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Which Defense Union?

Determining the causal impact of policy design on public preferences for European Defense Union alternatives through a randomized conjoint experiment in 5 western- European countries.

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Abstract

Prior to the 2022 Russian Invasion of Ukraine, the European Union was beginning to make initial steps in integrating the defense capabilities of its member states. The ambition was to incrementally achieve what French President Emmanuel Macron had labeled 'strategic autonomy'. The Russian invasion of Ukraine exposed the lack of preparedness of western EU member states in front of a serious military threat. The war has so far emphasized the essential role still played by NATO as a guarantor of security in Europe, while undermining the credibility of incremental approaches to a Europeanization of defense achieved through the progressive expansion of pre-war initiatives. Yet, from production to capabilities to strategic thinking, the war has also identified the critical bottlenecks of European defense, and has created a new momentum for defense integration that qualitatively differs from previous initiatives in the field. However, the political feasibility of such programmes remain disputed, as any EU-wide approach to defense will entail both additional financial costs and a share of responsibilities and sovereignty on the matter. Furthermore, any such policy design is inherently multidimensional, differing over scope and level, governance, source of financing among other dimensions. To determine public support for European security cooperation, we conduct the first conjoint experiment ever fielded on public support for alternative defense union designs. We field a pre-registered, randomized conjoint experiment on a highly representative sample of the French, German, Italian, Dutch and Spanish population in November 2022. This multidimensional conjoint experiment allows us to determine the causal link between policy features of potential defense pacts, and public support or opposition to such policy. Our results show that policy packages meeting the most support require higher levels of ambition, joint EU-level governance, joint purchases of military equipment through joint procurement, and progressive taxation increases as the preferred form of financing. All in all, our results not only show that there is considerable cross-border support for defense integration in western Europe, but also that citizens in different western European countries have generally converging preferences regarding the actual design of such policy, indicating that a compromise policy is feasible and publicly supported. Furthermore, our results support ongoing research on the nature of European solidarity at times of crisis, suggesting that European citizens are willing to support the creation of joint institutions and policies to face issues of common concern, and therefore indicating that major crises open important windows of opportunity to re-shape EU-level policies and institutions.

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1. Introduction

The member states of the European Union (EU) have been discussing how to proceed with cooperation in the field of security since the 1950s. When the European Economic Community (EEC) evolved into the European Union in the Treaty of Maastricht, the EU extended its reach into Foreign Policy as well as Defense and Security Policy, acting as an intergovernmental forum to reach and enact decisions (see Hofmann, 2013 for an extensive discussion). The EU's role in defense and security has always remained complementary and largely subordinated to individual member state actions, bilateral or multilateral cooperation initiatives, and most importantly NATO, which remains the principal guarantor of collective defense in the European continent. Still, the EU has progressively attempted to build the foundations for autonomous capabilities in the defense sector, progressively absorbing the competences of the earlier Western European Union (WEU), a separate defense organization enshrining a mutual defense clause whose competences were progressively embedded in the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), leading to the WEU's termination in 2011. Under the CSDP, a number of small defense experiments were initiated, falling short of more fundamental steps towards a proper European army. When the former US President Donald Trump started to put into doubt the American commitment to the defense of Europe, the EU member states activated a clause in the Treaty on the European Union allowing for stronger EU-level defense capabilities, launching a Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) in the field of defense among 25 member states, building legal bases for training and joint procurement. Finally, on May 4th, 2023 the Commission proposed to start a limited joint procurement of ammunitions in support of Ukraine (Commission, 2023), starting to use EU budgets to develop a genuine EU military industrial base.

These initial steps in joint EU defense notwithstanding, the Russian invasion of Ukraine weakened the position of the EU as a credible and independent security provider in the aftermaths of the invasion. Divisions among EU member states regarding the political line to be taken vis à vis Russia

and the provision of military aid to Ukraine have underscored the weaknesses of existing EU structures for foreign and defense policy; simultaneously, the Russian invasion of Ukraine demonstrated the centrality of NATO in the defense of Europe, since it quickly became apparent that, without NATO and the US commitment underpinning it, not only Ukraine but also some EU member states could have been fallen victim of Russian imperialism.

Still, the EU has not given up its ambition of developing independent defense capabilities that would work alongside and within NATO. While prior to the war four member states remained committed to neutrality, complicating the relationship between NATO and the EU, the Russian invasion of Ukraine prompted Sweden and Finland to seek NATO membership. While this further emphasizes the centrality of NATO in the security architecture of Europe, it also simplifies the interactions between the two partially overlapping institutions often linked by intertwined 'chessboard politics' (Hofmann, 2009, 2011), provided that only Austria and Ireland are now members of the EU only. The EU, for its part, has initiated works to step up its own capabilities in response to the war. In March 2022 it launched its 'strategic compass', an encompassing defense initiative; EU-level instruments like the European Peace Facility (one of the tools that some have seen as responding to a neofunctionalist logic of EU-level competences expansion—see Bergmann, 2019) have been used to support the scaling of ammunition production for Ukraine; and broad discussions have started on expanding joint instruments involving a widened public procurement of military equipment and the expansion of EU-level military instruments (European External Action Service, 2022). Defense integration on this scale is an unprecedented step for the European Union. Not only does defense remain one of the key features of national sovereignty that, according to the point of view of the German Federal Constitutional Court, must remain under control of the nation states (Bundesverfassungsgericht, 2009: 252); from a theoretical standpoint (see, for instance, Schmitter, 1970) military capabilities are 'high politics' whose integration on a supranational scale are deemed to be controversial, generating conflict. Similarly, Genschel and Jachtefuchs (2016) identify military capabilities as a core state power defining and enabling sovereignty. In this context, concerns over legitimacy and public support are essential (Galantino, 2015), and in fact Hooghe and Marks (2009) had warned that integration in high politics could foster Euroscepticism, as political entrepreneurs exploit latent national allegiances and identities to oppose European integration (see Kuhn & Nicoli, 2020 for a review of the relationship between identities and integration of core state powers). Indeed, as predicted by postfunctionalists, Eurosceptic parties and leaders have often branded the fear of an

EU army to mobilize Eurosceptic votes; for instance Önnerfors and Krouwel (2021) identify several conspiracy narratives associated with the formation of EU armies or military forces; similarly, Ramswell (2017) identifies the claim that the EU would 'soon' create an army as a key point of the Leave campaign in the Brexit referendum. Similarly, Genschel et al. (2023) suggest that lack of public support is one of the reasons the EU did not integrate faster in front of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. All in all, therefore, understanding public preferences and the impact of different policy design on public support or opposition is critical to ensure the legitimacy of any further integration in the military field.

Nonetheless, survey evidence on support and opposition for an EU defense union is limited to some observational studies. For instance, the special 2017 Eurobarometer on security and defense found that, notwithstanding a generalized sceptiscism towards defense spending, 75% of respondents are in favour of EU cooperation in the security sector, and over 50% are in favour of an EU army; a related 2018 standard Eurobarometer found over 60% of support for defense cooperation (European Parliament, 2019). Accordingly, Schilde et al. (2019) argue that this support is stable or increasing over time, and rather than representing a mere 'permissive consensus', it identifies genuine support for EU-level integration of military capabilities, while Irondelle et al. (2015) argue that national strategic cultures are key determinants of different country perceptions over the opportunity of a European army.

Furthermore, a number of works have shown that this support is in fact, conditional to the presence of crises. De Vreese and Kandyla (2009) show that support for EU-level security policy is higher when the EU is presented under threat; Graf (2020) finds that external threats such as Russian expansionism strongly increase support for a European army. Importantly, these observational survey studies remain in stark contrast with previous evidence discussing the key role played by scare campaigns over EU military capabilities in shaping Euroscepticism, and other research suggesting that military and foreign policy domains are seen by the public as inherently separate. For instance, Peters (2014) finds that even though Europeans generally support a common foreign policy, they are much less in favour of a European army. Furthermore, this literature does not explore what is meant by 'European army' even though there are many different options for such policy which for example vary over programme scope and level, form of governance and the source of financing.

Despite the generally inconclusive results of the literature, to our knowledge no other survey experiment has been fielded to date to explore preferences for alternative defense union designs. This

original, representative survey experiment therefore makes both a theoretical and an empirical contribution. Theoretically, we show that public support for 'emergency policies' remain high in the European Union at times of crisis, even in fields uncontroversially qualified as 'high politics', providing further evidence that crises defuse the 'constraining dissensus' of mass politics (Hooghe and Marks, 2009) towards European integration. Empirically, we show that high levels of support exist for a broad range of defense union designs, identifying how different policy characteristics independently relate to such public support.

