

HELSINKI SECURITY FORUM

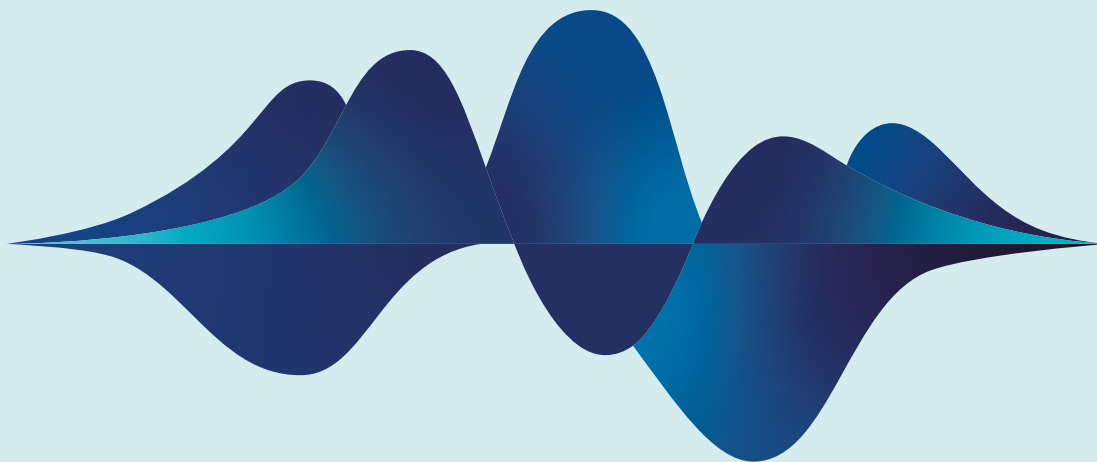
**TOWARDS A TOTAL DEFENCE OF EUROPE
– FROM APATHY TO ACTION?**



**HELSINKI
SECURITY
FORUM**

FIIA

FINNISH INSTITUTE
OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS



27.–29.9.2024

**TOWARDS A TOTAL
DEFENCE OF EUROPE –
FROM APATHY TO ACTION?**

WELCOMING WORDS



MIKAEL MATTLIN

ACTING DIRECTOR, FIIA

Helsinki Security Forum 2024 – Catalysing action for European total defence

The year 2024 has underscored the urgent need for a comprehensive and proactive approach to defending Europe in the face of a grim security situation and proliferating geopolitical uncertainties. A passive and reactive stance is no longer adequate. A determined transition to decisive action is called for.

The current state of the world provides a sobering backdrop for the third annual Helsinki Security Forum. This year's forum brings together thought leaders, policymakers, and experts to address the theme of HSF 2024: Towards a Total Defence of Europe – From Apathy to Action. Forum discussions will delve, inter alia, into the future of the European security architecture, the Russia factor in European security, the role of the defence industry in securing Europe, climate security, military use of AI and its governance, the new age of intelligence and protecting critical infrastructure.

Helsinki Security Forum continues to solidify its role as a premier Northern European platform for high-level dialogue on security and defence. With each passing year, the forum's influence grows, and so too does the urgency of the issues it addresses.

We at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs take great pride in advancing both domestic and international dialogues on defence and security matters. In our interconnected and increasingly complex world,

FIIA's work is more vital than ever in ensuring that the discussions at the forum lead to meaningful action.

This year, HSF will benefit from the support of more partners than ever before. This can be viewed as evidence to the forum's expanding impact, as well as shared recognition of the need for a unified response to Europe's security challenges. The involvement of our partners is crucial to the success of the forum. Their contributions will enhance the depth of the discussions, ensuring that the forum's outcomes are practical, actionable, and far-reaching. I would like to express my gratitude for your contributions and enduring commitment.

The future of European security depends on our collective ability to move from discussion to action. Given the significance of the forum participants – many of whom are key security and defence practitioners – HSF is not merely a venue for debate, but a catalyst for enhancing European security. Through joint commitment, close collaboration and appropriate burden-sharing, we have the opportunity to build a more resilient and secure Europe. Thank you for your engagement in this critical dialogue and for your dedication to the future of European security.

On behalf of myself and the Finnish Institute of International Affairs – Welcome to Helsinki Security Forum 2024!



**THE CURRENT STATE OF
THE WORLD PROVIDES
A SOBERING BACKDROP
FOR THE THIRD ANNUAL
HELSINKI SECURITY FORUM.**

WELCOMING WORDS



JUHANA VARTIAINEN
MAYOR OF HELSINKI

Cities have an important role in promoting comprehensive security

Our capital, Helsinki, has been the venue for numerous events and high-level meetings, and we are proud to provide the platform for the Helsinki Security Forum for the third time.

The role of cities in creating a peaceful world is significant. Our services reach the entire society. This is where life happens.

When a crisis occurs, there is no longer time to build trusted connections – preparedness needs to be done in peace times, in calm waters.

The City of Helsinki has a long history in preparedness work, and Helsinki benefits from Finland's long-standing tradition of preparing its citizens for war. As is well known, being prepared for war is the best way to avoid it.

According to the agreed and legislated Finnish division of responsibilities, Helsinki has implemented preparedness at the local level. Finnish municipalities are legally obligated to provide an array of basic services, and this obligation extends to situations of armed conflict. Fulfilling this task requires a huge amount of advance planning, investment and practice, as well as trustworthy communication between authorities and citizens.

One of Helsinki's strong assets is the ability to provide underground shelter for its people if needed. Civil protection is a comprehensive process. It includes

warning systems, carrying out sheltering, and even evacuating people. It is worth mentioning that in Helsinki alone, there are 5 500 shelters. Most of them are privately owned, since the law requires private builders to include an underground sheltering facility for every residential unit.

The City of Helsinki owns roughly 100 shelters, 50 of which are large-scale, rock-bedded shelters capable of protecting thousands of people at once.

Together, the shelter facilities can accommodate more people than the entire population of Helsinki.

