

Please, use me! The European Defence Agency: convincing Member States to reinforce its role

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Abstract

The European Defence Agency (EDA) was created in 2004. Unsurprisingly for a Council's Agency working in the area of military capability development, it is deeply dependent on Member States and has very limited control over its own destiny. It can achieve some results if Member States do not oppose the EDA's proposal, but for the most crucial aspects, the EDA needs the active support of Member States. This thesis tries to understand how the EDA is using the idea of *Pooling & Sharing* to convince Member States to reinforce its role and therefore create a new path in defence policy. This new path, the *cooperation path*, aims at changing the way Member States approach their national defence policies, making European defence cooperation the rule and not the exception. If such a change occurs, the role given to the EDA by the Member States would be reinforced. But this would also change the way each Member State considers its national defence policy.

Therefore the EDA tries to convince Member States that cooperation can provide significant savings while enhancing military capabilities and not jeopardizing States' sovereignty. If the EDA is successful in this attempt, Member States are likely to task the EDA to take actions that would benefit the EDA, Member States, Common Security and Defence Policy, and the European Union as a whole.