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EVALUATING HUNGARY'S PARTICIPATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION'S COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY¹

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Abstract

Hungary joined the European Union in 2004 but started to participate in EU crisis management operations well before. Since the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) was a new policy area at that time, it was an extraordinary experience for Hungary to be integrated into a policy still under development.

After briefly detailing the foreign and security policy options Hungary faced right after the transition from communism, this paper analyses Hungary's contribution to the CSDP. The CSDP is based on two pillars – one operational and the other related to capability-building. The paper first analyses Hungary's participation in the civilian and military operations launched in the framework of the CSDP. Specifically, it explores the operations Hungary has joined, the kind of capacities it has contributed and the deficiencies and problems that have emerged in this sphere. Second, the paper addresses Hungary's perspectives and aspirations regarding capability development. Specifically, it looks at how Hungary views the future of the CSDP, especially in light of the country's participation in permanent structured cooperation (PESCO), the central element in the EU's joint defence capability development.

Methodologically, the paper employs qualitative content and discourse analysis, drawing on relevant secondary literature and analyses of official EU and Hungarian (legislative and non-legislative) documents. Surveying Hungary's participation in EU crisis management operations since the beginning of the CSDP, the paper finds it has joined 42 per cent of civilian and 70 per cent of military operations. These have been in the immediate neighbourhood but also distant locations (Africa, Central Asia, and the Near East). At the same time, distinct challenges have hampered Hungary's contribution to certain operations, such as a dearth of foreign language skills and a lack of strategic airlift and mobile logistics capabilities. The paper also finds that regional defence cooperation was not the central driver of cooperation within PESCO projects. Overall, Hungary is somewhere in the middle of the pack in terms of the number of PESCO projects it participates in.

Keywords: Hungary; EU; common security and defence policy; PESCO; CSDP initiatives

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Introduction

Two parallel processes determined the foreign and security policy of the Central Eastern European countries after the fall of communism. The first was sovereignty sharing and integration to the Euro-Atlantic organizations (EU, NATO). The second was re-nationalization–namely, identifying national interests and developing independent foreign, security and defence policies (Tóth 2007, 315–316).

As Péter Tálas and Tamás Csiki have noted, at the time of the political transition in Hungary (1989–1990), there were six theoretical options open to Hungarian foreign, security and defence policy, with varying degrees of likelihood: (1) the Eastern option involving a new type of relationship with Russia and the post-Soviet states; (2) Neutrality, whereby the great powers would guarantee Hungary's security; (3) the Eastern European option involving regional cooperation among the countries of the region; (4) Defence self-determination, whereby Hungary would guarantee its own security; (5) the Pan-European option, drawing on defence cooperation (including collective defence) in the framework of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE); and (6) Euro-Atlantic integration in which Hungary would join NATO and the EU (Csiki and Tálas, 28–29).

Despite the range of theoretical options, since 1993, strategic defence documents have emphasized Hungary's aspiration to integrate into Euro-Atlantic organizations. One of the first strategic documents underpinning this aspiration was the *Principles of the security policy of the Hungarian Republic*, published in 1993. It claimed that, after the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the bipolar international system, the military aspect of security had declined in importance with an attendant rise in the valence of the economic, political, social, and human dimensions of security. As a result, the emerging political union within the European Community–and the prospect of a common security and defence policy as a part of it–became a decisive security framework in Europe. In this view, membership in the European Community (alongside NATO, the Western European Union and the OSCE) would basically guarantee Hungary's security (National Assembly decision 11/1993, paragraph 4).

Current strategic documents (Foreign Policy Strategy 2011; National Military Strategy 2012; National Security Strategy 2020) confirm that the two pillars of Hungarian defence remain NATO and the CSDP of the EU. At the same time, coordination and cooperation between the two pillars are emphasized. The National Military Strategy states that the use of Hungarian Defence Forces abroad should occur only based on appropriate international authorization, in the framework of international organizations or ad hoc coalitions. In other words, Hungary does not intend to use military force unilaterally (National Military Strategy of Hungary 2012, paragraph 15).

Regarding the NATO-EU relationship, the Foreign Policy Strategy emphasizes that the development of CSDP should be harmonized with NATO, and a division of labour between the two organizations should be established (Hungarian Foreign Policy after the EU Presidency 2011, 12). The recently revised National Security Strategy also asserts that NATO and the European Union constitute the primary international framework of Hungarian security and defence policy and that it is in Hungary's interest is to preserve the coherence and complementarity of the two organizations (National Security Strategy 2020, paragraph 91). Hungary has stressed the importance of complementarity between the EU and NATO not only in the national strategic documents but also in the framework of Visegrad Group (V4) Cooperation within the EU as well: "strengthening CSDP should go hand in hand with reinforced partnership with NATO" (Declaration of the Visegrad Group Foreign Ministers). This complementarity means that NATO has priority over collective defence, the value of which has increased in the last few years in Europe (National Security Strategy 2020, para 51 and 93).