I am happy and proud of Finland's recent NATO accession. The membership will bring adjustments to our preparedness setup, and we are committed to doing everything necessary to meet the updated requirements. The Finnish comprehensive security model certainly helps us in adapting to these new realities. We already possess the fundamental mindset and the capabilities needed to work closely with the armed forces. This approach to security is something Finland can also offer to other NATO countries.

I am very pleased to announce that the City of Helsinki is once again a prominent part of the Helsinki Security Forum – welcome to Helsinki!



**THE ROLE OF CITIES IN CREATING
A PEACEFUL WORLD IS SIGNIFICANT.**

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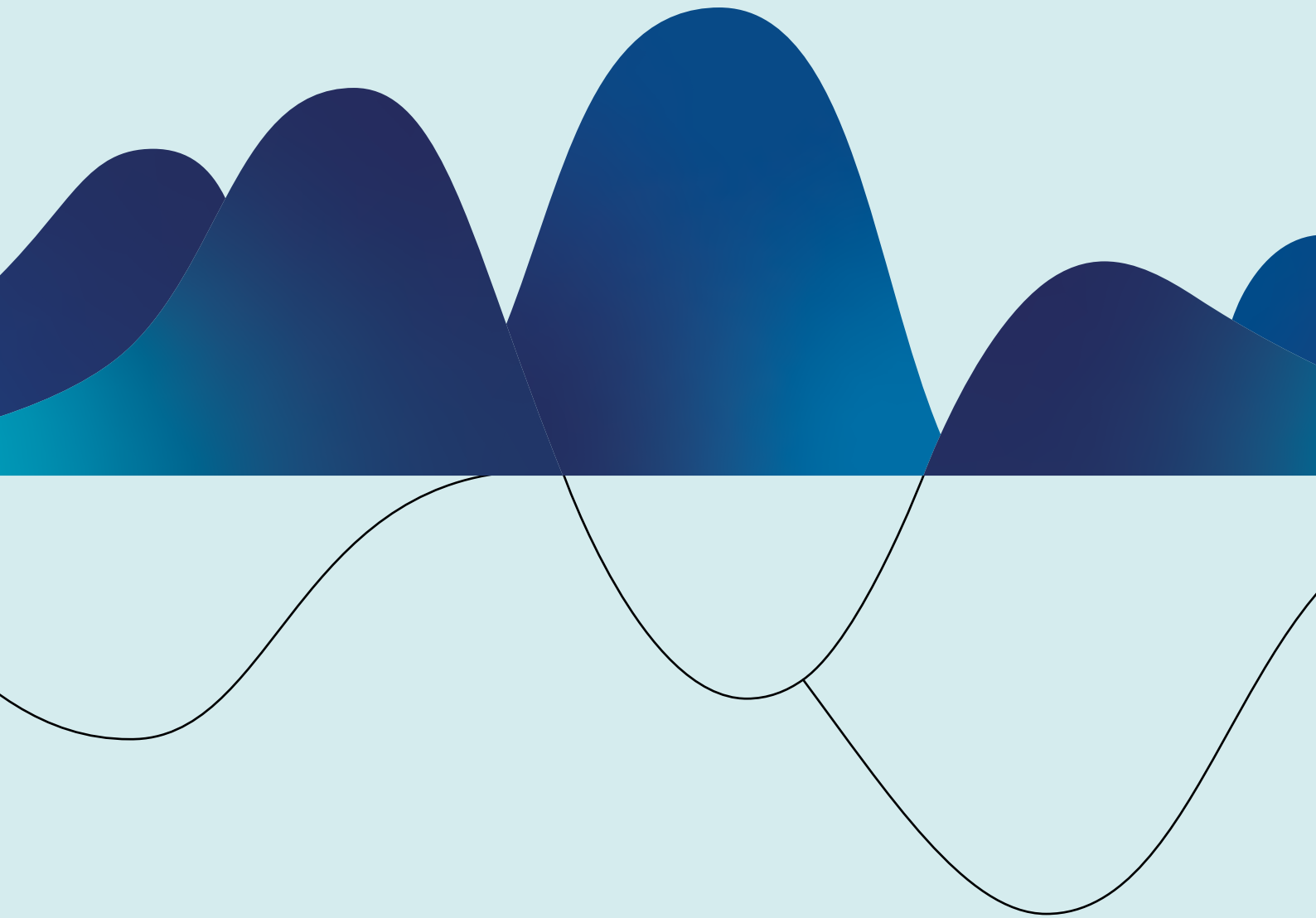
TOWARDS A TOTAL DEFENCE OF EUROPE



– FROM APATHY TO ACTION?

In its search for unity, Europe needs a comprehensive approach to security to build resilient societies. Could the Finnish model of total defence serve as a blueprint for a broader European security architecture?

In the following pages, researchers from the Finnish Institute of International Affairs offer their expert perspectives on the themes of Helsinki Security Forum 2024.





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Total defence and societal resilience – A need for a comprehensive approach

In May 2024, North Atlantic Council published a statement on recent Russian malign activities across the Euro-Atlantic area. According to the statement, these activities constitute a threat to Allied security and have included sabotage, acts of violence, cyber and electronic interference, disinformation campaigns, and other hybrid operations. Indeed, malign acts by Russia below the threshold of Article 5 are expected to become increasingly frequent in Russia's shadow war against the West. It is crucial to recognize that this is not a short-term problem.

Other state and non-state actors have also shown interest and ability to utilise a range of hybrid tools. Frequently, these tools take advantage of the nature of the societies they target in order to undermine the very same societies. Increasing the resilience of societies and strengthening the tools they have at their disposal to address interference is increasingly a focus of states and multilateral organisations, such as the European Union and NATO. These efforts have increasingly centred around the notions of 'whole-of-society', 'whole-of-government' and 'societal resilience'.

Finland has received international attention for its societal resilience and civil preparedness capacities, and many actors have turned to Finland for inspiration and practical advice or insights. The country has a long history in civil preparedness based on the historical notion of total defence – as a non-allied country in a difficult geopolitical position, Finland has needed the capability to mobilise the entire society against an overwhelming superpower on its eastern border.