To determine public support for a European defense union, we conduct a randomized conjoint experiment on a highly representative sample of 750 individuals of the French, German, Italian, Dutch and Spanish population in November 2022.[2] In each of these countries, we administer to the respondents a repeated multifactorial conjoint experiment testing, overall, nearly 200 different defense union designs. This multidimensional conjoint experiment allows us to determine the causal link between specific policy features of potential defense union designs, and public support or opposition to such policy.

Our results show that policy packages meeting the most support require higher levels of ambition, joint EU-level governance, joint purchases and procurement, and progressive taxation as a form of financing. All in all, our results not only show that there is considerable cross-border support for European defense, but also that citizens in different western European countries have generally converging preferences regarding the actual design of such policy, indicating that a compromise policy is feasible and publicly supported. Furthermore, our result corroborate and align with previous work (for instance, De Vreese & Kandyla, 2009; Graf, 2020) , suggesting that European citizens are willing to support the creation of joint defense institutions. This is especially the case at times of heightened collective risk, indicating that major crises open important windows of opportunity to re-shape EU-level defense.

[2] Country selection was guided by multiple concerns. First, the survey was designed to cover both energy security and military security, so country selection should have reflected both field priorities. Second, all countries had to be part of NATO, to simplify the experimental design as discussed later. This led us to exclude Denmark and Finland which were not yet part of NATO as of survey contracting in May 2022. Finally, since the survey is part of a long-term panel study linking individuals over several years, the country selection was constrained by previous waves' data availability, which unfortunately led to the exclusion of countries that would have otherwise been ideal for this experiment, such as Poland, Lithuania, or Romania. We are aware of this limitation by qualifying our claims to Western Europe only, and we further elaborate on this limitation in the conclusions.

Against this background, this paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 discusses the fundamental features of potential defense union designs. Section 3 discusses how these have been implemented in our conjoint experiment; section 4 presents overall results, as well as country-specific results; the conclusions draw main theoretical and policy implications of this original experiment, and discuss the limitations of this setup.

2. *The Design of a European defense union*

While the European Union is still far from having established a genuine supranational army and a proper European defense sector, it has made substantial advances since the establishment of the Common Security and Defense Policy with the launch of the Permanent Structured Cooperation in 2017, and with the strategic compass in 2022. Rather than a single, coherent EU-level policy, European initiatives in the field of defense remain fragmented across several programmes, covering multiple dimensions and mechanisms of collective action. This dispersion, which the PESCO and the Strategic Compass have only started to narrow, means that the preferences for alternative designs of a potential European defense union are naturally suited to be explored by means of conjoint experiments. Conjoint experiments are a class of survey experiment that is optimized for the assessment of multidimensional policies, enabling the researcher to identify the specific causal impact of certain features on support or opposition for the policy package as a whole. To do so, we need first to 'deconstruct' the main features of a policy package into its constitutent dimensions, and then determine alternative variants (or options) for each of the dimensions. Critical to the design of conjoint experiments is to find a balance between fidelity to the actual policy design, responsiveness to theoretical priors and existing knowledge on the distribution of preferences, and feasibility of the task for the respondents. In turn, complex policy debates need to be simplified by focusing on a feasible number of constituent policy dimensions. These represent simplified versions of the options discussed in actual policy debates, in terms and forms that survey respondents can understand and relate to.

This requirement has two main implications. First off, it implies that even though multidimensional conjoint experiments are substantially more sophisticated than single-item survey questions (in this experiment, we test nearly 200 possible defense union designs, each marginally different from any other), they still need to simplify the actual policy debate to a certain extent. Second, it implies that not all possible dimensions of a policy can be included in the experiment. When certain dimensions are not included in the experiment, they can be either left out completely, or introduced as 'fixed' characteristics in the introductory text of the experiment. Fixed characteristics are inherent parts of all

policy packages, and therefore we cannot test how having them or not causally impacts policy preferences, although we can observationally determine the level of support from them by looking at the average level of support across all packages. A major element of the existing European security architecture is, in this experiment, considered as one of these fixed characteristics: the relationship between EU-level defense and NATO. We consider that modeling alternative options of EU-NATO relationships as a randomized component of the experiment would have both substantively complicated the overall design, and decreased the adherence of the experiment to the reality of the policy debate, since reducing or eliminating the contribution of NATO to European defense is neither a politically viable option, nor a legally sound one, since the current legal bases for EU defense (art. 42.7 TEU) make clear that NATO remains the anchor of European collective security for its participating member states (art. 42.7 TEU). For these reasons, we specify in the introductory text of the experiment that any EU defense scheme would be to complement, and in addition to, existing NATO cooperation even though the EU itself also includes a solidarity clause and a mutual defense clause.

Furthermore, to ensure that the experiment remains cognitively manageable by respondents, the number of possible policy dimensions is limited. Research on policy conjoint experiments rarely makes use of more than six policy dimensions. The majority of recent policy conjoint experiments on EU issues have used between three (Beetsma et al., 2021) and six dimensions (Beetsma et al., 2022; Burgoon et al., 2022; Vandenbroucke et al., 2018). We identify six key dimensions of European defense policies: **scope and level, financing, governance, opt-outs, joint procurement and size.** For each of these dimensions, we provide alternative options which randomly vary; the rationale for these alternatives is discussed below. Similarly, we do not randomly vary the presence or absence of mutual defense clauses, since these are covered both by NATO art. 5, and –to a lesser extent –by the EU's solidarity clause. The full text of the introductory framing, in different languages, is presented in Appendix 1. The precise description of each dimension is provided in table 1 below.

The **scope and level dimension** models the extent to which the programme introduces EU level instruments, as opposed to providing EU support for national instruments. Through this dimension, we are therefore able to assess to what extent citizens support either a proper new European instrument, or rather new European support for national instruments. To do so, we administer to respondents packages containing one of two alternatives for this dimension: either constituting a new European military force, or co-financing the improvement and expansion of national military forces.

These dimensions do not exactly reproduce the content of the policy debate, but rather simplify it into two clear 'ideal-typical' alternatives to explore which one best reflects public preferences. In reality, the EU has pursued both enhancement of national forces and development of supranational forces simultaneously. The existing legal bases for defense cooperation in the EU (art. 42 TEU and following) allow both for coordination of national forces, and for the creation of supranational or international ones, both ad-hoc for specific missions, or on a permanent basis. Before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, these forces took two forms. First off, some member states established ad-hoc, intergovernmental military units that could be used for EU and NATO defense. These are dubbed 'Eurocorps', and remain fully under intergovernmental control. The second pillar of existing joint European capabilities are the European Battlegroups, ensembled from voluntary national contributions, but under EU control through the Council in case of emergency. Since the activation of PESCO in 2017, the EU has in fact discussed repeatedly whether to reform these structures, maintaining the Commitment no. 12 under the Council Decision (Council of the European Union, 2017) establishing PESCO, which clearly commits member states to participate with long-term allocation of domestic forces into the European Battlegroup formations. Nearly simultaneously, the EU established in 2017 a small 'Military Planning and Conduct Capability', an 'embryonic but symbolic' (Reykers, 2019) military headquarters office originally tasked with managing future EU military operations, which further extended its oversight capabilities to include potential combat operations in 2018. In 2022, as a reaction to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the EU launched a new initiative, labelled 'European Strategic Compass', which introduced a range of new capabilities to be developed at European level. Among other developments (some discussed below when discussing other dimensions), the Strategic Compass proposes the progressive construction of genuine EU level military force, named "Rapid Deployment Capacity" (European External Action Service, 2022), and the further expansion of both size and powers of the EU military headquarters. While these developments mark the beginning of an expansion of the EU's reach in the military domain, the Compass does not represent a change in paradigm; the majority of the initiatives still aim at supporting and bettering national forces, and – in practice— the EU has mostly used its instruments to support national action, for instance through the use of the European Peace Facility to finance the restocking of national weapon stocks depleted by the member states' support to Ukraine. In sum, the scope and level dimension depicts two ideal-typical alternatives to determine which way forward respondents generally prefer, although actual policy decisions will aim at striking a balance (which might vary)

between the establishment of genuine supranational capabilities, and support for the bettering and coordination of national capabilities.