Hungary joined NATO in 1999 and the EU in 2004. Since then, the international framework of Hungarian defence and security policy has been provided by these Euro-Atlantic organizations. Like all EU Member States that are simultaneously NATO countries, Hungary has to balance between the two organizations, expressing its commitment to both in words and in deeds. Regarding operational activity, it is worth examining what kind of contribution Hungary has provided to different international organizations since the Hungarian government's ambitions are quite modest (currently 1,200 personnel). In other words, Hungary is ready to deploy a maximum of 1,200 soldiers at one time in the framework of international peace operations. The question arises then as to which organization Hungary has contributed the most.

The first hypothesis of this article is that, in the field of crisis management, NATO is the primary international framework and that the scale of contribution to CSDP missions will therefore be significantly lower than the contribution to NATO operations (Hypothesis 1). Looking in more detail at the military and civil CSDP operations in which Hungary has participated, the paper addresses the following questions: What has been the main geographical scope of the Hungarian contribution? Is it confined only to the close neighbourhood, or is Hungary willing to deploy in peace operations in remote locations as well? What kind of difficulties or deficiencies can be identified regarding the Hungarian contribution?

Regarding European defence initiatives, most specifically permanent structured cooperation (PESCO), the paper addresses the question of how active Hungary has been in PESCO projects, especially compared to other V4 (Visegrad Group) countries. In terms of cooperation with the other PESCO-participating Member States, the paper hypothesizes that regional defence cooperation is a decisive driver–namely, that Hungary cooperates mostly with members of the Visegrad Group in the framework of Central European Defence Cooperation (Hypothesis 2).

Methodologically, the paper employs qualitative content and discourse analysis, drawing on relevant secondary literature and analyses of official EU and Hungarian (legislative and non-legislative) documents. The first part of the study examines Hungary's switch from territorial defence to international peace operations and the country's contribution to different international organizations, including the EU and NATO. The second part details Hungary's participation in EU CSDP operations, examining the geographical scope, the capabilities and the emerging deficiencies. In the third part, the paper addresses questions of participation in PESCO projects, such as how active the Hungarian participation has been and with which countries Hungary has cooperated chiefly in the framework of PESCO projects. A concluding section summarizes the findings and assesses the validity of the hypotheses.

The switch from territorial defence to international peace operations

After the Cold War, the focus on traditional territorial defence in Europe gave way to one on peace operations, thereby redrawing security and defence policy. One of the challenges for Hungary after the political transition in 1989–1990 was to develop the capabilities needed to participate in peace operations, first in UN-led ones, and later with the aspiration of joining the EU and NATO and contributing to their missions as well.

At the beginning of the 1990s, Hungary sent military observers to UN-led operations in the Middle East (Iraq, Kuwait), Africa (Angola, Mozambique, Liberia, Uganda), Cyprus, Georgia and Tajikistan (Besenyő 2013, 58–74). From the middle of the 1990s, Hungary began to deploy combat forces abroad, to Cyprus (a platoon), the Western Balkans (a battalion) and the Sinai Peninsula (a platoon). Since 1999, Hungary has participated in all of NATO ground missions (Szenes 2014, 110).

Decision-making concerning participation in NATO and EU-led international peace operations has changed significantly over time. Right after the political transition, the Hungarian Constitution was amended to allow the executive to deploy soldiers abroad without prior consent from the National Assembly but *solely for UN-led operations*. This made Hungary's participation in NATO and CSDP missions quite cumbersome, so in 2003 another constitutional amendment extended the government's authorization to decide on foreign deployments to NATO operations; yet another in 2006 extended this to EU missions as well.

The current constitution (the Fundamental Law of Hungary, adopted in 2011) adopts a similar approach. Article 47 states:

The government shall decide on the deployment of the Hungarian Defence Forces and foreign armed forces referred to in paragraph (2) based on a decision of the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or any international organization for defence and security cooperation ratified by the National Assembly through the adoption of an Act, and on other troop movements by them.

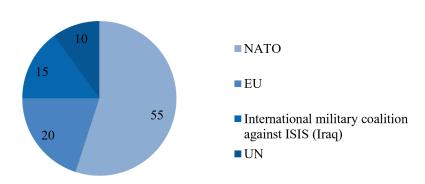


Figure 1. Hungary's contribution to international cooperation (percentage of deployed military personnel)

Source: Office of the National Assembly 2017, 2.

In other cases, the National Assembly shall, with the votes of two thirds, decide on the deployment of the Hungarian Defence Forces abroad or within Hungary and on stationing them abroad.

Since 2004, Hungarian governments have generally adhered to the ambition of deploying a maximum of 1,000 troops in peace operations simultaneously. However, in March 2019, the Minister for Defence, Tibor Benkő, announced that this ambition level had been increased to 1,200 (Ministry for Defence 2019). In 2016, approximately 890 persons were deployed in the framework of peace operations, 55 per cent to NATO missions, 20 per cent to EU operations, 15 per cent to Iraq to the international military coalition against ISIS, and 10 per cent to UN-led operations (Figure 1). (Office of the National Assembly 2017, 2).

