The power elite of security research in Europe: from competitiveness and external stability to dataveillance and societal security

Médéric Martin-Mazé

CRESPPA-LabToP,
Université Paris VIII Vincennes – Saint Denis,
2 rue de la Liberté, 93200 Saint-Denis, France
Email: mederic.martin-maze@univ-paris8.fr

Abstract: Since 2004, the European Union has spent approximately 3.5 billion Euros on security research. Yet, scholars of security have seldom been on the receiving end of these monies. The present article aims to make sense of this apparent paradox. To this end, it brings under examination the so-called high-level public-private *dialogue on security* that the European Commission sponsored between 2003 and 2009. Social scientists were excluded from this process at the beginning. Thus, the forum imposed the idea that security problems have technical solutions if the EU is willing to pay for them. Social scientists could then be-reincluded and enrolled under the banner of societal security. It falls to them to numb the general public into acceptance of security technologies. The paradox, then, is complete.

Keywords: security research; European Union; defence industry; surveillance; security technologies; public-private; Bourdieu.

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Biographical notes: Médéric Martin-Mazé is a Lecturer at the Department of Political Science, Université Paris VIII Vincennes – Saint-Denis, CRESPPA-LabToP. He received his PhD from Science Po Paris in 2013. The dissertation dealt with the technical assistance that international organizations provide in the area of border security to Central Asian States. As a postdoctoral researcher at the King's College London from 2014 to 2016, he then focused on the genesis of security research in Europe. Those different investigations advance a sociology of international projects. His international projects are operators of the transnationalisation of bureaucratic fields. Therefore, one can regard them as suitable entry points for original inquiries into any transnational milieu. This approach has been published in different journals, including *Cultures & Conflits*, the *Journal of Common Market Studies*, the *International Political Sociology* and the *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*.

1 Introduction

Since the mid-1980s, placid definitions of security as high-stakes affairs regarding the territorial integrity of sovereign states (Walt, 1991) have receded to the point of no return.

European academic circles have been at the forefront of this relentless assault onto a cynical understanding of security as that which precedes liberty (Etzioni, 2007). It has become a common place to present this discussion as a three-pronged debate [for a critical presentation (Collective, 2006; Waever, 2004)]. Some authors have sought to widen and broaden security studies, in order to bring out new issues and to scale down the discussion from the level of states to that of human beings (Booth, 2005). Others shed light on the discursive labour that it takes to transform a political problem into one of security. When successful, this move justifies exceptional measures (Buzan et al., 1998). Others still unpacked the socio-bureaucratic conditions under which professionals of security struggle to impose the legitimate definition of threats (Bigo, 2005, 1996).

In parallel of those discussions, the EU ramped up its effort in funding security research. 400 million Euros were earmarked to the preparatory action in security research between 2004 and 2006, 1.4 billion to the Security Theme of the 7th Framework Programme between 2007 and 2013, and €1.7 billion to the Security Theme of the H2020 between 2014 and 2020. A casual observer would expect that this *European Security Research Programme* (ESRP) would reflect at least partially the heated discussions of European security scholars. After all, the concept of human security of the United Nations Development Programme (1994) echoed the broadening and widening moves in critical security studies. However, while some international institutions listen to critical voices, the European Commission does not. One researcher recounts the "experience of being asked and working to provide evidence of the limits of mass dataveillance as a policy option, including on EU smart borders, and of seeing this evidence and work sidestepped or simply ignored" [Jeandesboz, (2016), p.3]. Paradoxically, the more the EU funds research in security, the less it listens to security scholars.

To make sense of this paradox, I empirically focus on the series of forum that formed the so-called high-level public private dialogue on security research (henceforth, *dialogue on security*) between 2003 and 2009. Theoretically, I draw on a Bourdieusian political sociology of the international (Bigo, 2011; Bigo and Walker, 2007; Cohen, 2018). My approach shows that managers, engineers and executives of the defence industry joined the 'power elite' of Europe (Madsen and Kauppi, 2013; Mills, 2000). It is they, and not researchers trained in social sciences or humanities who framed EU R&D policies in the area of security. In other words, the demand for security devices never pre-exists the supply of this market in the making. This relation of power goes beyond a simple monopsony, where a single supplier controls many purchasers. Rather, suppliers get to frame, from the very beginning, exactly what the demand is, imposing the idea that technologies are a go-to solution to (in)security, and silencing critical voices in the process.

I shed light on who those suppliers are, and what they say about freedom, technology and surveillance. After a first section which lays out the major theoretical tenets of my approach, the narrative unfolds according to a simple chronological movement. I start with the obstacles to the unification of the defence market, which civil servants of the European Commission run into in the mid-1990s. They put emphasis on bolstering the defence industry against emboldened US competition. But EU member states block what they perceive as a commission's foray into their sovereign preserve. Renewed attempts in the post-11/09 years circumvent these obstacles by riding the external-internal Mobius ribbon of security (Bigo, 2001). CEOs, diplomats and high-ranking officers successfully raise European monies by honing in on global security rather than national defence. They

impose the idea that security problems have technological solutions. The EU only needs to pay for them.