Next, we introduce a **financing dimension**. Since both new EU-level instruments or support for the improvement of national capabilities requires investment, public preferences might vary substantially with respect to which instrument is best to finance the construction of such defense union. The EU has several options in this regard, since at least two instruments with their own budgets already exist. Since 2017, the EU reformed the older Athena mechanism into the European Defense Fund and the European Peace Facility, both aimed at strengthening the EU's action in the defense and foreign policy domain. The former, with a budget of 8 billions, focuses on joint technological development, and targets the European defense industry broadly speaking, although it has been proposed to expand its role to include joint military procurement (European Commission, 2022b). Conversely, the European Peace Facility, established in 2021, has a budget of approximately 5.7 billions and focuses on support for third countries, but in reaction to the Russian aggression on Ukraine, it has been used to restock national weapons stocks depleted by the support provided to Ukraine. Neither of these existing instruments is sufficient on its own to permanently finance an expansion of EU support for existing national assets, or a proper EU-level military force, no matter how limited in size. Hence, in the wake of the war, many have called the EU to establish a fund, parallel to the Resilience and Recovery Facility (RRF), to support further joint expenses. For example, by February 2022 Palacio et al. (2022) had proposed to establish a European Security Facility to support, among others goals, EU weapons programmes. We model the financing dimensions of the experiment to represent several ideal-typical sources of financing, using a language that has proven to be easily understood in previous experiments (see, for instance, Beetsma et al., 2021; Burgoon et al., 2022) while being overall faithful to the cornerstones of the political debate. In addition, it aims to test both substantive policy preferences, and horizontal as well as inter-temporal redistributive preferences of respondents. The dimension has four levels: a progressive taxation increase, whereby extra expenses are paid for by the rich with a 1% tax increase; a flat taxation increase, whereby extra expenses are paid for by a 0.5% tax increase for everyone; a resources reallocation, whereby resources are re-allocated from other public spending areas; and an increase in European level debt (Eurobonds) to be paid for in the future. Importantly, these dimensions are designed to test self-interest as opposed to preferences for redistribution. One option clearly produces costs for all respondents (flat tax increases). One option produces no direct cost for respondents, but might produce indirect costs (re-allocation). One option formally introduces

inter-class redistribution (progressive taxation); while one option introduces inter-temporal redistribution, by means of joint EU debt.

Next, we introduce a dimension exploring **decisional mechanisms** into the experiment. Decisional mechanisms constitute one of the most crucial elements of contention when it comes to supranational military assets. Defense constitutes, by definition, the archetype 'high politics', the ultimate 'core state power' (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs, 2016); issues of defense are an essential element of national sovereignty, and their centrality to national sovereignty is recognized by several national constitution and constitutional courts, for instance the German Bundesverfassungsgericht in its 2009 decision on the Lisbon Treaty (BVerfG, 2009, p. 252). At the core, the debate on the voting rules in Foreign and Security Policy pertains the nature of the European Union as a polity: supporters of unanimity see the EU as a classical intergovernmental organization; those who would like to have majority voting among member states are inspired by the Swiss model of governance, and would like the Union to evolve into a confederation; and finally, federalists would like to have both the Council and the European Parliament involved, extending the ordinary legislative procedure to all fields of policy-making. We represent all three points of view in the experiment, although under the current hybrid, 'sui-generis' EU constitution (which is simultaneously intergovernmental, confederal *and* federal depending on the policy field at hand) both the majority of foreign policy decisions, and defense decisions require, at the political level, unanimity of the member states in the Council. The intergovernmental logic of EU defense cooperation is not limited to the highest political institutions: even the EU military headquarters decide by unanimity of member states delegates. While unanimity protects member states interests, it exposes common policies to potential blackmails by certain member-states. This special protection of member-states interests therefore comes at the cost of efficiency and timeliness of EU-level decisions (Flers et al., 2011), which has led the Commission under leadership from President Von der Leyen and the EU High Representative Borrell to have repeatedly pushed for a change of unanimity rules (Koenig, 2022). Strategic compass does not aim to change that, but to allow subgroups of member states to act by using art. 44.

In sum, governance questions are not secondary in survey experiments, because they speak to the fundamental understanding that respondents have over who should 'have the last word' on European affairs. When modeling governance options, particular care is to be given in striking a balance between respondents' comprehension, fidelity to the public debate, and responsiveness to the different ideal-typical understandings about who should ultimately decide. To do so, we assign to each package one

among three stylized modes of governance representing, in a simplified way, the key ways the European Union works as it has been modelled by theorists. The dimension displays three different levels, corresponding to ideal-typical governance modes. A pure intergovernmental governance mode requires the unanimous consent of states to take a decision. A confederal model requires a majority of the member states to take a decision; a federal model requires both a majority of states, and a majority of the European Parliament.

Fourth, we include in the possible design the opportunity for participating countries **to opt out from common decisions.** Opt-outs have a long history in EU policy design, both at constitutional level (like with Schengen, the Eurozone, or Foreign and Security Policy) and within specific policies. In the case of EU defense, opt-outs have been absolutely critical: for instance, prior to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Denmark had a nominal optout from CSDP, which was reverted with a referendum in 2022; only 25 of the 27 EU member states participate in PESCO; and it is unlikely that any extensive EU military forces would see contributions from countries which have made neutrality as the cornerstone of their foreign policy, such as Ireland or Austria, even though these can contribute ad-hoc to certain missions. To model this, we include a broadly-worded dimension which focuses not on the institutional-level participation in the initiative, but whether a country has the right of opting out from specific decisions within the policy framework. This dimension includes two alternative levels: either countries are allowed to opt out from specific common decisions, or they are not, and must therefore follow the common framework every time a decision is taken.

Fifth, we include a key dimension: whether the packages **should or should not include joint purchases of armaments.** As shown in previous studies (Beetsma et al., 2021) common procurement is typically seen as a way of sharing costs of expensive public investment programmes as well as increasing the bargaining power of the public contracting party vis à vis industrial players. Yet, the joint procurement and purchase of armaments remains one of the most controversial aspects of the debate. On the one hand, substantial gains could be obtained by joining procurement, through monopsony power, reduction of inefficiencies, prevention of under-biddings, and ensuring compatibility of standards. On the other hand, joint procurement might produce costs for countries, since national military industrial complexes are characterized by low competition, high concentration, and presence of strong national 'champions' whose continuity of operations is seen not only as an economic necessity, but as security priority. As a consequence, creating joint procurement of weapons at European level implies a degree of industrial consolidation that is politically controversial. For these

reasons the European Union – while recognizing the centrality of armaments procurement – has been hesitant to push for common purchases, focusing its actions instead on progressively removing the roadblocks preventing the establishment of procurement initiatives in the long term. From this perspective, the Commission has pursued two parallel avenues, covering both "negative" and "positive" integration (see, among others, Hoeffler, 2019). From a regulatory standpoint, it first attempted to ensure that free and fair competition rules apply to national defense procurement, aiming at creating a genuinely European defense market and therefore a Europeanised industrial base. Directive 2009/81/EC aimed at achieving such goal, but the Commission's own assessment of the directive suggests that, even though the Directive "has led to a more than twofold increase in the value of defence and security contracts published EU-wide and awarded, in competition, under rules based on transparency and equal treatment (…) a very significant share of defence procurement expenditure is still made outside the Directive" (European Commission, 2016). Since the report also found that high-value, advanced or strategic systems were those the least covered by the directive, the Commission has strategically invested in narrowing the gap between different national industries by focusing on Research & Development, product development, and technical standards. To this end, Art. 43.4 of the treaty provides for the establishment of a R&D-focused European Defense Agency (EDA). This was further complemented with the European Defense Fund (EDF), established in 2021 with a budget of 8 billion, and tasked with the goal of promoting cross-national industrial cooperation in the development of new technology and defense applications. While both the EDA and the EDF do have funding for supporting acquisitions of certain innovative equipment or technologies developed through their respective funding, they fall short of proper joint procurement of capabilities on the scale. On the onset, the Russian invasion of Ukraine did not deeply affect the member states' calculus in this regard; at the Versailles Summit of 10-11 March 2022, merely weeks after the beginning of the war, EU leaders still only committed to "*develop further incentives to stimulate Member States' collaborative investments in joint projects and joint procurement of defence capabilities"* (Versailles Declaration, 2022: art. 9b, p. 4). The attitude of the European Commission, however, had started to change. In May, as it became apparent that no short term solution to the conflict was in sight, the Commission released an extensive analysis of the capability gaps in the European defense industrial base. In July 2022, the Commission proposed a new regulation establishing an 500 million Euros fund for genuine, EU-level joint procurement via the EU budget, aiming to evolve it into a genuine European Defence Investment Programme in the future (European Commission, 2022a). At the same time, the EDA launched, in November 2022, an initiative to jointly procure and purchase artillery ammunition to

replenish stocks depleted by the member states support to Ukraine (European Defense Agency, 2023). An agreement on this mechanism, that sees EDA as directly responsible for procurement, was reached between 18 member states in March 2023, and expanded to 6 more in April the same year. While still falling short of industry-scale procurement, the 'Collaborative Procurement of Ammunition' project acts as a pilot for joint EU procurement outside of traditional domains of R&D, and therefore represents a genuine –albeit controversial –progress.