Hungary's participation in CSDP missions

Military operations

Hungary started to participate in the crisis management operations of the European Union even before joining. At the very beginning, the geographical scope of the Hungarian contribution was primarily concentrated in the Western Balkans. The EU deployed its first military operation, Concordia, to Macedonia in March 2003 and Hungary's contribution was a liaison officer and a warrant officer who served at the EU headquarters (Fapál 2006, 125).

In 2004, another military operation (that is still in the field), EUFOR Althea, was launched by the Council of the European Union in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Hungary has been participating since the beginning of the operation. At the same time, the form and the scope of the contribution have changed significantly due to the changing mandate and re-structuring of the operation. In the beginning, the Hungarian contribution was realized in an integrated police unit, whose main tasks were to protect military buildings, patrol, escort VIPs and participate in special operations (Fapál 2006, 125). Since the first re-structure of the mission in 2007, Hungarian soldiers have served under the Multinational Manoeuvre Battalion (MMBN) comprising troops from Austria, Hungary and Turkey. At the same time, the focal point of the mission's mandate has shifted to non-executive tasks such as training and mentoring of local forces. Due to the successive downsizing of the mission, Hungary's contribution is now the smallest, behind Austria and Turkey's (Vogel 2016, 123). In 2016, an average of 163 Hungarian personnel was deployed in EUFOR Althea (Office of the National Assembly 2017, 3).

In June 2003, the EU launched its first autonomous² military operation, EUFOR Artemis, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The main goal of Artemis was to stabilize the Bunia area after bloody ethnic and tribal conflicts in the province Ituri. Originally, Hungary did not intend to participate, but eventually, the government concluded that doing so would positively affect the country's standing just before EU accession. Lieutenant-colonel János Tomolya served at the operational headquarters in Paris (Besenyő 2016, 204–205).

Although Operation Artemis ended in September 2003, the EU and Hungarian military presence in the DRC did not come to an end. In 2005, EUSEC RD Congo was deployed to the country, followed by EUFOR RD Congo in 2006, both of them with a Hun-

² That is, it was not launched in the framework of the "Berlin Plus Agreement" between the EU and NATO.

garian contribution.³ Nevertheless, it bears noting that a dearth of French language skills made it cumbersome to find deployable officers for these missions (Besenyő 2016, 208). Hungary has also participated with fewer soldiers in three additional completed military operations, EUFOR Chad, EUFOR RCA, EUFOR Libya and a military-civilian one, EU support to the African Union Mission in Darfur.

Hungary has also been participating in ongoing operations in Africa (EUTM Somalia, EUTM Mali and EUNAVFOR Somalia-Atalanta) and one launched in the Mediterranean Sea on 31 March 2020 (Operation Irini) aimed at enforcing the UN arms embargo on Lib-ya (Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/472). Until 2016, Hungary deployed three military officers to Operation Sophia, the predecessor of Operation Irini devoted to the fight against migrant smuggling and rescuing lives in the Mediterranean Sea (Office of the National Assembly 2017, 3).

Until 2010, Hungary contributed three sergeants to the EU's first naval and anti-piracy operation, EUNAVFOR Somalia-Atalanta. The officers worked at the operational headquarters in Northwood in the UK as IT experts responsible for registering merchant ships on a dedicated website called "MERCURY." After registration, merchant ships are grouped into convoys and secured by operation forces off the Somali coast (Besenyő 2016, 213).

Hungary has been contributing to the EUTM Somalia training mission since the start of the operation. Hungarians are responsible for the training of Somali officers. Eighteen soldiers were deployed to the mission until 2016 (Besenyő 2016, 214). Another training mission of the EU in Africa, EUTM Mali, is devoted to rebuilding the armed forces of Mali (and ensuring civilian control over them) and training local soldiers. Hungary's contribution to the operation up to 2016 included 16 persons altogether, including a liaison officer, medical staff and trainers (Besenyő 2016, 215–216).

Civilian missions

In June 2000, at a session of the European Council in Portugal, EU Member States decided to launch a civilian arm of the CSDP as well. Like the first military mission, the first civilian mission was deployed to the Western Balkans (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and launched in January 2003. The main aim of the EUPM BiH (in the initial phase with a staff of 450) was to create a modern, sustainable, professional, multi-ethnic police force that would be trained, equipped and able to assume full responsibility and independently enforce the law according to international standards. Hungary seconded five police officers to the mission, which ended in 2012 (Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Hungary, Article 2).

EUPOL Proxima was a police mission with 150 staff requested by the government of North Macedonia. It was a non-executive mentoring and monitoring operation to assist local authorities in the process of stabilizing the rule of law, police reform, and establishing a system of border management. Even before its accession, Hungary was among the contributing countries; from January 2004, five Hungarian police officers took part in the mission's activity. However, from 2005 the mission was transformed into a smaller police advisory operation, the EUPAT, to which Hungary deployed one police officer (Boda 2014, 156).

³ Eleven officers were deployed to the former and three officers the latter until the end of the missions (Besenyő 2016, 208–209).