As a result, Finland has developed unique capabilities with relevant concepts, processes, structures and actors to tackle threats that range from natural disasters to hybrid and grey zone actions to industrial state-on-state warfare. There are multiple historical and cultural factors that lay the foundation for Finland's comprehensive societal security approach. For instance, Finland scores well in several global indexes related to high media literacy, high trust in institutions – including public media – and the citizens' strong will to defend their country.

Compared to other states, Finland is thus well-equipped to face a myriad of threats. However, there are genuine questions about whether many of these concepts, processes and cooperative structures can be replicated by other states or groups of states. States have differing characteristics related, for instance, to energy security, logistical connections, geographical conditions and security policy solutions. Several states are in the process of building up their own resilience models.

While frequently called 'total defence', the key guiding concept in Finland is the notion of comprehensive societal security. To be able to tackle myriads of threats, one needs to incorporate a broad spectrum of actors into the preparedness process. This means a whole-of-society approach, where the vital functions of society are jointly safeguarded by authorities, business operators, civil society organisations and citizens.

The fundamental logic is that whether a threat to societal security is manmade or natural, there is a range of actions that may be necessary, for example, evacuations or civil protection. Likewise, the security authorities

must cooperate daily and train frequently to ensure that irrespective of the specific nature of the threat, they have the legal basis and practical abilities to address the threat, whether it is caused by youth gangs, organised crime, 'little green men' or armoured columns lined up for attacks across the border.

Although building up resilience is first and foremost a national task, there are things that collective political, economic and security organisations such as NATO and the EU can do together with their constituent members.

Finland also highlights this: as the recent government report on Security and defence policy states, 'Finland underscores the need to strengthen the Union's comprehensive preparedness for potential future crises and hybrid threats. [...] Finland advocates for the creation of a preparedness union based on comprehensive security within the EU to strengthen the Union's preparedness and crisis operations.' The Union has already taken important steps, for instance with the new Critical Entities Resilience Directive, which lays down obligations on EU member states to secure their critical functions of society. Also NATO has taken concrete steps to enhance resilience with its seven baseline requirements for national resilience. For NATO, civil preparedness has three core functions: continuity of government, continuity of essential services to the population and civil support to military operations.

In the context of hybrid threats, it is important to note that different types of hybrid activities require somewhat different approach to resilience building. The response depends especially on whether the target is, for instance, the population of the society, or the critical infrastructures or functions of society. Making critical infrastructure better protected and the system more resilient is where 'conceptual copying' is easier.

However, things are more complicated when it comes to activities that aim to covertly provoke divisions, polarisation and societal tensions among target populations. Instead, more invisible and subversive hybrid interference requires tailored responses where emphasis is placed on the role of societal attributes along with the ability to reform and adapt. Here comes into play the whole-of-society approach, in which governmental institutions retain a coordinating role.

Open societies are not fragile, but often agile in responding to strategic challenges. Beyond the state-based solutions, Western democracies harness market- and society-based approaches to dealing with risks and threats. Enhanced civilian capabilities as crucial enablers to society's capability to face armed or grey zone hostilities. All this means that developing comprehensive deterrence and defence capabilities with a genuine civilian component are increasingly crucial for the West.

Action Plan

Focus on civil preparedness. When preparing for the new and multifaceted threats, it is important to keep the whole-of-society approach in mind, including NGOs and the private sector.

Facilitate processes of public-private continuity management in critical infrastructures. Public-private cooperation is paramount as most critical functions of society these days are operated and managed by private sector actors.

A low-hanging fruit is ensuring there are no legal barriers to information sharing and collaboration between companies (related to monopoly-collusion laws) and between state actors and companies. This ensures that companies can confidentially inform state actors about attempts and breaches of critical infrastructure facilities or systems.

Develop strategic communication and attribution. Enhanced attribution capabilities and communicated thresholds of response are important expedients in dissuading hybrid aggressors. This must also include a sense of what response options are – only attributing but never responding is taken as a sign of weakness by actors such as Russia.



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A new European security architecture should learn from the peripheries

While Russia's full-scale war on Ukraine still rages, European expert communities are already beginning to discuss a potential security architecture in post-war Europe. One problem in particular should be reflected in these debates: as the pre-war security order enabled Russia's aggression in Ukraine, how to avoid repeating its flaws when rebuilding a new security architecture for Europe?

As pointed out by an array of scholars and analysts since February 2022, too much leeway for Russia's security interests in the past decades paved the way for the full-scale war. The pre-2022 security order was built on and around the economic cooperation between the Eurasian centres of power and on the expectation of economic interdependence preventing war.

In hindsight, European states prioritised their economic interests over security concerns. Dependence on Russian energy and the overall prioritisation of relations with Moscow contributed to the lukewarm responses to Russia's imperialist operations, including to the five-day war in Georgia in 2008, to the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and to the subsequent beginning of the war in Eastern Ukraine. The perception of Russia's aggression as a peripheral problem was fortified by the dominance of Western European views in European security debates, shaped by 80 years of peace, prosperity and diplomatic relations with Russia. The design of the post-Cold War security architecture took the Eastern European experience under Soviet occupation inadequately into consideration.

In 2008, NATO pulled the brake on the aspirations of Georgia and Ukraine to enter the alliance, while also the EU excluded any security cooperation with the Eastern neighbours. Ukraine did not receive substantial military assistance or training from its European partners between the annexation of Crimea and the full-scale invasion in February 2022, as such cooperation would have endangered the sensitive relations between European key capitals and Moscow. The impunity for Russia's breaches of the international law and the lack of security cooperation with its neighbour countries facilitated further imperial policies – including the war – in the European periphery.

