

Judging from the rhetoric of European security and defence policy, the EU has acquired the capabilities to make it more than just a 'civilian superpower', effectively adding hard military instruments to the all-round tool-box that has become a hallmark of the EU as an international actor. However, leaving aside the EU's capacity to produce rhetoric, the ESDP remains a project rather than an actual policy. Europe is beginning to think strategically, but EU member states face a number of immense challenges on the road towards an effective and credible ESDP. The present anthology can be seen as a sympathetic yet critical effort to highlight the gap between rhetoric and reality.

The anthology comprises nine chapters offering updated and detailed analytical treatment of subjects ranging from security strategy, via military capabilities and intelligence co-operation, to the challenge of thinking about 'homeland security' in a European context. The different contributors to the anthology generally agree that stronger European co-operation in the fields of security and defence policy is a necessity. The present situation, where most European states are spreading their limited resources across national, European and transatlantic security arrangements, is inefficient and weakens the impact of European armed forces. Insufficient resources are being spread too thinly, reflecting the absence of a common strategic approach to security and defence policy. Only through collaborative efforts can Europeans hope to acquire the operational effectiveness that will permit them to play an active role in international security.

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