On ‘a Continuum with Expansion’? Intelligence Co-operation in Europe in the Early Twenty-first Century

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Abstract

This article argues that during the early twenty-first century, generally we have witnessed greater intelligence co-operation in Europe. Indeed, we can even appropriately discuss the increased ‘regionalisation of intelligence’. Effectively reflecting ‘uneven and combined development’, persistently these co-operative intelligence trends appear to be occurring haphazardly, non-uniformly and at several different rates at the different levels of relations in the various ‘pockets’ of European intelligence co-operation. This article concludes by arguing that overall there is the development of an ever-more complex web consisting of a plethora of various overlapping international intelligence liaison arrangements that collectively provide a form of regional intelligence coverage in Europe. How they overlap is important, accounting for the connections, and notably the ‘disconnects’, that publicly come to our attention.

Keywords

Information sharing; Intelligence co-operation; Liaison; Law Enforcement; Policing; CFSP; CDSP; EUROPOL; EUROJUST

IN THIS ARTICLE, SEVERAL INTERCONNECTED PROPOSITIONS ARE PRESENTED FOR THEIR consideration. Adopting a broad approach that intends to comprehensively survey the highly complex and dynamic terrain of contemporary European intelligence co-operation - and other closely associated activities, which essentially involve any form of critical information flows -, many timely insights seek to be provided. In its main, this article argues that during the early twenty-first century, generally we have witnessed greater intelligence co-operation in Europe. Indeed, when examining wider trends, we can even appropriately discuss the increased ‘regionalisation of intelligence’.

The enhanced intelligence co-operation in Europe has been most focussed on the issue of counter-terrorism. This was catalysed especially in the wake of high-profile terrorist atrocities - notably the 11 March 2004 Madrid attacks and the 7 July 2005 London bombings.1 Other issues that have spurred closer regional intelligence and security co-operation, such as confronting transnational ‘organised crime’, civil protection and crisis

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man­age­ment con­cerns, have also formed impor­tant pri­or­i­ties. These fac­tors equa­ly should not be more over­looked. 2 This is an ap­proach that also largely chimes, but not ex­clu­sively, with the ‘Copen­hagen School’ in se­cu­ri­ty stud­ies; par­ticu­larly where there is an em­phasis on ‘wid­en­ing’ con­cept­ual lenses so that anal­ysis goes bey­ond mer­ely fo­cu­sing on ‘tradi­tion­al/classi­cal’, strongly ‘Cold War era-as­so­ci­ated’, and solely ‘mil­i­tary-orien­ta­tion­ed’ se­cu­ri­ty con­cerns. 3

When taken to­gether, per­sistently the co-op­er­a­tive in­tel­li­gence trends (known in the parlance of the in­ter­nal­ity world as ‘liaison’) effec­tively re­flect the con­di­tion of ‘une­ven and com­bined de­vel­op­ment’. They are occur­ring non-uniform­ly, and in their work, along with their evolu­tion, they are un­der­way at sev­eral differ­ent rates of de­vel­op­ment. This is par­ticu­larly marked at the dif­fer­ent ‘lev­els’ of rela­tions in the vari­ous ‘pockets’ of Eu­ro­pean co-op­er­a­tive in­tel­li­gence ac­tiv­i­ty. High com­plex­ity is man­i­fest. 4

U­lt­i­mately, this ar­ticle con­clu­des by ar­gu­ing that over­all in Eu­ro­pe there is the de­vel­op­ment of an ever-more com­plex web con­sist­ing of a pleth­ora of vari­ously over­lap­ping in­ter­na­tional in­tel­li­gence lia­ison ar­ran­gements. Col­lect­ively, these pro­vide a for­m of re­gional in­tel­li­gence cov­er­age and in­tel­li­gence and se­cu­ri­ty reach, re­sult­ing in the de­li­very and pro­duc­tion of ef­fects and out­comes that can, in turn, today, be re­garded as be­ing gen­er­ally satis­fac­tory. How the ar­ran­gements and their as­soc­i­ated net­works o­ver­lap and com­ple­ment one an­other is im­portant, ac­count­ing for the con­ne­c­tions, and no­tably the ‘dis­con­nects’, that pub­licly come to our at­ten­tion. Room for tid­ying re­mains.

The de­vel­op­ments are es­sentially on ‘a con­tinuum with ex­pan­sion’. But as ever when work­ing in the ‘sensitive’ and sligh­ly ‘fenced-off’ in­tel­li­gence world, and in­deed when re­search­ing it, im­port­ant cave­ats re­main. Dis­tinct op­er­a­tional pa­ram­e­ters and lim­i­ta­tions there­fore con­tinue to fea­ture in a dom­i­nant man­ner, but es­sen­tially they do not o­ver­whelm prac­ti­cally.

Ex­am­in­ing this sub­ject

A wider con­cern can be read­i­ly ar­ti­cu­lated. This con­sid­er­ation es­pe­cially ac­counts for why the sub­ject un­der-ex­am­i­na­tion in this ar­ticle has much con­tem­po­rary rele­vance and why it