De-centering Russian security interests in European security thinking and ending the period of facilitating Russian imperialism in European peripheries must be the starting point of building future European security architecture. In this new security architecture, the central role of Russian security interests and Western European economic interests should be replaced by addressing the security needs of the peripheries. Traditionally, this perspective has been sidelined in the debates about European security, while Russia's imperial perspective has shaped the knowledge production. This fact has been pointed out by many scholars (see for instance Kseniya Oksamytna's 'Global dialogues during the Russian invasion of Ukraine', 2023).

What kind of security architecture can prevent war in Europe in the future?

Considering the perspective of the peripheral countries would require, firstly, fortifying the multilateral world order in contrast to power politics and emphasising each state's right to an independent foreign policy. Ukraine abandoning its NATO aspirations is a key demand of Moscow, whose attempts at controlling Kyiv are not limited to military alliances. A 'deal' excluding Ukraine from NATO would just pave the way for other means of influencing Ukrainian foreign policy.

The international organisations in the heart of European security architecture uphold the principle of respecting sovereignty of each member state, regardless of the size of their territory or economy. States outside NATO and the EU remain particularly vulnerable to foreign influence and control. For Ukraine, the right to join both organisations would be a demonstration and a guarantee of full sovereignty vis-à-vis Moscow.

Secondly, accountability and justice should be the guiding principles in the process of reconstructing European security order. As the experiences of Russian neighbouring states witness, impunity for war crimes and breaches of international law pave the way for further violations in the future. A global knock-on effect is the erosion of the broader rules-based world order. The international community is already supporting the collection of evidence for Russian war crimes in Ukraine.

However, the existing international justice mechanisms and fora such as the UN Security Council, the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court are limited in their ability and power to hold states accountable for their violations of international law. European security arrangements such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe merely serve as a platform

for dialogue between power centres and at best help to address and resolve conflicts at local or regional levels.

While impunity – in other words, the absence of functional mechanisms for accountability – clearly is the key weakness in the currently eroding European security architecture, other means are needed to prevent future wars in Europe. Learning from the experience of the peripheries, a stronger deterrence is the pragmatic solution to protect neighbouring states from Russia's imperialist policies. This should include both military and institutional measures: increasing the defence capability of European countries and including Ukraine and Moldova in the institutional framework of the EU and/or NATO. An institutional solution must be found also for Georgia and, further down the line, potentially also Armenia in the South Caucasus to help the countries resist Russian attempts to drag them into its orbit of violence.

The level of European deterrence before 2022 was inadequate to prevent Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. It remains at risk of further erosion due to the potential decline of US military commitment in Europe in the future. The problem of lack of European strategic autonomy has been discussed for decades but has not been addressed decisively enough to build up Europe's own military capability sufficiently to reduce dependence on US military power.

The current task is, therefore, to strengthen the European pillar of NATO for instance by developing a stronger integrated air and missile defence capability to reduce dependence on US enablers, as well as improving force generation. In the new European security architecture, the role of the EU will be to support and coordinate capability development in European states and to facilitate deepening defence integration. Arranging credible security guarantees for Ukraine is one topical part of the overall challenge.

Action Plan

Center the perspective of the peripheries. The process of building a post-war European security architecture should replace the norm of prioritising Russian security interests in its neighbouring regions.

Develop European military deterrence. Europe needs to grow its strategic autonomy to avoid further breaches of international law and to protect the multilateral world order in the absence of functional accountability mechanisms.

Support Ukraine. It is the most topical task and the best available means for protecting the rules based international order and for preventing Russian aggression in Europe in the future.



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Unbreak my heart – Rebuilding a transatlantic partnership in support of Europe’s comprehensive deterrence

It must have been love, but is it over now?

Over the decades, the transatlantic partnership has been defined by shared interests, profound economic and societal interdependencies, a fabric of institutions and converging identities. However, long-term structural drivers are eroding this bond, making the collective “West” less resilient and vulnerable to influencing by malign actors. It is high time to rethink the parameters of the transatlantic partnership to forestall further erosion and enhance comprehensive deterrence.

My heart will go on? A less transatlanticist America

Deep-seated domestic dynamics and changes in the international system are rejiggering American priorities. Donald Trump, with his America First brand of politics, has tapped into a broader isolationist turn in the US body politic. Wars in the Middle East and the pathologies of globalisation have soured the American middle class on international engagement. A generational change underway in the US foreign policy elite means fewer interlocutors steeped in Cold-War-era thinking about the centrality of the transatlantic relationship.

All this is happening as the international system is shifting from Western-centric unipolarity to multipolarity, manifesting as strategic competition between the great powers. Across the American political spectrum, China is seen as the long-term challenger par excellence and Europe is fast becoming a secondary theatre in a global great-power game.

A second Trump presidency could create the conditions for a transatlantic break-up: the administration would likely hit Europe with tariffs, challenge NATO’s Article 5, and seek a fast peace in Ukraine at Kyiv’s expense. Trump’s team would be pronouncedly anti-EU, and frown upon key international institutions. They would cultivate the transatlantic relationship predominantly through links with right-wing conservative parties and governments in Europe.

A Kamala Harris administration would initially continue the road charted by incumbent president Joe Biden. This would mark a positive development for Europe, but only in the short term. The prospects of a US-EU trade deal would remain bleak, domestic wrangling would circumscribe US support to Ukraine and the administration would – albeit less boisterously than Trump – insist upon robust steps from European allies to enhance their military capabilities. Harris’ team would also expect Europe to toe the American line in contesting China.

Ultimately, a more transactional and potentially aloof US stance vis-à-vis Europe is likely in the medium to long run regardless of who sits in the White House.

Heartache tonight: A Europe coping with transitions

The shifts in US politics have not gone unnoticed in European capitals. For the past decade, European states and the EU have vowed to increase their capabilities and even develop strategic autonomy from the US to soften the blow of a possible transatlantic divorce. Some

significant steps have been taken with taboos broken along the way. European states (when including the UK) are the biggest financial AND military supporters of Ukraine. The EU is remodeling itself from a civilian to a military power, willing to engage its economic toolkit in great-power competition.