In this experiment, we make sense of this very complex institutional trajectory by focusing on the fundamental principle of joint procurement, since other aspects of the policy (for instance, size, financing, governance) are already the focus of other dimensions. Hence, this dimension features two levels- one including joint procurement, and one leaving procurement to countries.

The final dimension of the experiment pertains the **size of the militarize force under the security pact**. The size of the commitments should capture a respondent's overall interest in the presence of a security pact between European countries. The scale of the ambition of the project is deemed to be a key driver of respondents' preferences. Developing alternative options in this dimension is challenging because we need to avoid 'absurd' combinations across all dimensions, but simultaneously we need to keep in mind that the tension between European support for national forces and the construction of proper European forces is already dealt with in the "level" dimension. Hence, we focus this dimension on the size of the force supported, without specifying whether these pertain supported national forces or genuine European ones. Still, to avoid unrealistic combinations, the existing debate on possible EU armed forces drives the description of the attributes for this dimension, since these would be anyway smaller than existing national forces. Hence, we derive the smaller size force (capturing a low level of ambition) from the 2022 European Strategic Compass, the official strategy of the European Union released in March 2022 to set up the bases of a common European intervention force under the control of the European Commission, which we extensively discussed earlier in this paper). Like in the Strategic Compass, we set the size of the common force to 5000 troops and their equipment, a value that would work equally well regardless of whether package combinations include a EU level force or support for national ones under the scope and level dimension. The more ambitious version of the dimension is instead inspired by the current discussions between a subgroup of member-states to develop a European rapid reaction force, currently labelled as Crisis Response Reaction Core, or CROC. CROC has been proposed by French President Emmanuel Macron in 2018, and endorsed by a number of then-current government leaders (such as

Angela Merkel) as well as former leaders (Chirac and Blair among them). The rapid reaction force, indicated as a goal already in 1999, was formally launched as a Permanent Structured Cooperation and it is still currently in development; when deployed, it should include up to 60.000 troops on a non-permanent basis. In the experiment, we use the value of 50.000 troops for our higher-ambition level in the dimension; of the five countries surveyed in the experiment, four participate in CROC (Italy, France, Germany, and Spain) while one does not (the Netherlands). This value is both extremely ambitious for an EU-level force, but also relatively ambitious for national forces, even though it remains well within the existing capabilities of the member states surveyed.

3. Empirical strategy

The conjoint experiment. We test preferences on alternative forms of EU security cooperation by means of a conjoint experiment administered to a representative sample of 750 respondents each in France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain. These countries provide a good variety of western European positions across two key metrics of reference: military projection capabilities (high for France, moderate for Italy and the Netherlands, low for Spain and Germany), and net contributor/recipient position towards EU-level financial instruments[3] (France, Germany and the Netherlands as net contributors, and Italy and Spain as net recipients). Importantly, these countries reflect well the overall Western and Southern European landscape, but they do not reflect the position of central-eastern and northern member states, which play a key role in the provision of security vis à vis Russia. Hence, results on the basis of this sample cannot be generalized to the entire European Union, although they reflect well, we believe, Western-European attitudes.

IPSOS conducted the experimental survey, which drew a representative sample of individuals from each country using six quotas: gender (divided into two categories), education level (divided into three categories), income level (divided into three categories based on actual household income), NUTS-1 population distribution, age (divided into three categories), and profession (divided into ten categories). The sample was initially drawn from individuals who had previously responded to similar surveys in March 2020 and July 2020 in the context of an ongoing but unrelated panel project. To the

[3] While Italy is nominally a net contributor to the standard EU budget, it is also a net recipient of grants under the RRF. Furthermore, it receives a relatively larger share of covert financial support through a palette of various ECB asset purchase programmes, which all in all qualify the country still as a net recipient despite is nominal position vis à vis the standard EU budget.

extent that the sample fell short of the target size, respondents were drawn in such a way that the overall sample was nonetheless representative for the demographic characteristics mentioned above. This sampling method ensured that the survey results were representative of the population and allowed for the analysis of changes in individual attitudes over time.

To begin with, respondents are presented with an introductory text describing the policy and then shown two policy packages side-by-side, each composed by multiple dimensions. The levels (or attributes) for each dimension were derived as discussed from the policy debate but simplified and adapted to be accessible to respondents, while still testing fundamental theoretical debates. Table 1 provides an overview of the dimensions used in the survey.

For each policy package, a level was chosen at random for each dimension, resulting in two randomly generated policy packages displayed side by side. Respondents completed three tasks: first, they indicated which of the two packages they preferred; next, they indicated their level of support or opposition for each package on a 5-point Likert scale. This process was repeated three times, resulting in a total of six packages being evaluated by each respondent. To avoid any ordering biases, the order of dimensions was randomized over respondents, but for single respondents remained constant across all three iterations of the experiment. A screenshot of the survey tasks is provided in Annex 2.

Table 1- the dimensions of the conjoint experiment

Dimensional questions	**Levels:**
SCOPE: **What is the goal of the security pact?**	Jointly finance the improvement of the national armed forces of the member states, each separately Put together some parts of national armed forces, into a novel European army.
FINANCING: **How is the security pact financed?**	By increasing taxes by 0.5%, for everyone in the EU. By increasing taxes by 1%, only for the rich in the EU. By increasing EU public debt, to be repaid in the future. By reallocating national spending on national armed forces.
GOVERNANCE: **How are decisions on common security taken?**	All countries must agree, i.e. one country can block any decision on its own A majority of countries must agree: no country can block a decision on its own Both the majority of countries and a majority of members of the European Parliament must agree.
OPTOUTS: **Is it possible for one country to opt out from certain decisions?**	No- all countries must participate if this is the common decision. Yes- a country can always refuse to participate if it so wishes.
JOINT PURCHASES: **Are there joint purchases as part of the security pact?**	Yes- the EU countries procure and jointly purchase common military equipment. No, every country procures and purchases military equipment on its own.
SIZE:	Enough to support a small unit- about 5000 servicemen and their equipment.

What is the size of the security pact?	Enough to support a large force- about 50.000 servicemen and their equipment.

Methods of analysis—We analysed the experimental data as they were a panel dataset, with each individual policy package evaluation being the unit of observation. Individuals rate six packages and choose between pairs of them independently. To account for within-individual effects, we cluster the standard error by respondent. As the data is purely experimental, we can make strong causal inferences about the impact of policy characteristics on preferences.

In the empirical analysis, we begin by examining the overall support and opposition levels through descriptive figures (figure 1 and 2). We then move on to analyzing aggregate results, followed by country-specific patterns, and comparing specific packages. While we test several regression models to determine the causal effect of the dimension attributes, the results shown below are based on a model using OLS estimators with package choice (whether or not a package has been selected) as the dependent variable. The independent variables are the dimensions of the experiment, allowing us to estimate the causal effect of having or not having a certain policy feature on package preferences. Meanwhile, this model controls for country fixed effects (FEs). Additional models reported in appendix table A1 include a model using only experimental variables, a model including demographic controls (age, education, income) and models using package rating instead of package choice as the dependent variable.

Figure 3 reports the Average Marginal Component Effect (AMCEs), which concisely shows the causal effect of each dimensional level on package choice. Next, we carry out separate estimates for each country. The ensuing country-specific AMCEs are shown in figure 3, while the full results are shown in appendix table A2. Finally, we explore levels of support for certain combinations of particular interest. We focus on a 'minimalist' combination, where dimensions are assigned those attributes with low EU ambition; a 'maximalist' combination, capturing levels of support for the most ambitious EU-level policy combination; and the 'state of the play' combination, which approximates the status quo as of December 2022 as close as possible. These are reported in figure 4.

4. Results

Support and opposition in general. Examining general attitudes towards defense cooperation in Western Europe is a crucial first step in analyzing specific research designs. It is important to understand overall levels of support and opposition, regardless of the specific policy dimensions, to gain a comprehensive

understanding of public sentiment. As demonstrated in Figure 1, approximately 22% of the packages seen by respondents are evaluated negatively or very negatively, while roughly 37% are evaluated favorably or strongly in favor, and around 41% leave the respondents neutral. These findings suggest that there is little opposition to creating a EU-wide security union and it is unlikely to embolden Eurosceptic politicians, as over 80% of respondents are either neutral or in favor of such a union. By taking these general attitudes into account, we can better understand the context in which specific policy proposals are received.