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2 See, e.g., ‘A Secure Europe in a Better World’, European Security Strategy (ESS) (Brussels: European Union, 12 December 2003); ‘Provid­ing Se­cu­rity in a Chang­ing World’, Report on the Im­ple­men­ta­tion of the Eu­ro­pean Security Strate­gy - S407/08 (Brussels: EU, 11 De­cember 2008); ‘sub-strate­gies’, e.g., ‘Fight against the pro­lif­er­a­tion of wea­pons of mas­t de­struc­tion’, EU stra­te­gy against pro­lif­er­a­tion of Weapons of Mas­t Destru­ction (Brussels: 10 De­cember 2003); The Euro­pean Union Counter-Terror­ism Strate­gy (Brussels: Eu­ro­pean Union, 30 No­vem­ber 2005); EU In­ternal Se­cu­ri­ty Strate­gy (Brussels: EU, 25 Fe­bru­ary 2010); ‘Com­mis­sion pre­sents a new set of EU mea­sures to bet­ter pro­tect Eu­ro­pean cit­i­zens’, EU Press Re­lease, and ‘The EU In­ternal Se­cu­ri­ty Strate­gy in Ac­tion: Five steps to­wards a more se­cu­re Eu­ro­pe’, EU Com­mu­ni­ca­tion from The Com­mis­sion to The Eu­ro­pean Parlia­ment and The Coun­cil (22 No­vem­ber 2010); see also the essays in B. Gie­ger­ich (ed.), Europe­an Se­cu­ri­ty and Global Se­cu­ri­ty (Lon­don: IISS/Rout­ledge, 2010). For the de­vel­op­ing con­cep­t of ‘Soci­etal Se­cu­ri­ty’ in Eu­ro­pe, see the work of the ‘Eu­ro­pean Soci­etal Se­cu­ri­ty Re­search Group’, via their web­site: <http://www.societalsecurity.eu/> (ac­cessed: 5/12/2010); see also ‘The Stockholm Pro­gram­me’, EU (Last updated: 16 March 2010); ‘Un­der­stand­ing Civ­il­ian Pro­tec­tion: Con­cepts and Prac­tices’ and ‘Explor­ing Civ­il­ian Pro­tec­tion’, Brookings/United States In­stitute for Peace (14 Se­p­tem­ber 2010); J.P. Bur­ges­s, ‘Non-Mil­i­tary Se­cu­ri­ty Chal­len­ges’, ch. 4 in C.A. Snyder (ed.), Con­tem­po­rary Se­cu­ri­ty and Strate­gy (Basing­stoke: Pal­grave, 2008 [2ed.]), pp.60-78.

3 See, e.g. ref­er­ences in P. Hough, Un­der­stand­ing Global Se­cu­ri­ty (Lon­don: Rout­ledge, 2008 [2ed.]); see also B. Buzan, J. De Wilde and O. Waer­er, Se­cu­ri­ty: A New Fram­ework for Analysis (Boul­der, CO: Lyn­ne Rie­m­mer, 1998); B. Buzan and L. Hansen, The Evolu­tion of In­ter­na­tional Se­cu­ri­ty Studies (Cam­bridge: Cam­bridge Uni­ver­si­ty Press, 2009), esp. from p.212.

deserves being opened up to at least a degree of closer and further scrutiny. In terms of scholarship and our understanding, although being increasingly addressed over time, we start from a comparatively and relatively ‘low-base’. Both generally, on a global basis, and more specifically with regard to regions, such as Europe, studying international intelligence co-operation is especially important today. This is because during the so-called ‘War on Terror’ and ‘Long War’ (c.2001-09), and continuing during the subsequent years since, international intelligence co-operation has expanded exponentially. Including extending into ‘globalisation realms’, it now effectively represents the most significant dimension of intelligence.5

Hand-in-glove has been a similarly burgeoning accountability and oversight deficit.6 This is concerning and matters to us all, whatever our exact status. Indeed, ‘profound implications’7 have been starkly witnessed during the early twenty-first century. For example, prominent episodes of US ‘extraordinary renditions’, ‘intensive interrogations’, and ‘torture’ allegations have emerged publicly, and their ‘fallout’ has had a significant and ongoing impact in several individual European countries, as well as regionally, across Europe as a whole.8

Furthermore, while over recent years much scholarship has been undertaken concentrating on the broader and closely overlapping theme of ‘security co-operation’ in


7 M. Rudner, ‘The globalisation of terrorism: Canada’s intelligence response to the post-September 11 threat environment’, Canadian Issues (September, 2002).

Europe, particularly with a strong emphasis on ‘governance’ concerns, considerably less has been written about the main focus of this article, namely the more specific area of ‘intelligence co-operation’ in Europe. Different approaches to the ‘problems’ encountered also exist, such as the contrastable law enforcement/security-dominated methodology of ‘see and strike’ and the intelligence methodology of ‘wait and watch’.

With the analysis advanced below, this article now aims to better contribute towards more fully addressing this observed ‘paucity’ in the overall subject literature. This is together with better highlighting some of the analytical complexities involved in, and during the course of, that addressing. In summary, building on the foundations of the existing scholarship, this article aims to perform the reflective functional role of being a comprehensive ‘introduction’ to this subject, with the analysis it presents being primarily connective and explorative in nature. Enduring reference utility similarly intends to be advanced.

Accordingly, as it seeks to better bridge discernible ‘gaps’, comprehensive observation is one of the main tasks undertaken throughout this article. Beginning with an exploration of the theme of ‘intelligence and Europe’ and its witnessed increased ‘regionalisation’ (and what is meant by that process), this article continues to examine the vexing question of how recent intelligence co-operation in Europe can be best evaluated, with the key structures facilitating contemporary European intelligence co-operation then being unpacked in-depth.

Following the presentation of this analysis, how wider European intelligence co-operation trends can be best captured is then discussed. Finally, several overall conclusions are presented, demonstrating that, extending into the future, many pressing challenges still remain within this domain of intelligence activity. At the least, these need their continued consideration for constantly maintaining the fashioning of the most advantageous effects and outcomes.

Advancing an increasingly enhanced understanding of this subject, as it continues to unfold in our contemporary context, can be most useful. Not least, this occurs as an ever-more sophisticated response is required in an ever-more timely manner in our ‘just-in-time’ society. Notably, operational through to strategy/policy-orientated ‘ends’ and ‘missions’ can be most effectively accomplished by applying the helpful ‘tool’ and ‘mechanism’ of intelligence co-operation, as a ‘means’ and as an ongoing issue management ‘solution’. This emerges as being in much demand in order to effectively navigate and address the multiple regional(-ised) to global(-ised) intelligence and security concerns that are currently confronted in Europe and in closely linked theatres beyond.

We begin with the ‘higher-level’ constructs involved.

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10 Svendsen, Intelligence Cooperation and the War on Terror, p.34.