Once high-profile capitalists stick their feet into the doors of EU policy-making, a myriad of managers and engineers come pouring in after them. I turn to those 'brokers of capitalism' in the fourth and fifth sections of this paper (Laurens, 2015). Those actors participate in the *dialogue on security*. Interestingly however, the constituency of this forum shifts from the defence industry and the military, towards IT specialists, border guards and professionals of civil security. This transformation is reflected in a discourse that increasingly centres on the dataveillance of transnational flows and societal security. Although the later topic presents itself under the guise of a more humane understanding of security, closer analysis reveals that it actually works so as to diffuse security imperatives throughout the entire social fabric (see also Larsson, this issue). Quite paradoxically indeed, it is the job of the very social scientists who were sidestepped in the first place to ensure the smooth diffusion of security devices by alleviating unease about them in the general public.

2 International political sociology of security research

This article brings the *dialogue on security* under examination. This process entails three forums that framed the objectives and content of the ERSP between 2003 and 2009: the Group of Personalities (GoP), the European Security Research Advisory Board (ESRAB) and the European Security Research and Innovation Forum (ESRIF). Activist research has taken a keen interest in these proceedings from the start. Looking at which institutions participate in this forum, they have shown that the defence industry was over-represented at the beginning [Hayes, (2009), p.15; see also Jones, (2017), p.14]. A later study then underlined the increasing presence of "representatives from national security agencies and services, whether police, border guards or defence ministries" [Jeandesboz and Ragazzi, (2010), p.13]. According to those accounts, the *dialogue on security* has set the agenda of the ERSP [Hayes, (2006), p.37, (2009), p.9; Jeandesboz and Ragazzi, (2010), p.7; Luehmann, (2011), p.2; Bigo et al., (2014), p.10; Baird, (2017), pp.7–8; Jones, (2017), p.2].

Those early investigations provided useful insights into the composition and effect of the *dialogue on security*. However, from a more scholarly perspective, their institutional focus falls short of depicting the full picture. Indeed, institutions do not act, nor do they speak. Instead, some human beings act and speak in their names. Mills has made this point eloquently: "The power elite is composed of men whose positions enable them to transcend the ordinary environments of ordinary men and women; they are in positions to make decisions having major consequences. Whether they do or do make such decisions is less important than the fact that they do occupy pivot positions (…). For they are in command of the major hierarchies of modern society. They rule the big corporations. They run the machinery of the state and claim its prerogatives. They direct the military establishment. They occupy the strategic command posts of the social structure" [Mills, (2000), pp.3–4].

In foregrounding the power elite instead of institutions, I emphasise homogeneity in socio-professional background over heterogeneity in patterns of institutional participation. Actors who sit at the table of the *dialogue on security* may speak in the name of private think tank today, but work for a public institution tomorrow. In the

dialogue on security a two-way transaction occurs. On the one hand, private interests become enshrined with the veneer of the public interest – in this case, the business interests of the defence industry is transfigured into the general interest of the community. On the other hand, civil servants stage an apparent confrontation with the civil society at large, thereby concealing the fact that they, too, pursue their own interests [Bourdieu, (2000), pp.164–170]. In Bourdieu's words, "the logic according to which the commission is constituted actually (and unconsciously) puts in practice the rule according to which one contributes to producing a discourse (in this case, the final report) by producing the social space, materialised in one group, in which the discourse is produced" [Bourdieu, (2000), pp.164–170, cf. p.170 for the specific quote – my translation].

It is therefore important to understand what enables and qualifies an actor as a member of the dialogue. Attention to what where actors come from is a corner-stone of Bourdieusian international political sociology (Bigo, 2011; Bigo and Walker, 2007; Cohen, 2018). I trace the social trajectories that lead to the *dialogue of security*. By social trajectory, I mean "the series of positions that an actor (or even a group) has subsequently held in a space that is itself becoming and under incessant transformation" [Bourdieu, (1994), p.88]. I draw on public data to build tables and graphs that feature the area of expertise and the institutional belonging of the last two positions occupied by the individuals who participate in the dialogue. The coding is non-exhaustive and focuses only on significant experiences. It is non-exclusive, for actors often accumulate expertise in more than one area and work for more than one institution on their careers. Furthermore, in order to bring flesh to my narrative, I describe in more details trajectories that epitomise salient group characteristics.