However, the geopolitical sugar rush brought about by the immediate response to the Russian war against Ukraine masks a worrying lack of political leadership in Europe. The traditional Franco-German leadership tandem is struggling to provide strategic direction in Europe. French calls for more ambitious steps to upgrade the EU on the global level have gone unanswered in Berlin. The German government approaches foreign and security policy with

caution, keeping an eye on the financial bottom line and trying to steer clear of an escalatory spiral with Russia and China.

Without a working Franco-German heart in Europe, there is little that the current pro-European Polish government can do to provide strategic direction. In the past, the UK had been an important counterweight among the “big three” to keep European ambitions rooted in a transatlantic approach, but now remains politically sidelined outside the EU. No constellation of European countries can currently chart the way forward for the continent, and collective action is increasingly difficult to achieve.

Action Plan

While many of the challenges facing the transatlantic relationship are structural, policy agency is not futile. It can mitigate, if not entirely buck, the adverse effects of these trends. What should be done in transatlantic space to bolster comprehensive deterrence?

The EU should double down on its aspirations for strategic autonomy, moving from debates to action. It has become obvious that a dependent and enfeebled Europe is a far bigger problem for the US than an independent and robust one. A possible Harris victory should not divert European attention away from this imperative.

The EU needs to add an engagement component to the idea of “Trump-proofing”. Building working alliances with a new generation of US civil servants, legislators and leaders in DC and on the state level is paramount. Messaging should underline that engagement in European security remains vital to America’s national interests.

The incoming EU High Representative should nominate a Special Representative for the transatlantic partnership with the mission to maintain and develop ties with American politicians. The representative could lead a newly established Transatlantic Political and Security Council (TPSC), which would work alongside existing formats for closer coordination and strategic assessment of global challenges.

The ultimate objective should be to agree upon a common long-term vision for the Transatlantic community. Doubling down on a shared “Western” commitment to democracy and freedom needs to be made actionable in a global context to assuage suspicions of the Global South.



TUOMAS ISO-MARKKU
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Strengthening Europe's defence industry – Hard decisions ahead

The return of large-scale interstate war to Europe has highlighted the value of a well-functioning defence industry. With their own limited stockpiles running low, Ukraine's European supporters increasingly rely on the industry to continue supplying the country. At the same time, they need it to replenish their own depleted stocks and to fulfil identified gaps in their defence capabilities.

Defence-industrial production capacity is thus likely to be a major factor in determining both the outcome of the war in Ukraine and Europe's ability to enhance its deterrence and defence at large.

The role of an advanced and capable defence industry – with at least some degree of autonomy – is further emphasised by the intensifying global strategic competition, with different actors seeking control over key technologies, raw materials and supply chains. This highlights issues of technological know-how, security of supply as well as management of external dependencies, also in the defence-industrial sphere.

At present, Europe's defence industry is clearly not geared to meet the challenges facing it. This was exemplified by the EU's failure to deliver the 1,000,000 artillery shells it promised to Ukraine in a timely manner.

To be clear, European NATO allies and EU member states themselves are largely responsible for the current state of the European defence industry.

The capacity and structure of Europe's defence industry reflect years of uneven defence spending by European states as well as their propensity to protect their national

defence industries and/or to acquire a major part of their military capabilities from non-European providers, especially the US. These have resulted in a patchwork of loosely connected national defence industries of different sizes and shapes, mostly meant to serve the needs of a limited number of European states and some non-European customers.

Overall, the European defence-industrial landscape is characterised by redundancies, fragmentation and gaps – even though these do not apply equally across different domains and weapon systems. While many European defence companies can provide high-quality equipment, they do so on a small scale. However, the Ukrainian military as well as Europe's own armed forces would now require both mass and quick delivery times.

The war in Ukraine is obviously influencing the conditions under which Europe's defence industry is operating – but it has so far not led to a paradigm shift.

Most European NATO allies and EU member states have announced significant increases in their defence spending. While some doubts remain about the durability of these commitments, the size of the defence market is growing. However, European defence companies complain that the money is not translating into concrete, long-term contracts that would allow for new investments into production capacity and enable speedier deliveries.

Many European states have prioritised quickly closing existing capability gaps and therefore opt for off-the-shelf equipment, mostly from non-European providers.

Considering the volatile security situation in and around Europe, this is understandable and, in many cases, necessary. At the same time, it will not help to bring about the industry that Europe would need now and in the future.

Both NATO and the EU are putting forward ideas to strengthen the European defence industry. Unfortunately, their actions are often not well-coordinated or aligned. A major reason for this is to be found in their differing memberships. The EU's definition of the European defence industry is mostly limited to the EU member states, whereas NATO represents a larger group of states, including the UK with its sizeable defence industry as well as Europe's most important non-European military partner, the US. This has led to some notable tensions.

Going forward, European NATO allies and EU member states need to rethink their approach in defence-industrial issues, as their current way of working has proven inadequate. Doing so will be difficult – and will involve some hard decisions.

First, to support Ukraine and bolster Europe's deterrence and defence they need to keep up an adequate level of defence spending, as only that will allow defence companies to invest in their production capacity.

Second, European states will need to determine the level at which defence-industrial capacity serves them best. They must decide whether to continue maximising national capacity, even if this comes at the cost of a more effective division of labour and greater production capacity at the European level.

Investments in big European capability projects are bound to favour Europe's largest defence companies, which are mostly located in the biggest countries. At the same time, such projects will be essential for strengthening Europe's defence-industrial capacity. Moreover, in a more integrated European defence industry, advanced smaller and mid-sized companies from smaller states should also find opportunities to become part of the supply chains.

Third, European NATO allies and EU member states must define to what extent – and for what capabilities – they can continue to rely on non-European providers, including the US. While defence-industrial issues are a touchy part of the transatlantic relationship, it is ultimately in the interests of the US that Europe has a viable defence industry that can serve Europe's defence needs – for example in a situation in which the US were forced to concentrate its military resources elsewhere. This does not mean severing transatlantic ties but reorganising them.

