

INTERSECTION DEMOCRACY, PEACE & SECURITY

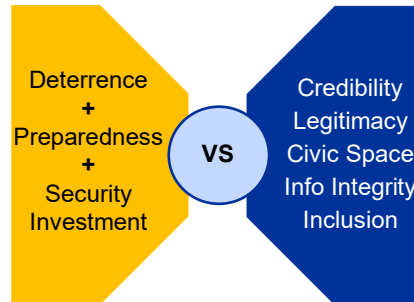
A European Approach Responding to Global Transformation

CHALLENGES & DILEMMAS

Security Turn

-  More defence spending
-  Risk of (over) securitisation
-  Reduced civic space
-  Democracy funding pressures
-  Institutional silos

Policy Dilemmas



Not whether security matters, but how security is defined.

 A narrow focus on defence & deterrence risks sidelining democracy, peacebuilding & conflict prevention.

 A broader conception reinforces all three agendas.

WHY MATTER

-  Democratic resilience is a security issue
-  Hybrid threats target democratic systems directly
-  Social cohesion is a strategic asset
-  Democratic legitimacy strengthens Stability
-  Information integrity & independent media underpins societal resilience
-  Democratic governance contributes to preparedness

“Security ≠ Defence Alone”

COUNTRY CASE STUDIES & PRACTICES

1 Whole-of-Society Resilience

 **Finland.**
“Comprehensive Security Model” → Democratic resilience, media literacy, economic interests, civic participation & trust can be integrated into a whole-of-society security framework.

 **Ukraine.**
Societal resilience & security sector reform → Cooperation between state institutions, local governments, civil society & private actors strengthen resilience.

 **Baltic Region.**
“Baltic Sentry Initiative” → Cross-border cooperation improves resilience & situational awareness.

2 Democratic Mobilisation & Legitimacy

 **Kenya.**
Gen Z mobilisation → Political mobilisation often emerges from human security (inequality, crime, socio-economic) grievances rather than abstract democratic principles. Rights/Issue-based civic movements can act as a bulwark against democratic & peace erosion.

3 Accountability & Governance Reform

 **Moldova.**
Democratic resilience, institutional reform & security objectives can reinforce one another & EU partnership.

 **Armenia.**
Democratic security approach → Governance reform, democratic resilience & security objectives increasingly reinforce one another.

 **Afghanistan.**
Integrated civilian-military approach → Remains necessary but is difficult to operationalise & sustain as coordination often depends on personalities, incentives/political will & institutional culture.

4 Media, Info Integrity, Civic Space & Localisation

 **Central African Republic.**
Trusted local media can support elections, social cohesion & conflict prevention.

 **DRC, Mali, Burkina Faso & Niger.**

Role of community radios in nexus → Maintains civic (including youth & women) dialogue, awareness & knowledge despite political restrictions & conditions of insecurity.

 **Sahel Region.**
Independent local media remain essential democratic infrastructure within shrinking civic space.

APPROACHES & TAKEAWAYS FOR TEAM EUROPE

-  **Democracy, peace & security are increasingly inseparable, but policy & funding frameworks remain fragmented.** Democracy support should be recognised & protected as a strategic asset of security & resilience rather than treated as a separate policy domain.
-  **Democratic legitimacy is not automatic.** Built through inclusion, recognition & citizens lived experience of governance, it forms a critical bridge between democracy & security & requires strong democratic oversight of security policy, mobilisation & investment.
-  **Peacebuilding, prevention and mediation must remain integral to European security approaches.** Applying conflict sensitivity & accountability to security investments. Defence & security spending should be subject to the same standards of impact assessment, accountability & conflict sensitivity as development & peacebuilding interventions.
-  **Hybrid threats increasingly target democratic systems.** Disinformation, foreign interference & polarisation undermine social cohesion, making independent media, info integrity, media literacy & civic preparedness critical components of democratic resilience.
-  **Broadening the concept of security to include human security.** Security cannot be reduced to territorial & defence spending alone; requires diplomacy, tackle inequality, crime & exclusion, apply context-specific approaches to address underlying drivers of instability.
-  **Integrated & whole-of-society approaches are necessary but challenging.** Greater dialogue between democracy, peacebuilding & security actors is needed to reconcile deterrence & preparedness with democratic legitimacy, civic space, information integrity & inclusive governance, while avoiding the risks of excessive securitisation.