Exploring the increased ‘regionalisation’ of intelligence in Europe

The issue of intelligence in Europe has increasingly emerged. Not all comfortably, it has acquired a higher public profile, and it has become a subject of much concern and debate. This has in part been fuelled by the experience of the US and the subsequent European homeland terror attacks, as well as the responses to them.12 Greater contextualisation is necessary.

Alongside the prominent terrorism concerns, further law enforcement and intelligence liaison driving factors in Europe, and more generally in the increasingly globalised context in international affairs, have featured. These include key security issues that extend from being regional-to-global (even ‘glocal’) in their impact, such as: Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) proliferation, increased organised crime, illegal immigration, people and drugs (narcotics) trafficking, as well as fulfilling the demands of peacemaking, peacekeeping and other humanitarian, civil protection and crisis management operations.13

A brief literature survey suggests that earlier, around the end of the twentieth century, the issue of intelligence vis-à-vis Europe was arguably more overlooked.14 It was also more understudied - albeit an imbalance beginning to be addressed more seriously around 2000.15 During 2000-01, there were also several debates surrounding the controversial European Parliamentary Inquiry into the UKUSA arrangement’s ECHELON system.16 By 2011, the subject of ‘intelligence and Europe’ is now being more effectively addressed in the literature. The trend of closely following behind the curve of developments and events occurring in the ‘real-world’ continues.17

These developments can be readily characterised. Generally we are witnessing greater intelligence co-operation - even if admittedly that intelligence co-operation is mixed, and can be regarded as emerging haphazardly and incrementally in places.18 Indeed, today,

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12 See, e.g., as already discussed above; see also ‘Norway PM Jens Stoltenberg warns against “witch hunt”’, BBC (1 August 2011).
14 As an exception, see, e.g., N. Gal-Or, International Cooperation to Suppress Terrorism (London: T&F, 1985), pp.74-76.
collectively this greater intelligence co-operation is taking place on a sizeable enough scale in Europe to allow the discussion of trends pertaining to the increased regionalisation of intelligence. A form of regional intelligence coverage exists for all participants.

Several relevant insights can equally be drawn from other closely related bodies of scholarship. This includes from the literature focussed on the themes of ‘regionalism’ and ‘regionalisation’ in the overlapping security context, as well as from the literature concentrating on the broader theme of (general) ‘international co-operation’. These more generally concerned sources offer added value in further helping us to extend our understanding of the developments undergone in this more specific realm, namely, in this article, in relation to the co-operative intelligence interactions underway in Europe.19

Indeed, Swedish scholar Björn Hettne’s ‘new regional theory’ is most instructive. This is particularly where Australian scholar Craig A. Snyder summarises it as arguing that ‘the development of regionalism is dependent on the support of the regional great power(s), the extent of reciprocity that exists in the relations of the states in the region, and the level of strategic reassurance that exists among these states.’20

Preliminary observations soon emerge. Unsurprisingly, particularly in the wake of the deeply shocking 11 September 2001 (9/11) terrorist attacks in the United States, the intelligence co-operation in and beyond Europe in the early twenty-first century has mostly been focussed on the issue of counter-terrorism.21 In Europe, this co-operation was then essentially catalysed substantially further, particularly internally, in the wake of the 11 March 2004 Madrid attacks, in which 191 people were killed.

Most immediately, the Madrid attacks resulted in widespread demands for increased and more effective sharing of counter-terrorism-related intelligence within Europe. These movements were to be accomplished within the region both geographically as well as organisationally within the EU framework, for example with the enhancement of the Joint Situation Centre (SitCen).22 This call resonated strongly as discoveries were made during the course of the post facto investigations that the perpetrators of the Madrid attacks had substantive connections to a number of European countries.23 The 7 July 2005 bombings

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22 See, e.g., the distinctions outlined below, and the changes the EU SitCen underwent in 2004-5, detailed below.

in London similarly spurred some close UK intelligence interactions with both their European and other international intelligence liaison partners.\textsuperscript{24}

The important impact of the broader context in which these co-operative intelligence activities are embedded and taking place is likewise demonstrable. Multiple and mutually shared terrorist threats to Europe regionally, to specific European countries, and to their close partners beyond, such as, most notably, to the US, Canada and Australia, have also continued to be manifested since.\textsuperscript{25} In the wake of the horrific attacks in Norway on 22 July 2011, with the bombing in Oslo and the shooting on the island of Utøya, in which 77 people are reported to have died, Norwegian Intelligence co-operated widely with their European and international partners as part of their post facto investigations, firmly demonstrating that mode of activity remains a valuable tool.\textsuperscript{26}

**Evaluating intelligence co-operation in Europe**

As the mini-analysis undertaken above so far demonstrates, several complexities within this domain of activity evidently begin to quickly and increasingly emerge. Enhanced introspection into this area of research and analysis, and how those processes are conducted in this context, is now helpful. How and where to begin evaluating intelligence co-operation in Europe are more moot points. Unfortunately, analyses are highly prone to a substantial array of shortcomings; therefore undertaking some methodological reflection is essential.

Many areas need addressing. Considerations such as: (i) how ‘Europe’ is conceptualised; (ii) which units of analysis or actors are selected for examination; and (iii) which precise levels of experience and activity are focussed upon; as well as (iv) which approach is adopted – such as how far in-depth (macro to micro) the analysis is followed through - can all contribute towards differing interpretations.

Mindful of these considerations, this article tries to establish some clear operational parameters for its analysis. Firstly, ‘Europe’ is conceptualised as a geographic entity, extending from the Atlantic to the Urals.\textsuperscript{27} Then, secondly, a macro ‘structural’ analysis...
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(MSA) approach is adopted. This is done in order to try and better capture the overall, underlying and longer-term trends.

Insofar as it can be physically located per se, European intelligence co-operation is recognised as occurring in several different areas of activity. For instructive illustrative purposes, some of the main different intelligence co-operation structures that can be found in Europe will next be highlighted in turn.