Fourth, European NATO allies and EU member states need to agree on how the "Europe" in European defence industry should be defined. Much speaks for adopting a pragmatic approach that acknowledges the role of non-EU European states, including the UK, Norway and Ukraine. Pragmatism should also guide the relations between NATO and the EU, as they both have distinct but valuable tools to further Europe's defence agenda.

Fifth, European states must strike a balance between fulfilling urgent military needs and investing in future capabilities and technologies. With the war still raging in Ukraine, making this choice will not be easy – but it is very important.

Action Plan

European NATO allies and EU member states need to face the music and act accordingly. To support Ukraine, strengthen its own defence and adapt to a world of strategic competition, Europe needs to take defence industrial matters seriously.

To be more effective, the European defence industry should be more integrated and act as a coherent whole. This is likely to favour the defence industries of the biggest states but could also offer opportunities for advanced companies from smaller NATO and EU members.

EU member states and European NATO allies need to find the right balance between investments into European defence industrial capacity and off-the-shelf purchases from non-European producers as well as between responding to current capability needs and funding future-oriented projects.



EMMA HAKALA
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Preserving future capabilities – Climate security as a part of total defence

At its summit in Madrid in June 2022, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) announced a target to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, along with the aim of becoming the leading organisation on climate security globally. These declarations can be seen as an anomaly on the agenda of a NATO summit, which was heavy on traditional security issues related to Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, such as formally inviting Finland and Sweden as members of the alliance. Yet, NATO's ambitious declarations are a follow-up on previous work, including the Climate Change and Security Action Plan it adopted in 2021.

NATO's activity on climate change can be seen as indicative of a slowly emerging change in perceptions of traditional security actors. The impacts of climate change on operability infrastructure and other concerns are becoming so clear that military actors are obliged to take them into account. Armed forces for example in the United States, United Kingdom and the Netherlands have developed solutions to adapt to the changing climate and even to reduce their own carbon footprint by cutting emissions.

Even so, more could and must be done to improve armed forces' performance on the climate front. This imperative does not merely stem from external pressure, although civil society actors are increasingly calling for obliging reductions targets for defence emissions. Equally pressing is the need for armed forces to ensure their capacities and ability to operate effectively in the future under a changing climate.

Some armed forces are already well on the way in their preparedness. For example, NATO's Climate Change and

Security Impact Assessments and the US Department of Defense Climate Risk Analysis outline ways in which armed forces will be affected, by factors such as rising sea levels threatening military bases or more intensive storms destroying critical infrastructure. These reports propose measures that can be taken to increase the resilience of militaries in such situations. NATO has also compiled a Compendium of Best Practices for Climate Security to facilitate exchange of information and implementation among its member states.

Apart from adapting to climate change itself, militaries also need to keep up with the structural changes that follow the green transition. The necessary and significant shifts in production and consumption patterns will affect all actors of society, including defence industry. For instance, as the phase-out of fossil fuels advances globally, specific kinds of petrol critical for air forces, navy or military vehicles may become obsolete and unavailable.

Moreover, the green transition is taking place amid an increasingly tense geopolitical setting, which is likely to increase competition for critical resources. Currently, China produces at least 60% of rare earth minerals that are necessary for the components required for green technologies. Ongoing trade rivalry between China, the US and Europe, combined with a vastly growing demand for the minerals needed for green transition, may reduce the availability of critical materials that are crucial for armed forces.

While maintaining national defence capabilities is a priority to all states, it will not remain a given to all if necessary materials or fuels simply are not available.

Rather than merely reacting to existing decisions, the defence industry could play a pivotal role in the green transition and the development of low-carbon emission innovations. Armed forces need to integrate the consequences of green transition into their foresight analyses and take them into account in military procurement. This approach will not only contribute to reducing global emissions but also help armed forces ensure that they will not be left reliant on technologies that have become redundant in a world of accelerating transition. Especially when acquiring equipment that could be used for decades, armed forces need to be certain that it will continue to be operable in an increasingly fossil-free world.

Rising geopolitical tensions have already highlighted the strategic importance of industrial policy for national security. Within the frame of strategic autonomy, the European Union has aimed to strengthen its defence industry through joint projects and procurement in defence capabilities. Similar efforts are echoed nationally by several European governments.

Industrial and defence policy will only be effective if it factors in climate change and the green transition. Risk analysis already shows that consistent, well-planned climate policy is crucial for national security.

While both the geopolitical and physical climate turn increasingly tumultuous, determined action on climate and defence policy can build resilience. Industrial policy should be used to consolidate these efforts for strategic gains.

DEFENCE FORCES MUST TAKE ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS INTO ACCOUNT, NOT LEAST TO ENSURE THEIR OWN OPERABILITY IN THE FUTURE.

Action Plan

Facilitate dialogue between security and environmental policy to improve foresight on climate-related threats.

Improve an understanding of the consequences of green transition in military procurement and defence industry.

Use industrial policy as leverage to coordinate actions in the defence sector and emissions reductions efforts.



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In search for a European solution to the ‘Russia problem’

It is often claimed that victory in Ukraine is existential for Russia. In fact, Ukraine’s victory in Ukraine is no less existential for Europe. Russia’s renewed large-scale aggression against Ukraine since 2022 is not only a brutal violation of territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, but also an attempt to revise the European post-Cold War security order. Russia is retroactively rejecting the post-1991 status quo and challenging the borders that were established after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Europe’s ‘Russia problem’ has evolved gradually. Since 2008, Russia’s threshold of using military force against its neighbours has lowered and Russia’s imperial ambitions have surged. This trajectory is linked with the evolution of Putin’s regime. Russia’s revisionism and external aggression have increased at the same pace with its authoritarianism and internal repression. The Kremlin’s

insecurities about its own political survival are projected as chauvinism against its neighbours – in particular Ukraine, which has chosen a path of democracy and integration into European and Western structures.