Besides the above-mentioned non-executive police missions, the EU launched its biggest,⁴ most comprehensive and still ongoing rule-of-law operation, EULEX Kosovo, with an executive mandate in 2008. The overall mandate of the mission is to assist the Kosovo authorities in establishing independent, multi-ethnic, sustainable institutions to support the rule of law. The mission implements its mandate through the Monitoring and the Operations Pillar (EULEX Kosovo 2020). The Hungarian government set a maximum of 50 staff to be deployed across the duration of the mission in 2008 (Government decision 2025/2008).

Hungary has also contributed to civilian operations in the Middle East. For example, the first integrated rule-of-law mission, EUJUST LEX-Iraq, operated between 2005 and 2013. It sought to strengthen the rule of law and promote a culture of respect for human rights in Iraq, providing expertise and assistance to the criminal justice system (police, courts and prisons) (European External Action Service 2014). Between 2011 and 2013, László Huszár was the head of the mission; during his leadership, Hungarian participation peaked at five persons (Wagner 2016, 264).

The third sphere of Hungary's participation in civilian crisis management is in Eastern Europe. The ongoing EUMM Georgia was first deployed in 2008 after the EU-mediated Six Point Agreement, which ended the war with Russia. The monitoring mission's goal is to ensure that there is no return to hostility and build confidence among the conflicting parties. Hungary deployed 15 observers to the mission, which has 219 observers altogether (EUMM 2020).

The EU's ongoing border management mission, EUBAM Moldova-Ukraine, was deployed in 2005 to promote border control, customs and trade norms and practices that meet European Union standards and to improve cross-border cooperation between the border guard and customs agencies and other law enforcement bodies of the two countries (EUBAM 2020). The first head of the mission was Brigadier-general Dr Ferenc Bánfi, who completed his term in 2009 (Boda 2014, 157).

The non-executive ongoing advisory mission, EUAM Ukraine, was launched in December 2014 following the Maidan revolution at the invitation of the Ukrainian government. The mission assists in civilian security sector⁵ reform. Between 15 June 2014 and 31 October 2015, the head of the mission was Kálmán Mizsei, a former EU special Representative to Moldova (Urszán 2016, 194).

In Central Asia, Hungary also participated in the EUPOL Afghanistan police mission. The operation started in 2007, intending to support the Afghan government's efforts to establish a civilian police force guided by the rule of law. EUPOL divided Afghanistan into five regions. A senior Hungarian police advisor led the central region. In addition, a senior advisor in the anti-drug-trafficking division (the fifth-most-senior position with-in the EUPOL hierarchy) was also Hungarian. Hungarians worked at the EUPOL office in Baghlan, where basic training programmes (reading, writing, English, IT) were organ-

⁴ Currently the mission strength is 503 staff, but at the beggining it was more than 2,600. https://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/?page=2,64&ydate=2019; https://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/?page=2,64&ydate=2009 (2020.03.16.)

⁵ The civilian security sector is comprised of agencies responsible for law enforcement and the rule of law, such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the National Police, the Security Service, the State Border Guard Service, the General Prosecutor's Office, local courts, and anti-corruption bodies.

ized, as well as specified training for police officers, such as crime scene investigation and covert information gathering (Wagner 2016, 271).

In summary, Hungary has been participating in EU civilian and military crisis management operations since the launch of the CSDP. To date, Hungary has participated in 42 per cent of the civilian and 70 per cent of the military operations,⁶ and not only in its immediate neighbourhood but also in quite distant locations (Africa, Central Asia, Near East). The strongest contribution was provided to the missions in the Western Balkans. Hungarian participation in the African operations was primarily symbolic, intending to signal the country's commitment to EU Security and Defence Policy and the EU in general. In the case of civilian crisis management, a Hungarian was in several instances appointed head of mission.

At the same time, many authors–including some deployed in operations (e.g. János Besenyő) – have emphasized the deficiencies that emerged during the implementation of the missions. First, the armed forces have a shortage of sufficient airlift and mobile logistics capability, which prevents the deployment of combat units to Africa and the Middle East. Therefore, sending individuals or groups remains the only option, but sending them to remote operations is possible only if Hungary receives full support from the "framework nation" of the operation in question. Consequently, the Hungarian Defence Forces can send only observers and specialists (doctors, lawyers, cartographers, training experts, etc.) to remote missions (Besenyő 2019, 35). Another problem is the lack of linguistic capabilities (especially French), making participation in mostly French-led African operations difficult (Besenyő 2016, 208). In sum, Hungary has contributed fewer combat forces and more support personnel involved in policing and patrol, medical assistance and staff training.

Hungary and the CSDP initiatives

In recent years, European defence initiatives have focused on PESCO, the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), and the European Defence Fund (EDF). Hungary's position on the development of CSDP is important against the backdrop of these initiatives.

PESCO is the flagship in CSDP initiatives and is a special type of enhanced cooperation. The legal basis of PESCO is Article 42, paragraph 6 of the Treaty on the European Union, which states:

Those Member States whose military capabilities fulfil higher criteria and which have made more binding commitments to one another in this area with a view to the most demanding missions shall establish permanent structured cooperation within the Union framework.