Structures facilitating European intelligence co-operation

To keep the analysis undertaken in this article within clear boundaries, three main categories are focussed upon. Into these, the variously overlapping different intelligence liaison arrangements in Europe can be placed more or less appropriately. Simultaneously, some informed insights into their significant connections are offered. By, first, better understanding the ‘structures’ participating, a greater understanding of the intelligence dynamics, and the more ‘cultural’ aspects involved in the European intelligence interactions, can then be valuably communicated:

Firstly, there is a plethora of bilateral relationships traversing Europe. These are the oldest (most traditional) arrangements and, in their comparatively well-tried and tested forms - especially where ‘standards’ and ‘best practices’ in the interactions have become most operationalised for facilitating trust - they represent the most ‘exclusive’ intelligence liaison relationships that exist in Europe. They thereby usually facilitate the greatest and speediest qualitative and quantitative exchange of ‘secret intelligence’. This product figures in the ‘purer’ form of operationally viable (‘actionable’ or ‘serious’) intelligence, present in its myriad of different forms (tactical through to strategic), including the exchange of some ‘rawr’ (or less ‘sanitised’/‘diluted’) product.

With reference to widespread counter-intelligence and security anxieties that exist in the European context, these bilateral intelligence liaison arrangements are also most likely to be preferred by intelligence practitioners. As the UK Intelligence and Security Committee’s (ISC) 2006 Annual Report noted when evaluating ‘European Co-operation’, the familiar sources and methods protection considerations were important: ‘Co-operation on operational matters is primarily bilateral, to ensure that intelligence is shared where necessary and to protect operational sources and information-gathering techniques.’

Adopting network terminology, the intelligence and security services, concentrated in the ‘hubs’ of national European capital cities, then strive to form ‘nodes’ - for instance, joining up their different bilateral European intelligence liaison partner relationships in their

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28 See also the arrangements listed on ‘Foreign authorities’, Politiets Efterretningstjeneste (PET)/Danish Security and Intelligence Service website (2009).


31 See, e.g., where in the NATO context it is observed that bilateral intelligence sharing continued to be ‘preferred’ and was judged to be the ‘more effective route’, in R.N. McDermott, Countering global terrorism: developing the anti-terrorist capabilities of the Central Asian Militaries (February, 2004), p.8; see also T. Espiner, ‘European Commission suffers “serious” cyberattack’, ZDNet (24 March 2011).

headquarters, alongside engagement with ‘privatised’ and ‘outsourced’33 dimensions of intelligence activity.34

Secondly, there are various multilateral Europe-region-centred intelligence liaison arrangements. These developed most markedly from around the early to mid-1990s, after the Cold War thaw and the dismantling of the ‘Iron Curtain’ in Europe. Again, each of these arrangements involves different combinations of parties. Most significantly, they include: the Club of Bern (CoB),35 which consists of the European Union (EU) Member States’ security services, and also those of Switzerland and Norway; the Counter Terrorist Group (CTG), which is essentially the counter-terrorism intelligence-focussed subgroup of the CoB (formed after 9/11 in September 2001),36 the Middle European Conference (MEC), which consists of ‘16 intelligence services of 13 states of Western and Central Europe’37; as well as, perhaps more peripherally, the more recent ‘War on Terror’-associated and more operationally-focussed arrangements. These in turn include ‘Alliance Base’ in Paris, which involves some European countries – notably the UK, Germany and France – with the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).38 With more of a law enforcement focus, the Police Working Group on Terrorism (PWGT) likewise features.39

In this category - within the CTG, for instance - discussions are generally more concerned with higher and macro level considerations and strategic issues. As the UK ISC report noted: ‘All of the [UK intelligence] Agencies contributed to discussions which resulted in the formulation of the EU Counter-Terrorism Action Plan, which draws strongly on the UK’s CONTEST model’ (the UK’s 2003 counter-terrorism strategy).40

More peripherally, transatlantic-spanning arrangements, in which several European countries are involved, perhaps could also be argued to be sitting at least on the fringe of this category.41 These latter arrangements include: the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and its own plethora of variously overlapping intelligence-associated

35 N.B.: This group is sometimes referred to with the alternative spelling of ‘Club of/de Berne’.
41 By 2007, NATO-EU security and defence co-operation was also burgeoning - see e.g., ‘NATO and the EU: Time for a New Chapter’, NATO (29 January 2007); ‘NATO-EU: a strategic partnership’, NATO (27 October 2010); see also refs to the US-led ‘Proliferation Security Initiative’ (PSI) in Svendsen, Understanding the ‘Globalization of Intelligence’, and to the US-led ‘Container Security Initiative’ (CSI), e.g., Svendsen, Intelligence Cooperation and the War on Terror, p.21, p.58; ‘Full container screening “not best” move: US security chief’, AFP (22 June 2011).
arrangements - including, with NATO members participating to different extents, the NATO Special Committee, the US Joint Analysis Center (JAC) and the NATO-supporting ‘Intelligence Fusion Centre’, based at US EUCOM (European Command) at RAF Molesworth in Cambridgeshire, UK - and then there is the International Special Training Centre (ISTC) for Special Operations Forces, located in Germany.

Open source intelligence (OSINT) partnerships also exist, such as the ‘International Open Source Working Group’ (IOSWG), which includes several European nations, notably: Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, the UK, Italy, Austria, Sweden, Norway, France and Belgium, as well as there being more ‘exclusive’ European OSINT partnerships, including the ‘Budapest Club’, established in 2007.

Together with all of these arrangements, operating alongside are the increasingly internationally connected European countries’ national terrorism threat analysis centres, including: the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) in the UK, the ‘Centre for Terrorism Analysis’ in Denmark, and the ‘Coordination Center’ in Germany, which act as intelligence ‘fusion centres’.