On these grounds, we can also estimate the extent to which fundamental opposition (that is, regardless of policy design) exists against security cooperation. The simple share of rejected packages cannot tell us how fundamental opposition is shaped, because every respondent sees and evaluates multiple packages (so he or she might like some, and dislike others). To explore this further, we analyze respondent-specific patterns, as shown in Figure 2. This figure plots the share of respondents (y-axis) who reject a certain number of packages out of the six they evaluate (x-axis). The greater the number of packages that a respondent rejects, the more fundamental their opposition to the idea of a security union, regardless of its specific policy characteristics. This measure provides insight into the degree of "constraining" and uncompromising opposition towards EU-level policymaking. When respondents reject a greater number of packages, it suggests a more stringent and unyielding attitude towards security cooperation policies, while when fewer packages are rejected, it indicates a more favourable public attitude towards EU-level action. By understanding the level of opposition and the extent to which it is conditioned or not on policy design, we can gain a better understanding of the potential challenges and opportunities for implementing security cooperation policies at the EU level.

As shown in figure 2, fundamental opposition among Western European respondents to a defense union was, in November 2022, extremely limited. Less than 5% of all respondents are against 5 or 6 packages out of the 6 they have seen and evaluated, suggesting that the overwhelming majority of respondents was somewhat satisfied or at least neutral towards at least 50% of the packages they were assigned. While this might be a consequence of the specific historical moment the survey took place in these results are in fact highly consistent with previous figures over policy-specific opposition patterns, which consistently have shown that survey respondents tend to have much more open-minded attitudes when put in front of actual policy alternatives with specific details, as opposed to single-item questions about broad policy areas. In other words, conjoint experiments force respondents to reason on policy design, while single item questions likely activate their 'guts' reaction

against a certain policy field or institution; the latter, therefore, are more efficient in capturing ideology-driven answers, while conjoint experiments allow for a more precise depiction of pre-political policy preferences (Burgoon et al., 2022; Vandenbroucke et al., 2018).

Figure 1- levels of support: share of packages supported or opposed.

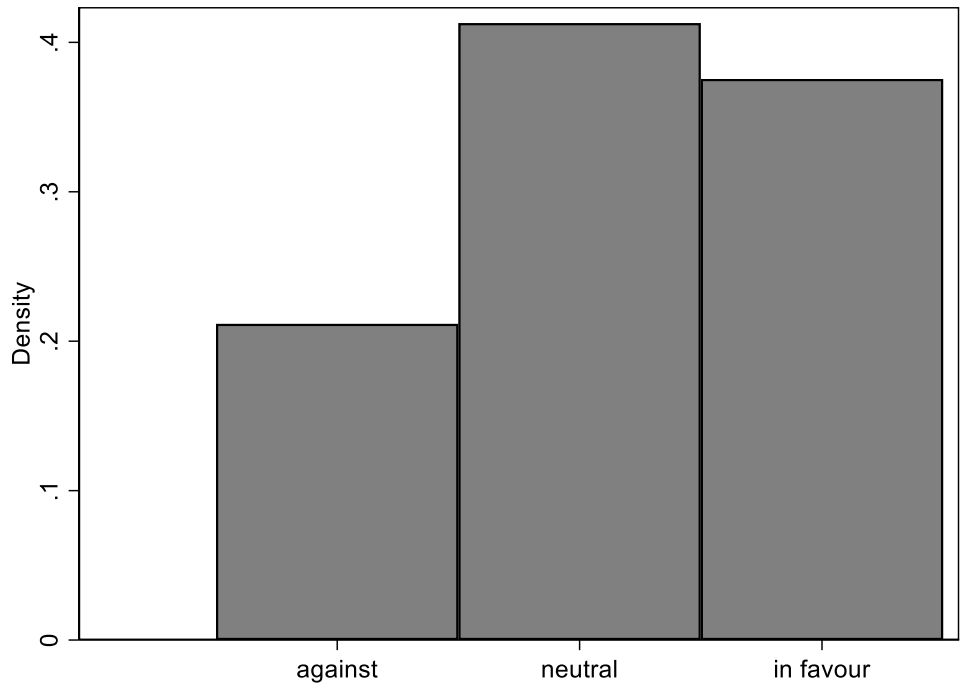
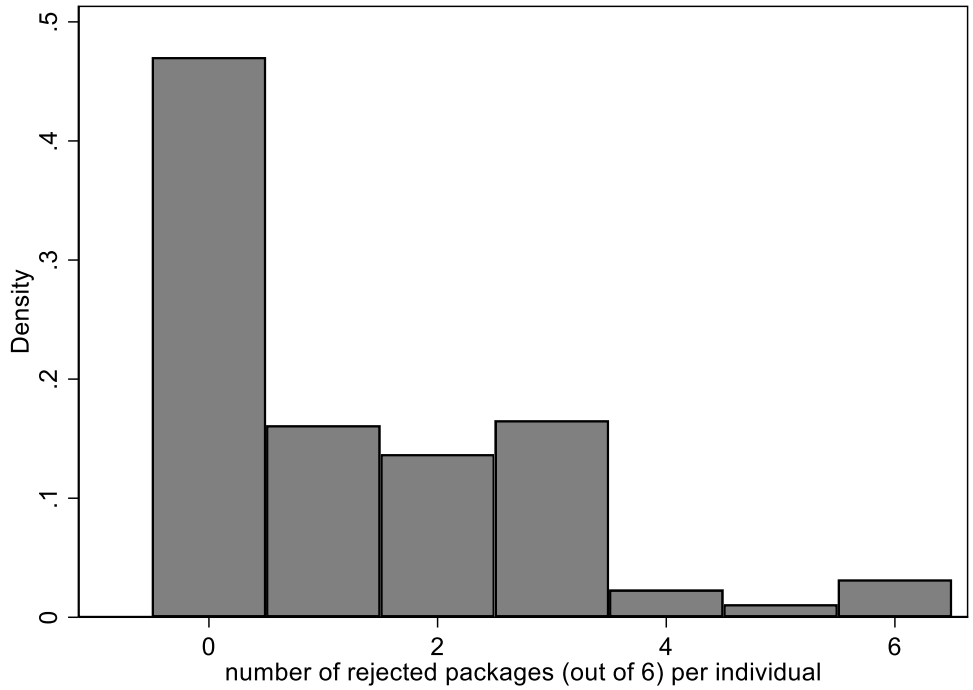


Figure 2- share of rejected packages per individual

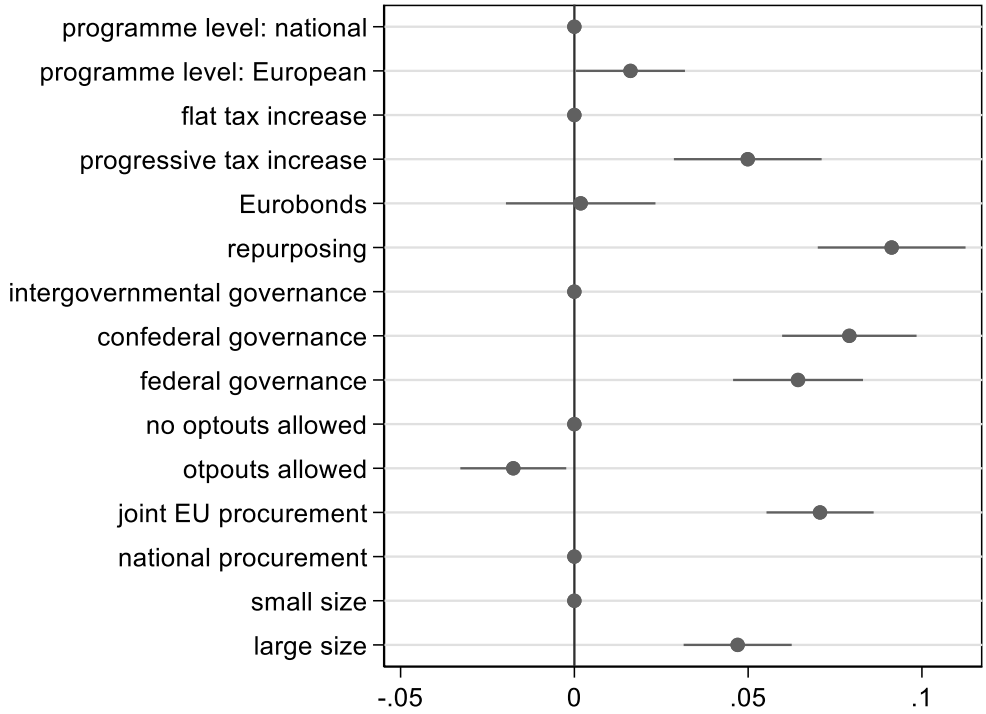


Fundamental opposition is 4.27%

Support or opposition for defense union alternatives. Next, we analyse preferences for defense union designs. We employ a linear model (eq. 1 above) to estimate the causal effect of the various dimensional attributes on the probability of a package being chosen or rejected, controlling for individual-level patterns with clustered SEs.[4] Figure 3 visually presents the purely experimental, baseline model, which allows us to draw solid causal inference regarding the effect of having or not a specific policy feature. The experiment randomly assigns one specific variant for each dimension, and are therefore perfectly independent from each other by construction. Therefore, the coefficients shown horizontally are to be interpreted as the change in probability of choosing a policy package characterized by the specific attribute of a specific dimension, in respect to the baseline alternative, controlling for all other characteristics of the policy at hand (Bansak et al., 2022; Hainmueller et al., 2014).