Article 1 of the Protocol on permanent structured cooperation established by Article 42 of the Treaty specifies in more detail the option of willing Member States to (1) proceed a more intensive development of defence capabilities with the coordination of the European Defence Agency; and (2) provide closer operational cooperation either at national level or as a component of multinational force groups, targeted combat units for the missions planned. Article 2 of the same protocol defines those concrete activities through which

⁶ Based on the author's own database drawn from factsheets of the missions and operations available via the European External Action Service website.

the Member States should bring their defence apparatuses into line with each other as far as possible, particularly by harmonizing the identification of their military needs and encouraging cooperation in the fields of training and logistics. States should also cooperate to achieve approved objectives concerning the level of investment expenditure on defence equipment, and regularly review these objectives and take measures to enhance the availability, interoperability, flexibility and deployability of their forces, in particular by identifying common objectives regarding the commitment of forces, including possibly reviewing their national decision-making procedures. Furthermore, they are encouraged to work together to ensure the necessary measures, without prejudice to undertakings in this regard within NATO, to abolish the shortfalls perceived in the framework of the 'Capability Development Mechanism' and take part in the development of major joint or European equipment programmes in the framework of the European Defence Agency.

Due to the 2007–08 financial crisis and its consequences, closer defence cooperation did not reach the top of the agenda of the Member States and the EU for years after the adoption of the Treaty of Lisbon. However, on 14 November 2016, EU foreign and defence ministers discussed and adopted the Implementation Plan on Security and Defence under the EU global strategy, presented by the High Representative. A set of three ambitions was laid down in the document– namely (1) responding to external conflicts and crises; (2) building the capacity of the EU partners; and (3) protecting the Union and its citizens.

In order to achieve these objectives, the following concrete steps were recommended by the Council: (1) identify the capability development priorities; (2) deepen defence cooperation and delivering the required capabilities together; (3) adjust the EU's structures for situational awareness, planning and conduct, as well as the rapid response toolbox; (4) increase financial solidarity and flexibility within the CSDP; (5) make full use of the Lisbon Treaty's potential for PESCO; (6) actively take forward CSDP partnerships (Implementation Plan on Security and Defence 2016, 2–6). The European Council meeting of 15 December 2016 can thus be conceived as a milestone, since heads of state and government endorsed the Implementation Plan, so that concrete steps could be taken to develop the CSDP.

Based on this work, in May 2017, the EU Council established the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), starting with a trial run from autumn 2017 until autumn 2019 (Council of the European Union 2017, 13). CARD is based on the voluntary participation of Member States and seeks to foster capability development, address shortfalls, deepen defence cooperation and ensure more optimal use of defence spending (European Defence Agency 2020). In addition, the European Commission launched the European Defence Fund (EDF) as the financial pillar of the EU defence initiatives. It consists of "two legally distinct but complementary windows" (European Commission 2017).

Regarding PESCO– the third pillar of CSDP defence initiatives–on 13 November 2017, ministers signed a joint notification, which was delivered to the High Representative and the Council. Based on this notification, on 11 December 2017, the Council took its decision (CFSP) 2017/2315 starting PESCO with the participation of 25 Member States.⁷

Council decision (CFSP) 2018/909 established a common set of governance rules for PE-SCO projects. This decision and Council decision (CFSP) 2017/2315 prescribe a two-layer structure for PESCO projects – the council level and the projects level. At the council level, the Council (1) provides strategic direction and guidance for PESCO; (2) establishes

⁷ Malta, Great Britain and Denmark decided not to participate.

the list of projects to be developed under PESCO, (3) ensures the unity, consistency and effectiveness of PESCO; (4) reviews annually whether the participating Member States continue to fulfil the more binding commitments; and (5) sets the general conditions under which third states may be invited to participate in individual projects and determines whether a given third state satisfies these conditions (Articles 4 and 6 of Council decision (CFSP) 2017/2315 and Article 2 of Council decision (CFSP) 2018/909). At the project level, the Member States taking part in a project (project members) agree among themselves on the arrangements for, and the scope of, their cooperation and the management of the project. As well, the project members may agree among themselves by unanimity to admit other participating Member States to the project (Article 5 of Council decision (CFSP) 2017/2315 and Article 4 of Council decision (CFSP) 2018/909). In addition, the European External Action Service (including the Military Staff) and the European Defence Agency are designated as the joint secretariat for PESCO (Article 7 of Council decision (CFSP) 2017/2315 and Article 3 of Council decision (CFSP) 2018/909).

There was a crucial debate over the inclusivity and ambitiousness of PESCO among the Member States, especially between Germany and France. While Germany prefers inclusive defence cooperation with the aim of preserving EU unity after Brexit, France supports a more ambitious and consequently more exclusive form of cooperation. Hungary stood on Germany's side in this debate, as did other EU Member States from the region (Nádudvari and Varga 2019, 5).