Furthermore, as Dutch intelligence scholar Cees Wiebes has reportedly observed, in parallel there exists a degree of burgeoning intra-European signals intelligence (SIGINT) co-operation, occurring at least amongst some select countries: ‘Since the end of the 1990s ... co-operation between the monitoring services of France, Germany and the Netherlands has grown and the countries exchange “Sigint” daily. Together with Denmark and Belgium, a “Group of Five” is slowly taking shape.’ Meanwhile, focussed on issues such as money laundering, the ‘Egmont Group’, an ‘international law enforcement financial intelligence exchange network’, might also be cited within this category.

Thirdly, there are the European Union (EU) intelligence arrangements. Developed from around the late-1990s onwards, these again contribute to varying degrees. These arrangements essentially act as specialist intelligence liaison ‘pockets’ within the EU framework as a whole, namely as part of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy

42 See, e.g., ‘NATO Special Committee’, NATO (2006); ‘New NATO intelligence centre opens in Britain’, UK Ministry of Defence and ‘Global Intelligence Assessment [sic] for NATO Countries’, NATO SHAPE (16 October 2006); ‘Intelligence fusion centre initial operational capability (IOC) ceremony’, NATO SHAPE (12 October 2006); B. Tigner, ‘NATO seeks more than a quick fix to its rapid-reaction command structure’, Jane’s International Defence Review (8 January 2009); ‘Situation Centre (SITCEN), NATO (2 December 2010); ‘NATO nations deepen cooperation on intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance’, NATO (17 March 2011).


45 Denmark’s ‘Centre for Terrorism Analysis’ in K. Tebbit, Benchmarking of the Danish Defence Intelligence Service: Introduction and Summary (Copenhagen: April 2006), pp.iii-iv, paras.11-12; for the German ‘Coordination Center’, F.T. Mikol and C. Froehlich, ‘Germany’s Role in Fighting Terrorism: Implications for U.S. Policy’, Congressional Research Service (27 December 2004), pp.7-9; ‘Germany minister now warns of terror attack threat’, Reuters (6 November 2010); see also ‘Poland’s anti-terrorist center gears up to protect Euro 2012’, Associated Press (17 May 2011); for Sweden’s National Centre for Terrorist Threat Assessment (NCT), ‘Suicide attack could happen again: prosecutor’, The Local - Sweden (3 June 2011).


47 ‘Serbia cleans up its act on money laundering’, Jane’s Intelligence Digest (16 February 2009).
As Björn Müller-Wille has elaborated, the types of intelligence arrangements in this third category include: ‘the EU Satellite Centre [SatCen], the Joint Situation Centre [SitCen]49 and the Intelligence Division of the European Military Staff… [which] are responsible [for] providing the “strategic” intelligence support needed for the decisions that fall within the Council’s competencies… [including] issues such as the launching and preparation of an EU peace support operation (PSO)’50, in the process also extending European intelligence arrangements partially into the wider realm of peacekeeping intelligence (PKI).51 Simultaneously overlapping are initiatives, such as the EU Terrorism Working Group (TWG) and MONEYVAL, the Council of Europe’s anti-money laundering arrangement.52

In this EU intelligence arrangement category, law enforcement intelligence liaison contributions from EUROPOL on the issue of terrorism, together with EUROJUST initiatives, can be included.53 Notably, as Lauri Lugna from the Estonian Ministry of the Interior has noted: ‘EUROPOL is charged with building and maintaining a database of information supplied by the Member States, and using this data to analyse crimes, conduct specific investigations at the request of national law enforcement authorities, and request that the latter launch such investigations.’54 By 2006, further strengthened internal EU co-operation between EUROPOL and the SitCen also appeared to be emerging.55

But, within this domain of activity, further challenging complexities clearly exist. The ‘structural’ considerations are not the only ones that are encountered. The type of intelligence product being interacted over during the conduct of liaison in these contexts similarly has an important role to perform. This factor now needs to be better brought into

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52 ‘National and international cooperation’, Säkerhetspolisen (Säpo - Swedish Security Service) website (December 2009); ‘Hire non-Swedes for sensitive posts”: Säpo’, The Local - Sweden (7 December 2009); ‘Serbia cleans up its act on money laundering’; see also references to the ‘European Expert Network on Terrorism Issues (ENER)’ as cited in fn. 48 of Cilluffo, Cozzens and Ranstorp, Foreign Fighters, p.19; on the theme of tackling the financing of terrorism, V. Pop, ‘Commission to propose new EU anti-terrorism tool’, EUObserver (12 July 2011).


54 ibid., p.124; see also the Gijs de Vries citation, below; M. Deflem, The Policing of Terrorism (London: Routledge, 2010), from p.127; focussed on organised crime, e.g., ‘Irish rhino horn racket uncovered by Europol’, BBC (7 July 2011); see also V. Dodd and M. Taylor, ‘Scotland Yard called in over Breivik’s claims he met “mentor” in UK’, The Guardian (25 July 2011).

the overall analytical narrative being presented. This is so that several of the main intelligence dynamics involved can be better understood. The ‘intelligence’ that features in the EU is essentially strategic, rather than tactical and operational, and can be characterised in its composition as being all-source-based assessments-derived. An important analytical distinction emerges, which can also extend more widely into the other somewhat overlapping European region and geographic arrangements.

Defined intelligence controls persist. Due to all the prevailing security and counter-intelligence anxieties concerning the protection of sources and methods that exist in such multilateral contexts (see as discussed above), for greater comfort, the intelligence supplied to the EU is based on ‘sanitised’ strategic, finished and processed intelligence. This is packaged and delivered to the SitCen instead more as diluted information input from EU Member States’ intelligence communities.\(^{56}\) For example, according to the UK ISC: ‘The UK (in particular the JIC [UK Joint Intelligence Committee] and JTAC) is one of the biggest providers of information to SitCen papers’\(^{57}\), revealing the nature, as well as the form, of the UK’s contribution.\(^{58}\)

In the EU context, this ‘information’ arguably then becomes ‘intelligence’ when ‘loaded’ in a ‘purposeful manner’. For instance, this occurs within the SitCen during the conduct of its own analysis, and when it generates its own product ready for dissemination amongst its own select customers, including EU Commissioner Baroness Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and head of the recently created (July 2010) European External Action Service (EEAS).\(^{59}\)