[4] Table A1 in appendix provides detailed estimates for the baseline experimental models

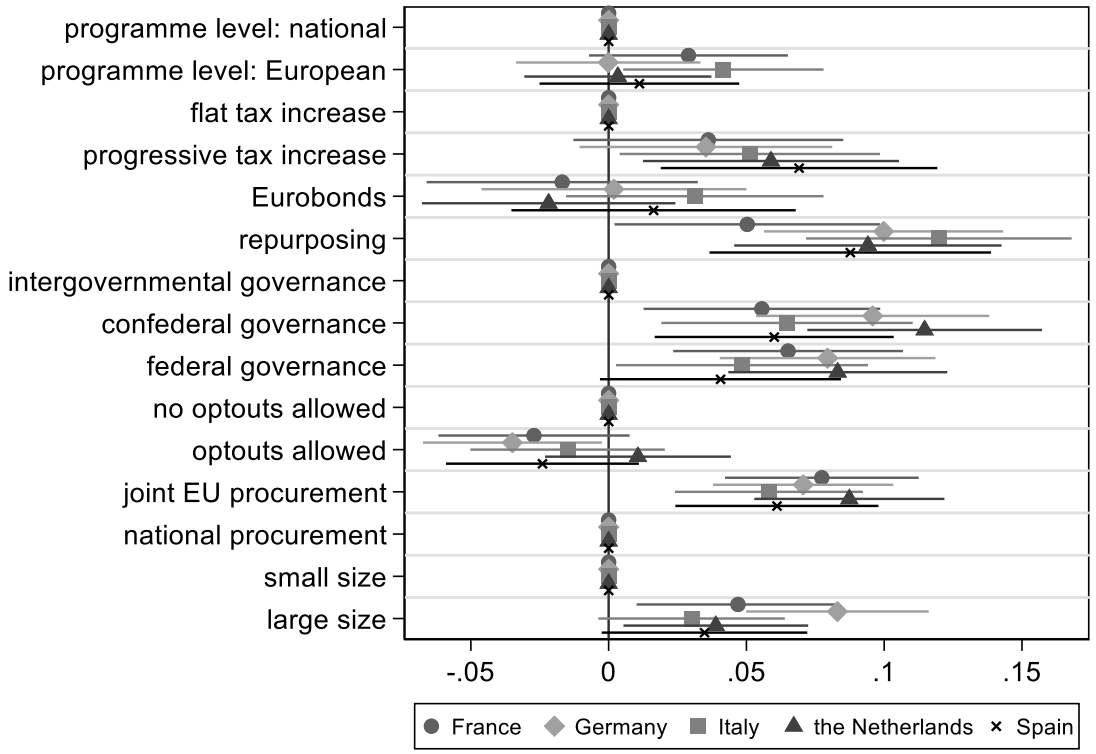
Figure 3- effects of dimensions on Choice among alternative security union designs



Note: estimates are plotted with 95% confidence intervals. Country fixed effects are omitted in this figure.

Generally, sampled respondents prefer ambitious packages at EU level, larger in size, with joint weapons procurement, council-level or even federal governance, and financing provided either by repurposing existing expenditure (hence, moving national expenditure on military matters, or perhaps even directly moving some military units at EU level) or increasing taxation following a progressive tax increase formula. Respondents are quite negative when it comes to allowing country opt-outs, and are indifferent vis à vis expanding the EU borrowing capacity, although public opinion on Eurobonds is quite divergent between countries.

Figure 4- country- specific policy effects

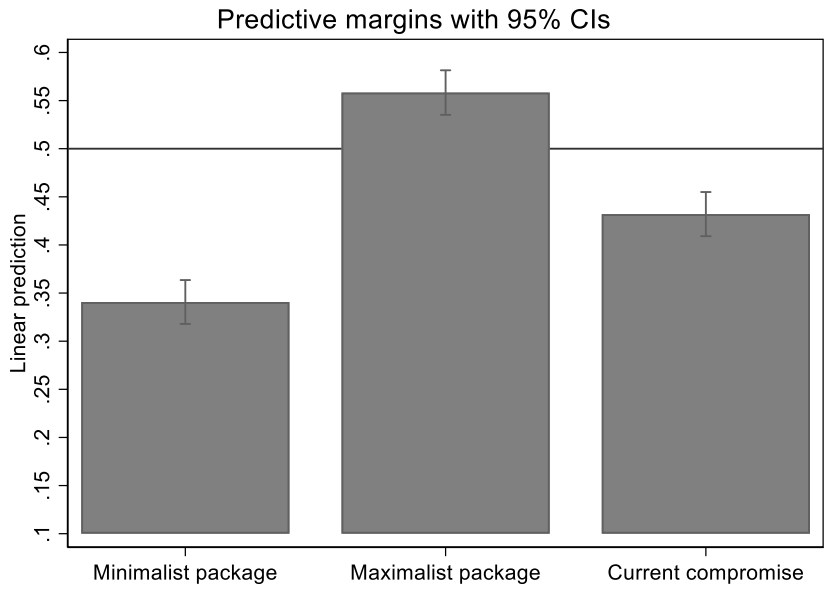


Respondents display generally consistent preferences across the surveyed western-European countries. Respondents in all countries tend on average to prefer larger forces rather than smaller forces, and clearly support repurposing of existing military expenditure, confederal governance and joint procurement. They also somewhat agree on progressive taxation and on federal governance, although in the former case France and Germany are not statistically significantly positive. Italy is the only country to certainly prefer a EU-level instrument rather than support for national instruments, with France following suit; the other countries are generally indifferent. Finally, preferences for Eurobonds are statistically not significantly different from flat taxation in all countries, although Italy and to a lesser extent Spain remain rather positive, while France and the Netherlands rather negative, over the use of joint debt. Finally, the Netherlands is also the only country which is somewhat in favour of allowing optouts, although – like in the case of Eurobonds- these results are far from being significant. All considered, these preferences are quite consistent over time, although the nature of the crisis at hand seems to impact specific preferences. In a similar survey fielded in July 2020 among largely the same respondents (Bremer et al., 2023), German respondents were considerably more negative towards Eurobonds, while Spanish respondents somewhat more positive (while the French,

Italian, and Dutch position was largely the same as in this wave). Yet, it is important to consider that while the proximity of the country-specific average treatment effects signals that there is a generalized convergence of preferences between different countries, these do not start from the same base level of support, since they somewhat differ on their "base" (dimension-agnostic) level of support, with France and Spain with a more baseline support (regardless of the policy content) of about 38%, Italy and Germany of about 35%, and the Netherland of about 33%.

Support for specific policy combinations. Finally, we move to assess both overall as well as country-specific support for selected policy combinations. Since about 200 marginally-differentiated policy combinations are possible, we focus the analysis on specific combinations which are either policy relevant, or theoretically interesting. In particular, we identify three packages for which we seek to identify the probability of support with respect to the alternatives: a 'minimalist' package, in which countries would agree to the minimal alterations to the pre-war setup; a 'maximalist' package, which includes the options that would expand the most EU-level capabilities; and a 'compromise' package, based on the attributes combination coming closest to the existing agreement under the Strategic Compass as well as the joint procurement agreed in March 2023. Each of these packages (and their specific policy content) is specified in figure 4 below. All in all, respondents are much more likely to prefer ambitious packages over non-ambitious ones. The minimalist package has a likelihood of being chosen over the alternatives of only about 35%, while the current compromise has a probability of being chosen of only about 40%; conversely, the maximalist package has a 55% of probability of being chosen in respect to the alternatives not featuring the same attributes.