This focus on trajectories is heuristically productive insofar as it helps understand which structures of perceptions migrate inform the *dialogue of security*, thus shaping its discourse and, eventually, framing the ESRP. As Guilhot observes when looking at the history of democracy promotion in the US foreign policy, "repertoires migrate to different institutional contexts along with the individuals who mobilize them in their professional practice. From this perspective, understanding why the World Bank today is promoting 'good governance' or how a Reagan-era foundation is concerned with human rights is also about identifying the agents who have brought such concerns in these institutions and retracing their trajectories" [Guilhot, (2005), p.11]. In Bourdieu's (1997, p.212, 1994, p.70, 1992, p.81) terminology, actors' position-takings are homologous to their social positions. Such homology results from the correspondence between the social structures where actors operate, and the mental structures that they have internalised in their life [Bourdieu, (1971), pp.300–301]. Thus, practices, including discursive ones, do not result from conscious calculus. Rather, they are generated by a feel for the game (Martin-Mazé, 2015). What I describe below is not the result of a rational plot, but the effect of an anonymous structure. Trajectories thus provide clues as to which categories of understanding and schemes of perception weave the discursive fabric of the *dialogue of security*.

Consequently, my approach also foregrounds the relative autonomy of the context in which the power elite of security research operates when they frame what security and what research means in this instance. Indeed, the different committees where the dialogue on security is held over the years partake in a partially autonomous social setting that constructs the ESRP according to its own practical logic [Bourdieu, (1994), p.67]. In

other words, my argument is distinctively set against functionalist interpretations according to which policies are generated as a reaction to wider context or environment. I insist on the shortcomings of functionalism as I turn to the pre-history of the dialogue on security in the next section.

3 Obstacles to market unification (1996–2003)

Research in security technologies results from foiled attempts by the European Commission at unifying the European defence market (Hoijtink, 2014). In the mid-1990s, the European Commission tables two communications pertaining to this issue. This move is often analysed as a reaction to a changing international environment (Citi, 2014). However, a close reading of the documents reveals an overwhelming preoccupation with the industrial facet of the armament policy, rather than its potential military applications.

Thus, the first communication laments over the detrimental consequences of 'peace dividend'. Defence budgets fall "by 5.3% in real terms between 1985 and 1994" [European Commission, (1996), p.4]. At the same time, US competition becomes more severe. As a result, the EU industry "is now exporting less than half as much as the US industry" [European Commission, (1996), p.5]. The European defence industries are therefore confronted to a scissors effect; the source of their revenue is drying up and they receive a diminishing proportion of the leftover. The commission aims to overcome the 'anachronic fragmentation' of the European defence market in order to ensure the survival of the weapons industry [European Commission, (1996), p.3]. The gist of the argument thus remains framed in economic terms.

The second communication entails a proposal for a *common position* on drawing up a European armaments policy and an *action plan for the defence-related industry*. "The situation of the defence industry has deteriorated still further" [European Commission, (1997), p.1]. The plan makes provision for the integration of civil and military activities in the framework programs for research and development [European Commission, (1997), pp.16–18]. Both the *action plan* and the *common position* bear testimony to how CFSP issues are constructed within the European Commission. Defence is framed as an institutional hybrid, enabling community action in matters pertaining to State Sovereignty. When the *common position* is forwarded to a preparatory body of the council of ministers (POLARM), the plan is consequently perceived as a move against the political consolidation of a *common defence policy*. The view that armament policy is predominantly second pillar issues prevails, thereby paving the way for rebutting the *common position* and the *action plan* [Mörth, (2005), pp.96–102].

Five years later, the European Parliament adopts a *resolution on European defence industries* where it "regrets that so little progress has been made in implementing this plan." Importantly, it invites the commission to "consider (…) the possibility of developing a defence equivalent of the Advisory Council for Aeronautics Research in Europe (STAR 21)" (European Parliament, 2002). In referring to STAR 21, the European Parliament lends political support to a repertoire of actions to which civil servants of the Commission often resort in business-related issues. STAR 21 corresponds to an informal group of CEOs, members of the European Parliament and civil servants the European Commission. Working under the auspices of the Commissioner for Enterprise Policy, it tables a report in June 2002 intended to create a coherent market for the European aeronautic industry [STAR 21, (2002), pp.4–5].

This kind of forum, whereby the directorate general for enterprise policy brings in expertise from the private sector, is nothing new in European policy-making. Commission's civil servants routinely enrol the top management of major European firms in the unification of European markets. Such a move enables the European Commission to establish itself as a major node for European business whilst securing the support of European businesses for the continental integration of economic markets [Laurens, (2015), pp.35–126]. In requesting that the European Commission duplicates STAR 21 for defence and security, the European Parliament provides a parliamentary blank check for what might otherwise be considered as a collusion of private and public interests [Laurens, (2015), pp.411–415].