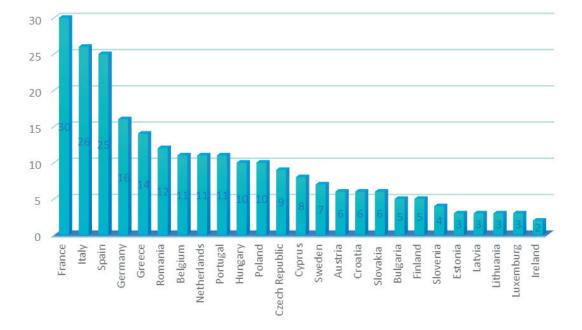


Figure 2. The number of PESCO projects EU countries participate in (author's own formulation).

Source: European Council 2019

https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/41333/pesco-projects-12-nov-2019.pdf (2020.03.30.)

Regarding third countries' participation in PESCO projects, there was another heated and extended debate. France and Germany wanted to lay down strict rules and conditions, while Hungary and other Eastern European countries preferred a more flexible way of cooperating with non-EU countries, especially with the United States and Great Britain (Nádudvari and Varga 2019, 5). Finally, on 5 November 2020, the Council of the European Union brought the debate to a close with its decision setting several political, substantive and legal conditions for third states' participation (Council decision (CFSP) 2020/1639).

To date, three programme packages have been launched under PESCO, covering a total of 47 projects. The first package was adopted on 6 March 2018 with 17 projects, the second on 20 November 2018 again with 17 projects, and the third on 12 November 2019 with 13 new projects (European External Action Service 2019). PESCO projects can be divided into seven clusters: (1) training and facilities; (2) land formation systems; (3) maritime; (4) air systems; (5) cyber; (6) enabling joint services; and (7) space. At the time of writing, Hungary was participating in ten PESCO projects in four clusters and is somewhere in the middle of the pack in terms of participation, with France, Italy and Spain being the most engaged participants (Figure 2).

Looking closely at the dynamism of Hungary's participation in PESCO projects, we can see that in the first wave (March 2018), Hungary joined four, in the second (November 2018) two and in the third wave (November 2019) four, which seems to be the most balanced participation among the V4 countries. Moreover, in the third wave, Hungary assumed leadership of the project entitled 'Integrated European Joint Training and Simulation Centre' (Table 1).

Concerning the other V4 countries, Poland and the Czech Republic joined almost exactly the same amount of projects (10 and 9, respectively), while Slovakia participates only in 6 (Figure 2). Regarding the dynamism of PESCO-project participation, Slovakia and the Czech Republic's enthusiasm seems to have petered out by the third wave, since the former joined five projects in the first wave and only one in the second, and the latter joined three projects in the first and six in the second wave. Neither the Czech Republic nor Slovakia joined any project in the third wave. Poland's willingness to participate in PESCO projects decreased as well since it joined six projects in the first, two in the second and two in the third wave. Like Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia each undertook the leadership of one project (European Council 2019).

Cluster	Project	Project description	Participating Mem- ber States/Adoption of the project	Project coordi- nator
Training and facil- ities	Integrated European Joint Training and simulation Centre (EU- ROSIM)	Aim: To establish a tactical training and sim- ulation of a cloud-based network connecting and integrating geographically spread sim- ulation sites and training capacities into one real-time, joint-level simulation platform.	Hungary, France, Germany, Poland, Slovenia Adopted on 12 No- vember 2019	Hungary
	Special Oper- ations Forces Medical Train- ing Centre (SMTC)	Aim: to enhance medical capabilities sup- porting the Special Operations Forces (SOF) missions and operations in terms of training, procedures and interoperability.	Poland, Hungary Adopted on 12 No- vember 2019	Poland

Table 1. PESCO projects with Hungary's participation

Cluster	Project	Project description	Participating Mem- ber States/Adoption of the project	Project coordi- nator
Land for- mation systems	Indirect Fire Support (Eu- roArtillery)	Aim: To develop a mobile precision artillery platform, contributing to the EU's combat capability requirement in military operations. This platform is expected to include land battle decisive ammunition, non-lethal ammunition, and a common fire control system for im- proving coordination and interoperability in multinational operations.	Slovakia, Hungary, Italy Adopted on 6 March 2018	Slovakia
	Integrated Unmanned Ground System (UGS)	Aim: To develop an Unmanned Ground System (UGS) capable of manned-unmanned and unmanned-unmanned teaming with other robotic unmanned platforms and manned vehicles to provide combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) to ground forces.	Estonia, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Netherlands, Poland, Spain Adopted on 19 No- vember 2018	Estonia
Cyber	Cyber Threats and Incident Response Information Sharing Plat- form	Aim: To help mitigate these risks by focusing on cyber threat intelligence sharing through a networked Member State platform to strengthen nations' cyber defence capabilities.	Greece, Austria, Cy- prus, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Spain Adopted on 6 March 2018	Greece
	Cyber and In- formation Do- main Coordi- nation Center (CIDCC)	Aim: To develop, establish and operate a mul- tinational Cyber and Information Domain Coordination Center (CIDCC) as a standing multinational military element, where the participating member states continuously contribute with national staff but decide on a case-by-case basis which threat incident and operations they will contribute to and how.	Germany, Czech Republic, Hungary, Netherlands, Spain Adopted on 12 No- vember 2019	Germany
	Network of Logistic Hubs in Europe and Support to Operations	Aim: To establish a multinational network based on existing logistic capabilities and infrastructure. The goal is to use a network of existing logistic installations for multinational business to prepare equipment for operations, commonly use depot space for spare parts or ammunition, and harmonize transport and deployment activities.	Germany, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cy- prus, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lith- uania, Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain Adopted on 6 March 2018	Germany
Enabling joint services	Military Mo- bility	Aim: to support member states' commitment to simplify and standardize cross-border military transport procedures. This entails avoiding lengthy bureaucratic procedures to move through or over EU member states, be it via rail, road, air or sea.	Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, Bulgar- ia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ita- ly, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden Adopted on 6 March 2018	Nether- lands