Figure 5- probability of choice for selected packages



Minimalist package:
- National scope
- Small size
- Intergovernmental governance
- Flat tax increase
- Opt-outs allowed
- No joint procurement

Maximalist package:
- EU scope
- Large size
- Federal governance
- Eurobonds
- Opt-outs not allowed
- Joint procurement

Compromise package:
- National scope
- Small size
- Intergovernmental governance
- Repurposing
- Opt-outs allowed
- No joint procurement

5. Conclusions

In the aftermaths of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the European Union has found itself vulnerable to potential aggression by Russia, and over-reliant on the security umbrella provided by NATO and the American armed forces. While NATO is today an even more important guarantor of European Peace than at any point in the previous decade, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the relative lack of preparedness of the European armies has raised the question of what Europe would do should, one day, the protection offered by the US go vacant. With this in mind, the Council, the European Commission (via the European External Action Service) and certain member states have started a discussion regarding the relaunching of Europe's integration in the security domain. Among many proposals emerged to re-shape European defense, some have advanced the idea of creating genuine armed forces, while others have suggested to put together funds to reform national armies. In truth, any such policy is inherently multidimensional- from governance, to scope, to financing, to solidarity, to the presence of absence of opt-outs, many alternative policy designs are possible. To explore the political feasibility of such designs, we fielded a pre-registered conjoint survey experiment among a highly representative sample of 750 respondents in France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain in November 2022.

The results of the study suggest that creating a EU-wide genuine defense union would probably be welcomed by western Europeans, and most likely would not meet limited 'constraining dissensus' from the public in the west, paving the way to the expansion of existing measures undertaken under existing CSDP initiatives. The level of fundamental opposition to a defense union was also found to be extremely limited, with less than 5% of respondents fundamentally opposed to defense integration as a matter of principle. However, this does not mean that support is unconditional: in fact, the surveyed respondents are very skeptical about unambitious, half-backed solutions that would only marginally change the state of the play. In detail, the experiment shows that respondents do in fact prefer relatively more ambitious policy packages at the EU level, inclusive of joint gas procurement, no veto rights, no opt-outs, financed through repurposing existing expenditure or through increasing progressive taxation.

This said, this experimental study certainly has limitations. First off, we survey a small number of European countries, all of which are located in western Europe. Even though we have good reasons for the country selection, and were faced by budgetary constraints, the study would have benefitted from the inclusion of a central-eastern European country in the sample, not least because these are critical in any discussion of European security. This implies that our results cannot be generalized to the EU as a whole, but to western Europe only; relatedly, the inclusion of CEE countries is likely to change the degree of fundamental opposition to defense integration recorded, and also it is likely to change the relative importance that certain dimensions have in the overall balance of preferred designs.

Second, the survey was fielded in a moment in which security concerns were particularly high among the population due to the very visible effects of the war. While our study can therefore be seen as an empirical corroboration of the idea that crises open opportunities for integration by depowering the 'constraining dissensus' towards European integration, it remains unclear whether these effects can be interpreted as permanent shifts in public preferences, or as temporary fluctuations of support which are deemed to revert back to 'normal' once the crisis is over. While evidence seems to suggest that these effects last over time, policy design needs to carefully account for the possibility that support is indeed temporary and crisis-drive, or risk undermining the long-term legitimacy of the novel institutions. These limitations notwithstanding, our results provide the first experimental evidence regarding public support for the construction of alternative European defense design, and strongly point towards a public preference for more ambitious EU level action to guarantee Europe's long term security.

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7. *Appendix*

Appendix 1: text of the experimental introduction.

"We now would like to draw your attention to the topic of European security. In light of the heightened security tensions in Europe, the Member States of the European Union are discussing how to better ensure European security by means of a European security pact, to complement existing cooperation within NATO. Some say that the member states of the EU would be better off by joining a part of their national armed forces to create some elements of a European army, while others say that common security should simply jointly finance the national armies of the member states, separately. Furthermore, different options exist regarding the size of the common instruments, how decisions are taken, how financing is provided and whether there is a clause of mutual support. This European security agreement can be organized in different ways. Therefore, in the next pages you will be shown alternative options. You will be asked to indicate which options you prefer (or dislike the least), and how much you are in favour or against these proposals. This will be repeated three times.
Note: respondents see the survey in a language of their choice, chosen between French, German, Italian, Dutch, Spanish or Catalan.

Appendix 2a: experiment example (French)

Si vous souhaitez lire de nouveau le texte d'introduction, vous pouvez appuyer ici.

Vous allez maintenant voir deux différentes versions du pacte de sécurité. Pouvez-vous s'il vous plaît nous indiquer pour quel pacte vous avez une préférence et de nous indiquer l'importance que vous attribuez à chacune de ses options.

	Option 1	Option 2
Quel est l'objectif du pacte sécuritaire?	Mettre en commun une partie des différentes forces armées nationales pour créer une armée européenne commune.	Mettre en commun une partie des différentes forces armées nationales pour créer une armée européenne commune.
Comment est-ce que le pacte sécuritaire est financé?	En augmentant les taxes de 1% pour chaque habitant riche de l'Union européenne.	En augmentant les taxes de 0.5% pour chaque habitant de l'Union Européenne
Quelle est la taille du pacte sécuritaire?	Assez pour supporter une petite unité militaire. C'est-à-dire 5000 soldats et leurs équipements.	Assez pour une supporter une grande unité militaire. C'est-à-dire 50.000 soldats et leurs équipements.
Comment sont prises les décisions du pacte sécuritaire?	La décision doit être prise à l'unanimité, c'est-à-dire que la décision ne sera pas acceptée si un pays la refuse.	La majorité des pays et la majorité des députés au Parlement europlen doivent accepter la décision.
Est-ce que ces achats communs font-ils partis du pacte sécuritaire?	Oui, les pays européens peuvent se procurer et acheter conjointement des équipements militaires communs.	Non, chaque pays se procure et achète de lui-même son matériel militaire.
Est-il possible pour un pays d'utiliser son droit de retrait pour certaines décisions?	Non - touts les pays doivent participer si c'est une décision commune.	Oui, un pays peut toujours refuser de participer s'il le souhaite.

Quelle est votre alternative préférée?

- ○ Option 1
- ○ Option 2

A quel point êtes-vous pour ou contre l'option 1 ?

- ○ Tout à fait pour
- ○ Plutôt pour
- ○ Ni pour, ni contre
- ○ Plutôt contre
- ○ Tout à fait contre

A quel point êtes-vous pour ou contre l'option 2 ?

- ○ Tout à fait pour
- ○ Plutôt pour
- ○ Ni pour, ni contre
- ○ Plutôt contre
- ○ Tout à fait contre

Suivant

Appendix 2b: experiment example (German)

Wenn Sie den Einleitungstext noch einmal lesen möchten, können Sie hier klicken.

Sie werden nun zwei mögliche Versionen eines solchen Sicherheitspaktes sehen. Bitte sagen Sie uns, welche Version des Sicherheitspaktes Sie bevorzugen und wie stark Sie jede Option befürworten und ablehnen.

	Option 1	Option 2
Was ist das Ziel des Sicherheitspaktes?	Zusammenführen von Teilen der nationalen Streitkräfte zu einer neuen europäischen Armee.	Zusammenführen von Teilen der nationalen Streitkräfte zu einer neuen europäischen Armee.
Wie werden Entscheidungen im Sicherheitspakt getroffen?	Sowohl die Mehrheit der Länder als auch die Mehrheit der Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlaments müssen zustimmen.	Alle Länder müssen zustimmen, d. h. ein Land kann jede Entscheidung im Alleingang blockieren.
Gibt es gemeinsame Ankäufe als Teil des Sicherheitspaktes?	Ja- EU-Länder beschaffen und erwerben gemeinsam gemeinsame militärische Ausrüstung.	Nein, jedes Land beschafft und erwirbt selbständig militärische Ausrüstung.
Ist es für ein Land möglich, vom Treffen bestimmter Entscheidungen zurückzutreten?	Ja- ein Land kann jederzeit die Teilnahme verweigern, wenn es das so wünscht.	Ja- ein Land kann jederzeit die Teilnahme verweigern, wenn es das so wünscht.
Wie groß ist der Sicherheitspakt?	Genug, um eine kleine Einheit zu versorgen- etwa 5000 Soldaten und ihre Ausrüstung.	Genug, um eine kleine Einheit zu versorgen- etwa 5000 Soldaten und ihre Ausrüstung.
Wie wird der Sicherheitspakt finanziert?	Durch die Erhöhung der öffentlichen Schulden der EU, die in der Zukunft zurückgezahlt werden müssen.	Durch eine Erhöhung der Steuern um 1 %, aber nur für die Reichen in der EU.

Welche der beiden Optionen bevorzugen Sie?

- ○ Option 1
- ○ Option 2

Wie sehr sind Sie für oder gegen Option 1?