The Russia problem includes three different but intertwined strands which all need to be acknowledged and addressed by the EU and European states. Most acutely, Russia poses a **military challenge** to Ukraine and to Europe at large. Russia has shifted its economy to a war economy and aims to build a Soviet-style mass army. Even if the war in Ukraine eventually ends, Russia’s militarisation is by now deeply institutionalised. It will reflect on Russia’s internal and external development for years to come. Russia’s revisionism means that Europe needs to develop its own military capabilities and invest in its defence industry with a long-term perspective. Most

A NEW EUROPEAN STRATEGY TOWARDS RUSSIA NEEDS TO STEM FROM REALISM: RUSSIA WILL NOT DISINTEGRATE AND CEASE TO EXIST, NOR WILL RUSSIA TURN INTO LIBERAL DEMOCRACY ANYTIME SOON.

importantly, Europe needs the ability to contain Russia's aggression in Europe through building and maintaining a credible deterrence against it.

The military challenge is closely linked with the fundamental **normative challenge** that Russia poses to Europe. If Russia manages, one way or the other, to change borders and expand its territory further at the expense of Ukraine, the core norms of European security are seriously diluted. This would have serious longstanding consequences for the whole of European order. It would open Pandora's box of norm revisionism within Europe and at its borders. If we do not stand for European norms and values and help Ukraine to win this war, the values will erode and start giving way to chaos and law of the strongest. Instead, Europeans need to defend Ukraine's sovereign right to determine its own future free from Russia's terror.

Thirdly, Russia poses a **global challenge** to Europe and the West at large. Russia has labelled all EU member states – perhaps with the partial exception of Hungary – as hostile states, and actively promotes anti-Western narratives through its disinformation and diplomacy. Russia tries to frame its imperialist war of aggression in Ukraine as Russia's anti-hegemonic fight against the US and NATO. Europe needs to reach out to non-European states and counter Russia's false narratives, both for Ukraine's sake and its own.

In conclusion, Europe needs to acknowledge that the Russia problem is an existential and a long-term one. A new European strategy towards Russia needs to stem from realism: Russia will not disintegrate and cease to exist, nor will Russia turn into liberal democracy anytime soon. This means that Europe will need vision, determination and stamina to deal with a long-term confrontation with resurgent Russia.

Action Plan

To address the military challenge and to strengthen wider European stability, European states and organisations need to build and maintain credible deterrence against Russia's continuous militarisation and aggression towards its neighbours. This will mean new, more active approach to European defence and defence industrial planning.

To deal with the normative challenge, European states and organisations should stand by European norms and values in Ukraine-related policy processes and negotiations: backing Ukraine's sovereign right to choose its own security arrangements and political direction as well as holding Russia accountable for its war crimes.

To tackle the global challenge, European states and organisations need to reach out to non-European states from equal footing, engage in dialogue and build partnerships, and counter Russia's false narratives more effectively.



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Europe, the Global South and security – Perplexity, perpetuality and parochiality

The return of war to Europe prompted the European Union to draft its Strategic Compass in 2022, outlining how to work towards a more secure Europe in the aftermath of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The policy document mentions Africa, Latin America and Asia as partners for working on common threats. These regions, like Europe, have suffered from great-power competition during the Cold War and could presumptively share the concern for today's increasing rivalry.

The question remains how Europe can engage constructively with key players in these regions, collectively often referred to as the Global South, on security matters in a time when Europe is broadly seen to be losing leverage in many parts of the world. Three interconnected preconditions come to mind if Europe is serious about enhancing security-related cooperation with Global South countries.

First, Europe needs to improve its understanding of the national interests of the countries of the Global South. These countries often very pragmatically pursue their own interest, whether by continuing to cooperate with Russia or through institutional plurality, multi-alignment and simultaneous membership of groupings such as the Quad and BRICS+. Therefore, a key requirement for Europe is a shift away from preachiness and towards a better understanding of what policies these countries consider economically or politically sensible.

The stance on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is a case in point. Europeans, alongside other Western nations, have portrayed the aggression against Ukraine as a watershed moment and a black-and-white issue,

demanding steadfast condemnation from African, Asian, Latin-American and other countries in the South. With a few notable exceptions, countries of the Global South have indeed condemned Russia's breach of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity, for instance, by supporting UN General Assembly resolutions on the matter. However, their traditional policy of balancing or non-alignment has left Europeans perplexed.

Moreover, the uneven level of political understanding in Europe regarding the war in Gaza and the treatment of Palestinians has accentuated rifts and strengthened accusations of double standards and hypocrisy. For example, several Global South countries were present at the Ukraine Peace Summit in June 2024, but refused to sign the concluding communiqué, either because Russia was absent or Israel was present. As Raja Mohan has argued, there seems to be an enduring 'presumption that the rest of the world will march to a Western drum'.

Second, and related, Europe should be more aware of history, particularly the perpetuating colonial legacy that continues to impinge on relations of trust with Global South countries – beyond the Gaza war. One key component of this historical legacy is the perception of the western-created international order as being unfair, resulting in a strong determination among African, Asian and Latin-American states to strengthen their collective voice in policy matters important to them. Reform of the UN system is a core issue. Indeed, international political efforts, such as the UN Summit of the Future, focus on achieving a fairer representation especially for Africa in the UN Security Council, and reforming the architecture of international financial institutions towards 'more equitable

and effective' solutions. The desire to create a fairer and more even-handed international system is a commonality shared with a core idea of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the grouping of newly decolonized countries formed in the aftermath of the Second World War. India, for one, has been a strong proponent of integrating Global South priorities into what it unquestionably sees as a multipolar world. Uniting, empowering and giving a voice to countries from the Global South remains one of India's explicit foreign policy aims.

Third, Europe needs to pay heed to a less parochial view on security, which includes taking sustainable development and its financing seriously. It is a fact that security paradigms and concerns clash to some extent.