Cluster	Project	Project description	Participating Mem- ber States/Adoption of the project	Project coordi- nator
	Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Surveillance as a Service (CBRN SaaS)	Aim: To establish a persistent and distributed manned-unmanned sensor network consist- ing of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) and Unmanned Ground Systems (UGS) that will be interoperable with legacy systems to provide a recognized CBRN picture to augment exist- ing Common Operational Pictures used for EU missions and operations.	Austria, Croatia, France, Hungary, Slovenia Adopted on 19 No- vember 2018	Austria
	EU Collabo- rative Warfare Capabilities (ECoWAR)	Aim: To increase the ability of the armed forces within the EU to face collectively and efficiently the upcoming threats that are more and more diffuse, rapid, and hard to detect and neutralize.	France, Belgium, Hungary, Romania, Spain, Sweden Adopted on 12 No- vember 2019	France

Source: European Council 2019

https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/41333/pesco-projects-12-nov-2019.pdf (2020.03.30.)

Regarding the cooperation with other EU countries, Figure 3 shows that Hungary cooperates the most with France and Spain (6 projects), as well as Germany and Poland (5 projects); considerable cooperation (4 projects) occurs with Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands and Slovenia. Except for Slovenia and the Netherlands, these countries all belong to the group of "defence frontrunners" based on their average share of EU arms export licences and arms sales by state-owned or transnational corporations between 2012 and 2017. Furthermore, their average defence expenditures in the same timeframe and the amount of active military personnel in 2019 are also notable (Blockmans and Crosson 2019, 15).

It is worth examining the possible impact of Hungary's regional defence cooperation on cooperation within PESCO. Hungary participates in two regional defence cooperation frameworks—namely, the V4 (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) and the Central European Defence Cooperation or CEDC (Austria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia. Poland is an observer).

During the first period of Visegrad Group defence cooperation, NATO accession was the main driver. The first meeting of V4 defence ministers was in November 1999. In 2014, the V4 defined three areas of practical cooperation in a document entitled "Long term vision on deepening defence cooperation."

The first of these was *capability development, procurement and the defence industry,* which focuses on long-term military planning to achieve convergence in V4 defence planning, defining the significant capability gaps and assessing the sustainability of forces. Concerning significant acquisitions, the V4 countries should first consider the possibility of joint or coordinated procurement either in a quadrilateral, trilateral or bilateral form. Furthermore, the V4 defence industry should contribute meaningfully to the European defence industrial base so that the region does not merely serve as a market for global defence companies. With this in mind, V4 countries should support their defence companies to form consortia.

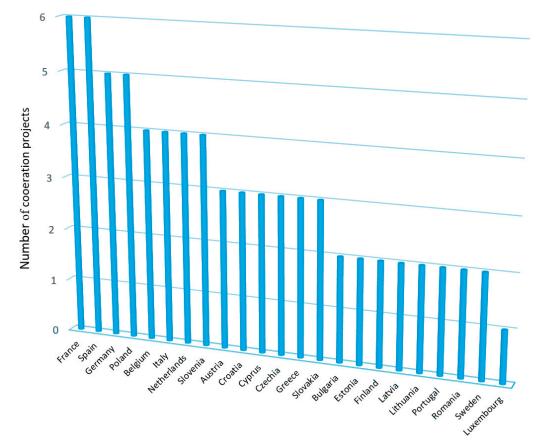


Figure 3. Hungary's cooperation with other EU countries in PESCO projects (author's own formulation)

The second area of cooperation is *establishing multinational units and running cross-border activities*. Here, based on NATO and EU commitments, the V4 should establish multinational forces that could be offered to NATO and EU operations. The V4 EU Battlegroup–established in 2016–was proposed as an initial step in this regard. The third area of cooperation is *education, training and exercises*. Since interoperability can be achieved primarily through training and exercises, V4 countries launched the Visegrad Group Military Educational Programme. In addition, they committed to organizing a joint V4 military exercise annually and planned to elaborate a V4 Training and Exercise Strategy (Visegrad Group 2014, 1–2).