- ○ Stark dafür
- ○ Eher dafür
- ○ Weder dafür noch dagegen
- ○ Eher dagegen
- ○ Stark dagegen

Wie sehr sind Sie für oder gegen Option 2?

- ○ Stark dafür
- ○ Eher dafür
- ○ Weder dafür noch dagegen
- ○ Eher dagegen
- ○ Stark dagegen

Weiter

Appendix 2b: experiment example (Italian)

Qualora desideri leggere nuovamente il testo introduttivo, può cliccare qui.

Le verranno ora mostratre due possibii versioni di questo accordo per la sicurezza. La preghiamo di indicare quale versione abbia la sua preferenza, e quanto Lei sia a favore o contrario/a a ciascuna opzione.

	Opzione 1	Opzione 2
Quale è l'obiettivo dell'accordo sulla sicurezza?	Unire una parte delle forze armate nazionali, in un nuovo esercito Europeo.	Unire una parte delle forze armate nazionali, in un nuovo esercito Europeo.
E' possibile per un paese non aderire a certe decisioni?	Si- un paese può sempre rifiutarsi di partecipare se così ritiene.	Si- un paese può sempre rifiutarsi di partecipare se così ritiene.
L'accordo sulla sicurezza include o meno acquisti congiunti?	Si- i paesi UE appaltano e acquistano assieme equipaggiamento militare comune.	Si- i paesi UE appaltano e acquistano assieme equipaggiamento militare comune.
Quali sono le dimensioni dell'accordo sulla sicurezza?	Sufficiente a supportare una piccola unità- circa 5000 uomini e il loro equipaggiamento.	Sufficiente a supportare una forza consistente- circa 50.000 uomini e il loro equipaggiamento.
Come viene finanziato l'accordo sulla sicurezza?	Aumentando la tassazione di 0.5% per tutti i cittadini dell'UE	Utilizzando fondi attualmente spesi nelle forze armate nazionali.
Come vengono prese le decisioni all'interno dell'accordo sulla sicurezza?	Sia una maggioranza dei paesi, che una maggioranza dei membri del Parlamento Europeo, deve essere d'accordo.	Tutti i paesi devono essere daccordo (un singolo paese può bloccare qualsiasi decisione da solo).

Quale preferisce tra queste due opzioni alternative?

- ○ Opzione 1
- ○ Opzione 2

Quanto è in favore o contrario/a all'opzione 1?

- ○ Fortemente favorevole
- ○ Abbastanza favorevole
- ○ Nè favorevole nè contrario/a
- ○ Abbastanza contrario/a
- ○ Fortemente contrario/a

Quanto è in favore o contrario/a all'opzione 2?

- ○ Fortemente favorevole
- ○ Abbastanza favorevole
- ○ Nè favorevole nè contrario/a
- ○ Abbastanza contrario/a
- ○ Fortemente contrario/a

Avanti

Appendix 3: methodological note

This appendix discusses models estimated in addition to the model results reported in the main text. Model 1 is an experimental model that uses OLS estimators, with package choice (whether or not a package has been selected) as the dependent variable. The independent variables are the dimensions of the experiment, allowing us to estimate the causal effect of having or not having a certain policy feature on package preferences, while (i, j, k) indexes the k^{th} package $(k = 1, .., 6)$ presented to individual *I* of country *j*, and ε is the error term (equation 1).[5]

(1)- *baseline model.*

$$OUTCOME_{i,j,k} = \boldsymbol{\beta_1}\, \boldsymbol{SCOPE_{i,j,k}} + \boldsymbol{\beta_2'}\, \boldsymbol{FINANCING_{i,j,k}} + \boldsymbol{\beta_3'}\, \boldsymbol{GOVERNANCE_{i,j,k}} + \boldsymbol{\beta_4'}\, \boldsymbol{OPTOUT_{i,j,k}} + \boldsymbol{\beta_5'}\, \boldsymbol{JOINTPROCUREMENT_{i,j,k}} + \boldsymbol{\beta_6}\, \boldsymbol{SIZE_{i,j,k}} + \varepsilon_{i,j,k}$$

Model 2 expands the baseline model with country fixed effects (Fes), and is hence identical to the model reported in the main text. Model 3 includes a series of demographic controls (age, education, income) in addition to country FEs. Models 4-6 run again specifications 1-3, using package rating rather than package choice.

[5] In appendix 4, we carry out a large variety of robustness checks by testing many alternatives to this baseline specification, for instance by adding / removing controls for respondents attention, by controlling for package ordering, by changing model specifications using logit or random effects panel models, and others.

Appendix 4. Main results

model	**-1**	**-2**	**-3**	**-4**	**-5**	**-6**
VARIABLES	choice (pure experiment)	choice (country FE)	choice (demographics)	support (pure experiment)	support (country FE)	support (demographics)
programme level: European	0.0162**	0.0162**	0.0165**	0.0120*	0.0121*	0.0127
(baseline: national)	(0.00753)	(0.00753)	(0.00798)	(0.00728)	(0.00727)	(0.00775)
financing: progressive taxation	0.0499***	0.0499***	0.0475***	0.00870	0.00889	0.00486
(baseline: flat taxation)	(0.0107)	(0.0107)	(0.0114)	(0.0104)	(0.0104)	(0.0110)
financing: Eurobonds	0.00183	0.00181	-0.000321	-0.00283	-0.00273	-0.00398
	(0.0107)	(0.0107)	(0.0113)	(0.0103)	(0.0103)	(0.0110)
Financing: repurposing existing funds	0.0913***	0.0913***	0.0875***	0.0108	0.0114	0.0153
	(0.0106)	(0.0106)	(0.0113)	(0.0102)	(0.0102)	(0.0109)
decision-making: confederal	0.0791***	0.0791***	0.0751***	0.0349***	0.0349***	0.0352***
(baseline: intergovernmental)	(0.00913)	(0.00913)	(0.00967)	(0.00882)	(0.00882)	(0.00939)
decision-making: federal	0.0644***	0.0644***	0.0639***	0.0105	0.0106	0.00982
	(0.00926)	(0.00926)	(0.00982)	(0.00895)	(0.00894)	(0.00953)
optouts: allowed	-0.0176**	-0.0176**	-0.0175**	-0.00472	-0.00497	-0.00629
(baseline: not allowed)	(0.00753)	(0.00754)	(0.00799)	(0.00728)	(0.00728)	(0.00775)
joint procurement: yes (baseline: no joint procurement)	0.0707***	0.0707***	0.0670***	0.0138*	0.0138*	0.0124
	(0.00753)	(0.00753)	(0.00798)	(0.00728)	(0.00727)	(0.00774)
programme size: large	0.0470***	0.0470***	0.0473***	0.0188***	0.0187**	0.0205***
(baseline: small)	(0.00753)	(0.00753)	(0.00799)	(0.00728)	(0.00728)	(0.00775)
second iteration	0.000782	0.000782	0.000883	-0.0575***	-0.0575***	-0.0609***
(baseline: first iteration)	(0.00922)	(0.00922)	(0.00978)	(0.00891)	(0.00891)	(0.00948)
third iteration	-0.00318	-0.00318	-0.00316	-0.121***	-0.121***	-0.127***
	(0.00922)	(0.00922)	(0.00977)	(0.00891)	(0.00890)	(0.00948)
age (years)			3.14e-05			0.00123***
			(0.000263)			(0.000255)
middle education			-0.000390			0.0127
(baseline: low education)			(0.0106)			(0.0103)
high education			0.00212			0.0305***
			(0.0114)			(0.0111)
income class: middle			-0.00118			0.0172*
(baseline: low)			(0.00938)			(0.00910)
income class: high			0.000280			0.0221**
			(0.0111)			(0.0108)
Germany		-0.00128	-0.00146		0.0183	0.0328***
(baseline: France)		(0.0117)	(0.0122)		(0.0113)	(0.0118)
Italy		-0.000288	-6.23e-05		0.0423***	0.0502***
		(0.0120)	(0.0127)		(0.0116)	(0.0123)
The Netherlands		9.19e-05	0.000307		0.0386***	0.0569***
		(0.0118)	(0.0126)		(0.0114)	(0.0122)
Spain		0.00206	0.00218		0.0470***	0.0697***
		(0.0121)	(0.0130)		(0.0117)	(0.0127)
Constant	0.359***	0.359***	0.362***	0.386***	0.357***	0.268***
	(0.0130)	(0.0151)	(0.0237)	(0.0126)	(0.0145)	(0.0230)
Observations (attention check fails excluded)	17,358	17,358	15,474	17,358	17,358	15,474
R-squared	0.019	0.019	0.017	0.012	0.014	0.018