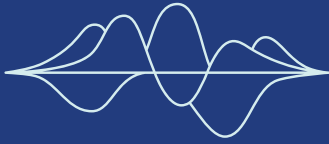
While European countries are raising their defence budgets, seeking to boost production of defence material, and discussing procurement due to inter-state aggression on their continent, many countries in the South grapple with newer or different security concerns. In addition to existing hard security concerns, countries of Global South regions are focused on lifting people out of poverty and providing infrastructure for a better future. While security for Europe implies deciding its own destiny and sovereignty, security in Africa, Asia and Latin America increasingly means dealing with climate change effects, food insecurity, disease outbreaks, or violent extremism. Human-centred or sustainable security cannot be ignored, a fact that partners elsewhere should be mindful of.

Action Plan

Europe needs to enhance dialogue with the Global South in order to address the perception gap. It should move from preachiness to profound conversations on how to create equal partnerships and address mutually important issues and shared interests.

The EU and its member states should use their influence to make international institutions, including the UN Security Council, more inclusive through equitable representation. This could ensure continued legitimacy and contribute to bridging the perception gap.

In view of the interlinked nature of security and development, the EU must support countries of the Global South on their path towards sustainable development, both in international arenas and through flexible, issue-based development partnerships.



ABOUT HSF

Helsinki Security Forum (HSF) brings together foreign policy experts and decision-makers to discuss topical issues related to international security and defence policy questions from a Northern European perspective. HSF is organised by the Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA).

In its third year, the annual Helsinki Security Forum remains topical, continuing to address the pressing issues of our time and our region. Established by FIIA in 2022, HSF has become an important platform for providing a comprehensive perspective on national and international security, as well as for discussions on European security architecture, transatlantic defence capabilities, emerging technologies and hybrid threats, and climate security and critical infrastructure.

HSF is a high-level, invitational event, bringing together over 200 decision-makers, experts, and practitioners relevant to international security and the changing theme of each year. HSF contributes to a global network of security conferences, and spotlights issues of international security that are especially pertinent to Finland. President of the Republic of Finland, Alexander Stubb, acts as patron of Helsinki Security Forum 2024.

HSF 2024 is organised with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, the Ministry of Defence of Finland, the City of Helsinki, Patria, NATO, Fortum, Lockheed Martin, HybridCoE and IQM.

ABOUT FIIA

The Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA) is an independent research institute that works in connection with the Finnish Parliament. The Institute produces high-quality academic research on a broad range of topics related to international relations, security, the global economy and the European Union.

FIIA'S PRINCIPAL TASKS ARE TO

- » **conduct academic research**
- » **support political decision-making**
- » **participate in public debate**

FIIA supports political decision-making by producing research of a high academic standard and producing analysis for public use. The institute's staff take an active role in public debate on international affairs, sharing their expertise and providing commentary on the rapidly changing global order. These times of radical uncertainty have underscored the importance of FIIA's role as a source of reliable, evidence-based analysis.

From 1961 to 2006, FIIA functioned as an independent research institute run by a private foundation. In 2006, the Institute was established by the Parliament of Finland in its centennial plenum. The Parliament provides funding for the primary operations of the Institute. FIIA is autonomous in its research activities and is governed by a nine-member board, assisted by an advisory council and a scientific advisory council.

PARTNERS



Ministry for Foreign
Affairs of Finland

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, together with approximately one hundred diplomatic and consular missions abroad, promotes the security and welfare of Finland and the Finns, and works for a secure and fair world.



Puolustusministeriö
Försvarsministeriet
Ministry of Defence

As one of the Ministries of the Finnish Government and leading authority in the area of national defence, **the Ministry of Defence** is in charge of national defence policy, provides guidance to the development of defence capability, directs international defence cooperation and coordinates total defence.



Helsinki is a clean, stable and secure capital with a very high standard of living and welfare. It is a compact city that is known for its unique combination of urban culture and the calm of nature.

It is Helsinki's goal to be a city where residential areas have no significant socio-economic differences, meaning that it is possible to live safely and comfortably everywhere, in neighbourhoods with distinctive identities. As the capital of Finland, Helsinki promotes security and the residents' experiences of safety in close cooperation with the regional and national authorities.

Helsinki is a city for all, a place for good life.

Patria



Patria is a modern and international defence and technology company with over 100 years of experience. Patria's mission is to give its customers confidence in all conditions, and the vision is to be the #1 partner for critical operations on land, sea and air. Patria has several locations including Finland, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, the Netherlands, Estonia, Latvia and Spain. Patria is owned by the State of Finland (50.1%) and Norwegian Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace AS (49.9%).

NATO's purpose is to guarantee the freedom and security of its members through political and military means. Politically, it promotes democratic values, enabling members to consult, cooperate, and build trust on defence and security issues to prevent conflict. Militarily, NATO is committed to peaceful dispute resolution but can undertake crisis-management operations if diplomacy fails. These operations are carried out under NATO's collective defence clause, Article 5, or a UN mandate, often with international cooperation.

Fortum is a Nordic energy company. As one of the cleanest energy producers in Europe, Fortum's actions are guided by ambitious environmental targets. The organisation generates and delivers clean energy reliably and helps industries to decarbonise their processes and grow. The core operations in the Nordics comprise of efficient, CO2-free power generation as well as reliable supply of electricity and district heat to private and business customers.



Lockheed Martin is a global defence technology company driving innovation and advancing scientific discovery. Its all-domain mission solutions and 21st Century Security vision accelerate the delivery of transformative technologies to ensure that those it serves always stay ahead of ready.



Hybrid CoE is an international, autonomous network-based organisation promoting a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to countering hybrid threats. Cooperating closely with the EU and NATO, Hybrid CoE builds its 36 Participating States' capabilities to counter hybrid threats. The Centre is unique in the sense that it is the only actor having both the EU and NATO work and conduct exercises together, with activities covering a wide range of domains from civil to military, and from hostile influencing to hybrid warfare.



IQM is a global leader in designing, building, and selling superconducting quantum computers. IQM provides both on-premises full-stack quantum computers and a cloud platform to access its computers anywhere in the world.

IQM customers include the leading supercomputing centres, enterprises, and research labs which have full access to IQM's software and hardware. IQM has over 280 employees with offices in Espoo, Munich, Paris, Warsaw, Madrid, Singapore, and Palo Alto.