However, a criticism can be raised that it is still just essentially information rather than more serious intelligence that is being handled in the EU context. Other distinct limits with these EU intelligence arrangements can be highlighted. Notably, limited resources, such as small staff sizes, can be cited (with the SitCen in 2010 consisting of around 100 personnel\(^ {60}\)), suggesting the need for the strict prioritisation of tasks. These considerations in turn raise many questions, including regarding the impact of bureaucratic factors, such as the issue of ‘time-lags’, during day-to-day business processes.\(^ {61}\) This is not least as wider, concerning events, such as those rapidly occurring in their multitude in international affairs, are meanwhile frequently unfolding in high-tempo and condensed-space operating environments.\(^ {62}\)

Further developments can be implemented. The concerns identified here naturally suggests that intelligence and information arrangements under the umbrella of the EU have plenty of scope for their gradual expansion and extension into the future. Indeed, during the summer of 2008, there were attempts by various European countries to better improve SitCen’s intelligence capabilities, as well as to extend ‘standardisation’ processes

\(^{56}\) M. Seiff, ‘MI5 Chief won’t share all secrets with EU’, *UPI* (14 September 2005).

\(^{57}\) UK ISC, ‘European Co-operation’, p.29, para.102 (emphasis added).


within its framework – most critically including trying to work around operational obstacles.\footnote{Ibid.}

According to The Guardian newspaper, evaluating the internal EU report seen during August 2008: ‘While cooperation between national police forces in the EU was advancing, the report conceded that the sharing of espionage and intelligence material was a “considerable challenge” as it clashed with the “principle of confidentiality” [or the ‘third party rule’, known interchangeably as the ‘control principle’, which is intended to preserve the confidentiality of secret exchanges between different parties during intelligence liaison]] that is the basis for successful exchanges.’\footnote{Ibid.}

For improved intelligence sharing within the EU context, there needs to be the continued further addressing of the ever-present secrecy-sharing dilemma that exists with regard to multilateral arrangements.\footnote{See, e.g., J.M. Nomikos, ‘The European Union’s Proposed Intelligence Service’, Power and Interest News Report (PINR) (17 June 2005); J.M. Nomikos, ‘A European Union Intelligence Service for Confronting Terrorism’, International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence, 18, 2 (2005), pp.191-203; J. Rüter, European External Intelligence Co-operation (Saarbrücken, Germany: VDM Verlag Dr. Mueller e.K., 2007).} Moreover, this addressing requires being undertaken adopting a cultural (including a philosophical), as well as a structural, approach towards facilitating sharing activities.\footnote{See also Gros-Verheyde, ‘L’Europe a aussi ses propres agents secrets’; J. Richards, ‘Intelligence centres – The EU mulls a strategic intelligence rethink’, Jane’s Intelligence Review (12 November 2010).}

Whether into the future there is a greater centralisation of intelligence and information liaison arrangements in the EU context still remains to be seen.\footnote{See, e.g., J.M. Nomikos, ‘The European Union’s Proposed Intelligence Service’, Power and Interest News Report (PINR) (17 June 2005); J.M. Nomikos, ‘A European Union Intelligence Service for Confronting Terrorism’, International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence, 18, 2 (2005), pp.191-203; J. Rüter, European External Intelligence Co-operation (Saarbrücken, Germany: VDM Verlag Dr. Mueller e.K., 2007).} Although the SitCen evolves over time, a distinct ‘EU CIA’ is probably going to remain highly unlikely, while an ‘EU NIC’ - that is: undertaking higher and more strategic level monitoring work, more akin to the research-based/dominated activities of the US National Intelligence Council (NIC), for instance with its in-depth future ‘global scenarios’ development (but on more of a ‘regional’ basis) - is a much more realistic model on which to focus attention.\footnote{See, e.g., J.M. Nomikos, ‘The European Union’s Proposed Intelligence Service’, Power and Interest News Report (PINR) (17 June 2005); J.M. Nomikos, ‘A European Union Intelligence Service for Confronting Terrorism’, International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence, 18, 2 (2005), pp.191-203; J. Rüter, European External Intelligence Co-operation (Saarbrücken, Germany: VDM Verlag Dr. Mueller e.K., 2007).} Within this domain of activity, there are certainly not going to be any rapid or dramatic movements, with trends continuing, as witnessed previously, on a gradual, evolutionary path.\footnote{See also Gros-Verheyde, ‘L’Europe a aussi ses propres agents secrets’; J. Richards, ‘Intelligence centres – The EU mulls a strategic intelligence rethink’, Jane’s Intelligence Review (12 November 2010).}

During November 2008, the UK House of Lords reportedly ‘warned’ that ‘intelligence on terrorism, drug trafficking and serious fraud is not being routinely shared with Europol… over fears of leaks’, with the UK Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA)’s exchange with EUROPOL being particularly criticised. Generally, therefore, political-to-policy and strategy-orientated drivers still appear stronger than more regularised operational movements.
These last aspects seem to take longer to ‘catch-up’, preferring to proceed more cautiously on more protected, specific and detailed individual (ad hoc) case-by-case bases.\(^{70}\)

However, despite their imperfections, these EU intelligence arrangements and initiatives are rightly recognised as being important in the EU context and beyond. This is particularly when dealing with pressing transnational issues, such as, most prominently, counter-terrorism.\(^{71}\) In 2005, with still-relevant initiative-driving aspirations clearly apparent, the EU’s Counter-Terrorism Co-ordinator remarked:

> Timely and accurate information - its collection, analysis and dissemination - is essential to prevent acts of terrorism and to bring terrorist suspects to justice. Progress is being made in implementing the decisions of the Council to improve the exchange of terrorism related information. Last year [2004] the Council decided to stimulate co-operation among Europe’s security and intelligence services by reinforcing the Situation Centre (SitCen) in the Council Secretariat.