Looking at Hungary's cooperation with other EU countries (Figure 3), we can see that Hungary participates the most with Poland (5 projects), while the cooperation with the Czech Republic and Slovakia is less significant (3 projects each), especially given that all of the PESCO-participating Member States take part in one PESCO project (Military Mobility). Apart from the highly inclusive Military Mobility project mentioned earlier, we also have to note that no PESCO project encompasses all four Visegrad countries. Consequently, it seems to be that V4 defence cooperation in the framework of PESCO projects has not significantly enhanced the V4 countries' synergies. Regarding the topics of PESCO projects in which Hungary participates with the other V4 countries, we can

Source: European Council 2019https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/41333/pesco-projects-12-nov-2019.pdf (2020.03.30).

observe that there is overlap since the bulk of them follows two priority areas (capability development and education, training, and exercises), identified in the long-term vision of V4 defence cooperation (Table 1).

CEDC was created in 2010 and focuses on developing defence capabilities and the coordination of the member countries' views on defence policy and planning. Since 2015, when a yearly rotating presidency and regular meetings at different levels was introduced, cooperation has been characterized by "light institutionalization" (Müller 2016, 30). In the 2018 Joint Declaration of the Ministers of Defence, CEDC countries ascribed an important role to this regional defence cooperation in developing and delivering effective responses to challenges affecting European security and welcomed the launching of PESCO as a historical step in the development of CSDP. The document projects cooperation in the area of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Surveillance as a Service, which was launched as a PESCO project, but not with the participation of all of the CEDC countries (i.e., only Austria, Croatia, Hungary and Slovenia). Apart from this project, CEDC countries participate (albeit partially) in the Network of Logistic Hubs in Europe and Support to Operations project. As mentioned, the sole PESCO project in which *all CEDC members* take part is the highly inclusive Military Mobility project (Table 1).

Blockmans and Crosson have concluded that previous (bi- or multilateral) regional defence cooperation in Europe only explains PESCO-project cooperation to a certain extent. While Benelux and Baltic cooperation remain strong in the framework of PESCO, Franco-German, Nordic, and Visegrad cooperation are surprisingly limited (Blockmans and Crosson 2019, 19).

Conclusions

Hungary's defence and security policy after the fall of communism shows a moderate Atlantic tendency, which means that Hungary is interested in the development of CSDP, but with the preservation of NATO's role in European and Hungarian security and defence, especially regarding collective defence. Thus, strategic documents emphasize the coherence and complementariness of the NATO and EU defence activity.

A close look at the country's contribution to international peace operations shows that support of NATO operations is overwhelming since 55 per cent of the deployed persons were seconded to the alliance and less than a half (20 per cent) to the EU (Office of the National Assembly 2017, 2). Put differently, the data confirms the validity of Hypothesis 1.

As we have observed, Hungary has been participating in civilian and military crisis management operations of the EU since the very beginning of the CSDP. To date, Hungary has taken part in 42 per cent of the civilian and 70 per cent of the military operations, and not only in its immediate neighbourhood but on several occasions in distant locations as well. The most substantial contribution has been to the missions in the Western Balkans. For the most part, Hungarian participation in African operations has been symbolic, indicating the country's commitment to common European security and defence. At the same time, Hungary's contributions have been limited by critical shortages in skills and competencies and military capabilities.

In the course of the development of the CSDP, Hungary has sought to avoid the formation of a multi-speed EU. Therefore, like other Central European Member States, it has preferred the German approach to forming a permanent structure of cooperation, which emphasizes *inclusivity* rather than on the *ambitiousness* of PESCO projects (Nádudvari and Varga 2019, 5).

Another consideration that has underpinned Hungary's participation in CSDP initiatives, especially PESCO projects, is that Hungary seeks to avoid supranational integration in the area of defence and security—or at least delay it as long as possible. As the National Security Strategy asserts:

Hungary supports increasing the EU Member States' defence budgets if it brings added value, building defence capacities in harmony with NATO and EU principles and strengthening the institutional system. In the long term, and following the consensus of the Member States, this may result in a common European defence and a joint European armed forces. However, until that time, the intergovernmental nature of European security and defence cooperation has to be preserved (National Security Strategy 2020, paragraph 94).

Last but not least, participation in the development of the CSDP demonstrates Hungary's commitment to European integration, especially in the shadow of ongoing migration and rule-of-law disputes with the EU.

After three waves of PESCO projects, Hungary falls somewhere in the middle of the pack compared to the other Visegrad countries in terms of participation. At the same time, it is essential to emphasize that the implementation has barely started. As it is still nascent in most projects, caution and further research are needed to properly evaluate Hungary's participation.

It seems that the preeminent forms of regional defence cooperation (V4 and CEDC) have not been the main drivers of Hungarian participation in PESCO projects. This refutes Hypothesis 2. Thus, future research could fruitfully map the motivation and drivers behind joining certain projects, such as evaluating the implementation of the projects, which, as mentioned above, is still in its infancy. At the same time, the serious economic and social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are likely to again divert the attention of the Member States and the EU from the CSDP (Nováky 2020, Marrone and Credi 2020, Sinha 2020). Moreover, with competing demands on limited financial resources,⁸ the implementation of existing PESCO projects is also at stake.

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⁸ The budget of the EDF has been decreased from an initial €13 billion to €7.9 billion for the 2021– 2027 financial period (Council of the European Union 2018, 2020)

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