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European defence policy changes in response to Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine: a 'wake-up call' in practice?

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine would be expected to constitute an external shock sufficient to cause a dramatic transformation of the defence policies of European countries. Political leaders have frequently referred to this critical event as a 'wake-up call for Europe'. Yet, defence policy experts generally suggest that this perceived sense of urgency has not yet translated into a transformative development of European defence integration. Research indicates that defence policy remains primarily a matter of national importance. However, a comprehensive overview of the changes in the EU member states' and European NATO allies' national defence policies after February 2022 has not yet been compiled. This article aims to address this gap in empirical knowledge by triangulating the results of expert interviews with document analysis to assess changes in European defence policies on three dimensions: (1) European defence budgets and equipment investments, (2) the objectives of European defence policies and (3) defence cooperation among European states. Subsequently, it builds on literature on Foreign Policy Change and NATO burden-sharing to develop a theoretical framework aimed at explaining the (varying) impact of Russia's war against Ukraine on European defence policies.

What discipline or branch of humanities or social sciences do you identify yourself with?

Political Science, International and European Studies

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No, I am submitting a Closed Panel abstract

Are you a PhD student or early-career researcher?

Yes

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