He continued:

> As a result, SitCen now provides the Council with strategic analysis of the terrorist threat based on intelligence from Member States’ security and intelligence services and, where appropriate, on information provided by Europol. Meanwhile, Europol is also strengthening its counter-terrorism task force. Eurojust is playing an increasingly prominent role in helping national prosecutors and investigating judges to cooperate across borders.\(^{72}\)

Ultimately, whatever is generally thought of the ‘intelligence’ material handled in the EU - and its usefulness, especially at the lower and micro levels of experience and activities, such as operationally and tactically - the EU intelligence arrangements clearly continue to have substantial and sufficient relevance. They are certainly worth the effort of sustaining into the future.\(^{73}\) In recent years, important EU efforts have also been witnessed concerning the addressing of pressing ‘radicalisation’ issues.\(^{74}\)

As the implementation of the EU Lisbon Treaty increasingly gathers momentum, especially with the creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS) during July

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\(^{73}\) B. Glick, ‘European data sharing system to help police track weapons’, *Computing.co.uk* (27 November 2008).

2010, and with the ESDP becoming re-branded as the CSDP, interest remains keen as 2011 progresses to see what are the fullest implications of these changes both for the SitCen (which became part of the EEAS in late 2010\(^{75}\)), and for the overall process of multi-functional information-sharing in the EU, over the longer-term.\(^{76}\)

Shorter-term impact is already clearer. Consisting of three units, essentially the ‘Operations Unit’, the ‘Analysis Unit’ and the ‘Consular Unit’, in detail, the SITCEN contributes […] by:

- providing all-source assessment on CFSP issues and assessment of the terrorist threat to the Union and its Member States;
- providing 24/7 support for the day-to-day conduct of CSDP crisis management operations;
- providing support for the functioning of the EU-Crisis Coordination Arrangements;
- operating the secure communications networks linking the foreign affairs, defence, intelligence and security communities of the Member States and the institutions.\(^{77}\)

Ultimately, the value of sustained co-operative intelligence efforts in the EU context is starkly obvious. This is demonstrably the case if we work from the simple basis that the lack of these initiatives and arrangements altogether would engender worse scenarios, resulting in counter-productive ignorance concerning especially the key issue area of counter-terrorism within the EU zone.\(^{78}\) Moreover, European intelligence co-operation clearly extends further than merely the ‘components’ just examined. Wider trends also demonstrate significance.\(^{79}\)


\(^{77}\) ‘EU Situation Centre (EU SITCEN)’ in Rehrl and Weisserth (eds), Handbook on CSDP, p.47.


\(^{79}\) See also, e.g., ‘NATO head worried about low European defense spending, calls on allies to reduce US reliance’, Associated Press (16 June 2011); B. Tigner, ‘Europe must pool defence resources, senior politicians...
Capturing wider European intelligence co-operation trends

Along the lines presented above, the overall prevailing wider trends concerning intelligence co-operation in Europe collectively point towards the increased ‘regionalisation of intelligence’. This is despite, within that regional framework, the overlapping international intelligence liaison developments over time occurring in a mixed manner, in both their operation and evolution, and varying in their ‘specialness’. This mixture effectively spans the full-spectrum of being, at times, more haphazard and ad hoc (for instance, work being conducted more case-by-case), as well as, at other times, being more regularised, and with developments occurring more systematically and incrementally (for example, as seen with the EU SitCen). Variations in nature exist.

Borrowing the reported words of the former Director General of the British Security Service (MI5), Dame Eliza Manningham-Buller (2002-07), the discernible overall regionalisation trends can be evaluated as being essentially on ‘a continuum with expansion’. This assessment stands even if you adopt a sceptic’s stance.

Admittedly, over time, due to the potent mixture of factors involved, these trends have not had a smooth development, and unevenness therefore continues to be effectively reflected. For instance, time-consuming and problematic trade-offs have been evident - including the ‘secrecy-sharing dilemma’ and the ‘constraints’ somewhat imposed by the ever-present counter-intelligence and security anxieties, shown where strictly sanitised ‘information’ rather than ‘intelligence’ per se features (as discussed with regard to the EU, above).

Moreover, due to their differing natures, the intelligence liaison relationships in Europe are also clearly of varying degrees of ‘exclusivity’. At times, they are somewhat differently focussed, together with handling different types of intelligence according to their different operating parameters. Stemming from these considerations, these arrangements then operate to what can be regarded as varying degrees of effectiveness in terms of their outcomes, as seen frequently depending upon information and communications security (INFOSEC/COMSEC) and Information Assurance (IA)-associated factors, such as which (who) and how many parties are involved. Questions and worries about maintaining the momentum of counter-terrorism initiatives have also figured, especially as the immediacy of terrorist threats essentially ebb as time progresses between shocks.

Evidently, further advances have still yet to be made. This conclusion extends to applying in several different areas, in many different directions, and to many different extents. However, this situation of overall and underlying trends on the whole tending to be on ‘a continuum with expansion’ is discernible, especially if those developments are: (i) referred

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80 See, e.g., the general literature on ‘regionalism’ and ‘regionalisation’ as discussed above.
83 For details of variations, see, e.g., as charted in Lugna, ‘Institutional Framework of the European Union Counter-Terrorism Policy Setting’, pp.111-139.
84 G. Corera, ‘Seeking a united front against terrorism’, BBC (9 March 2005); ‘EU anti-terror plans may “peter out”’, BBC (2 April 2004); B. Müller-Wille, ‘Building a European Intelligence Community in response to terrorism’, European Security Review, 22 (ISIS, Europe, April 2003); Nicoll (ed.), ‘Terrorist threats in Europe: hype or reality?’. 
to collectively; (ii) examined over the longer-term (for example, traced over the years from 2000 to 2011); and also (iii) if the literature on this subject is comprehensively explored.\textsuperscript{85}

Also, equally, there is evidently sufficient room for substantial overlap in terms of both intelligence targeting concerns and requirements (or topics of interest), and in at least elements of the intelligence/information product that is handled. This is most apparent where, for instance regarding the EU SitCen:

> On the basis of open source and classified information coming from Member States and the European institutions, SITCEN monitors and assesses international events 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The focus lies on sensitive geographical areas, terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The information and evaluations provided by EU SITCEN are of a civilian and military nature, covering all aspects of EU crisis management.\textsuperscript{86}

Meanwhile, intelligence liaison sceptics and critics are more likely to query the \textit{extent} of the observed wider trends. This is as well as those critics disputing their prevalence and effectiveness, especially if the minutiae and low and micro levels involved in intelligence activities are particularly highlighted over general trends, and above the generally prevailing incentives for enhanced co-operation.\textsuperscript{87}

This last point starkly suggests the involvement of further complexities. For instance, particularly when thinking in terms of counter-terrorism intelligence, the \textit{quality} of the intelligence, as well as the \textit{quantity} (or volume) of intelligence exchanged, is another worthy factor.\textsuperscript{88} Moreover, generally, human intelligence (HUMINT) is shared differently from signals intelligence (SIGINT), and differently again from imagery intelligence (IMINT), and from the other ‘collection disciplines’ or ‘INTs’ that exist.\textsuperscript{89} Also in some circumstances, rather than intelligence sharing per se taking place, merely ‘access’ to intelligence is granted, for example provided in Secure Compartmentalised Information Facilities (SCIFs), as evident in NATO.\textsuperscript{90} Assessment difficulties persist as generalisability limits are rapidly encountered.

Further analytic efforts, therefore, need their extension. Indeed, when attempting to evaluate intelligence co-operation and its associated trends, it is most helpful if an awareness of these further cascading levels of multiple complexities is effectively communicated, for instance through being explicitly conveyed and then being better taken into account. This is especially when that analysis is trying to be undertaken in a comprehensive manner at the macro level. Again, this communication can be done most expeditiously through engaging in some extended methodological reflection. This observation now brings us to overall conclusions.


\textsuperscript{86} ‘EU Situation Centre (EU SITCEN)’ in Rehrl and Weisserth (eds), \textit{Handbook on CSDP}, p.47.

\textsuperscript{87} For an example of a ‘sceptical perspective’ regarding intelligence liaison, see, e.g., M. Smith, ‘Intelligence-sharing failures hamper war on terrorism’, \textit{Jane’s Intelligence Review} (1 July 2005); ‘Bureaucracy blocks EU terror fight’, \textit{UPI} (1 August 2005).

\textsuperscript{88} See as discussed above with regard to the ‘bilateral arrangements’.

\textsuperscript{89} For the different ‘INTs’, see Svendsen, \textit{Intelligence Cooperation and the War on Terror}, pp.11-12.

\textsuperscript{90} See the itemisation of these complexities in \textit{ibid}, pp.41-42.
Conclusion

Much can be deduced. Overall in Europe there is the discernible development of an ever-more complex web consisting of a plethora of various overlapping international intelligence liaison arrangements. Essentially, the three broad ‘categories’ detailed above capture these, and, in their overall mosaic-like arrangement, they collectively provide a form of regional intelligence coverage in Europe.

Unpacking the three categories in-depth allows us several valuable insights not only into the European co-operative intelligence entities that exist, but also into the intelligence dynamics and interactions that occur (and equally not!) both within and between them. These entities clearly operate to varying degrees of speed and effectiveness, depending upon the constraints and limits, even operational obstacles, they encounter, and likewise they develop at different rates. Overall, similar processes, for not too dissimilar reasons, occur over time both within and across the three different categories.

In our contemporary era, this discernible mode of regional intelligence co-operation has been focussed mainly on the key issue of counter-terrorism - although other regionalised-to-globalised security concerns, such as organised crime and WMD proliferation, together with peacekeeping and crisis management considerations, are simultaneously present to a considerable extent. This occurs primarily due to regional intelligence and security reach continuing to be extended into ‘newer’ realms of activity as demands, requirements, and strategic and operational remits all become widened.91

Closely associated with broader globalisation trends apparent in international affairs, the ‘regionalisation of intelligence’ developments charted throughout this article are essentially on ‘a continuum with expansion’. Moreover, notwithstanding the observation that details and specifics - as well as the low and micro levels of experience and activity - matter significantly in the intelligence world, the overall trends are not ambiguous.92

However, as seen when generalising, while the trends may not be ambiguous in themselves - especially in terms of more tangible widening and structural developments - how far they precisely extend and endure – particularly in terms of less-tangible deepening and cultural (including philosophical) developments - are more debatable issues. Concerns such as these will continue to be hotly contested into the future, and no easy answers present themselves. A ‘complex co-existence plurality’ of developments is encountered.

Further conclusions are apparent. While significant caveats remain, suggesting that distinct operational parameters and limitations for all the arrangements continue to feature, the important overlap of the various arrangements in Europe allows them to perform in a more empowering than hindering manner. The limitations do not overwhelm the whole ‘system’. Intelligence co-operation trends within Europe can therefore be generally evaluated positively as being essentially on an upward trajectory, even if that trajectory is caveated.93

91 Technically, these have just become more prominent issues in recent years, e.g., due to all the globalisation developments undergone. See, historically, e.g., M.J. van Duin, ‘Emerging European Experience with Crisis Management’, Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management, 1, 1 (March 1993), pp.57-60; see also A. Boin, et al., The Politics of Crisis Management (Cambridge: CUP, 2005).
93 IISS Strategic Survey 2009, pp.35-36.
The essence is that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, and generally the overall ‘system’ that does currently exist appears to work substantially on that basis. Already present, at their least, as a reasonably adequate starting foundation on which further European intelligence co-operation developments can be built, these trends now need to continue to be better harnessed into the future. Seizing and maintaining a ‘forward’-driving initiative continues to be required in an increasingly timely fashion. This is in order to have an appropriately continuing transformative effect on wider developments in Europe and beyond as time progresses.\textsuperscript{94} Opportunities also figure.