Yet, drawing support from business actors gets the European Commission only half way towards rebooting the unification of a European defence market. It also needs to work around member states that are wary of commission's involvement in defence operations and diplomatic undertakings. This is what a new communication tabled in March 2003 does. Following up on the attempts of 1996–1997, this communication notes that "some of these ideas came to fruition. But member states did not act in a number of essential areas – feeling, perhaps, that the proposals were before their time" [European Commission, (2003), p.1].

One detects some interesting shifts in language between the communications of 2003 and 1996. Research and development is explicitly singled out as an autonomous sector worthy of policy-making attention [European Commission, (2003), p.7]. Although most of the communication deals with defence equipment, the focus shifts towards 'global security' when it comes to R&D. The most tangible action that the communication proposes is an "initiative to promote cooperation on advanced research in the field of global security" [European Commission, (2003), p.16, emphasis added].

Thus, the first breakthrough in the making of an EU industrial R&D policy in the field of defence and security occurs at the cross-road of two developments: the enrolment of the top-management of several large defence firms, and the connection between defence and police under the all-encompassing label of 'global security'. These two moves play out clearly in the launch of the *dialogue on security* to whose constituency and discourse I turn in the last three segments.

4 Security as a technicality

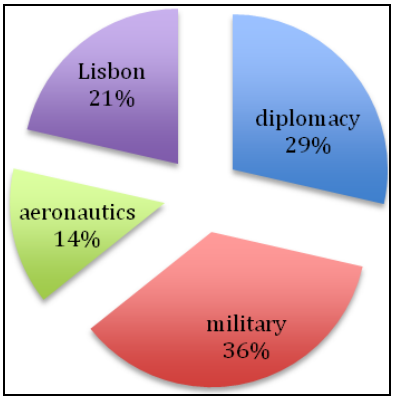
In 2003, DG Enterprise and DG Research outsource the framing of the R&D policy in global security to the GoP. This forum leads the *dialogue on security* until 2004 and gathers 28 official members (GoP, 2004). In the first part of this segment, I trace the trajectories leading not only official members to the GoP, but also their Sherpas.

Four participants have held high-level positions in the diplomatic sector. Martti Ahtisaari served as the Chairman of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Working Group of the International Conference on the former Yugoslavia, 1992–1993, and special adviser to the International Conference on the former Yugoslavia and to the secretary general's special representative for former Yugoslavia in 1993.[1] Carl Bildt worked as a special envoy for the Balkans between 1995 and 2001.[2] Finally, Javier Solana also accumulated considerable experience in this area, during his term as secretary-general of NATO between 1995 and 1999.

Table 1 Policy expertise – GoP

	Total	*Members*	*Sherpas*
Diplomacy	4	3	1
Military	5	2	3
Aeronautics	2	1	1
Lisbon	3	2	1

Figure 1 Policy expertise – GoP (see online version for colours)



Military affairs correspond to the second area of expertise. Five members have started their careers as military officers. Four members sit in their capacity of officers in multilateral or EU institutions. In addition, Ericson Microwave is represented by a former Swedish officer. The third policy area of competence is the Lisbon strategy. Besides the Commissioner for research and his Sherpa, the Chair of the Social Science Advisory Group to the European Commission also has been involved in this policy.[3] The fourth area is aeronautics, with two members (Victor Aguado, representing EUROCONTROL and Karl von Wogenau, conservative MEP) and one Sherpa (Jack Matthey, Sherpa of the Commissioner for Research) having participated in STAR 21. A finer image of the GoP's policy background thus comes into focus. Diplomacy and the military are the most salient policy areas. This observation is compounded when one turns to the institutional affiliations.

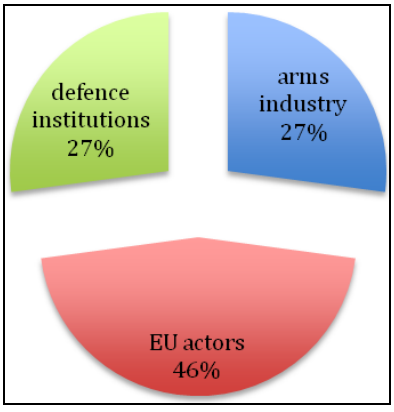
Table 2 Institutional affiliations – GoP

	Members	*Sherpas*	*Total*
Arms industry	9	7	16
EU actors	14	13	27
Defence institutions	10	6	16

The first category corresponds to eight firms of the arms industry. Karl von Wogenau has also been added to this group in order to account for his position of vice president of the EU lobby of the arms industry *security and defence agenda* [Hayes, (2009), p.9; Luehman, (2011), p.16]. Von Wogenau also chairs the *Kangaroo Group*, an informal forum that advocates "the application of the rules of the internal market in the field of

security and defence".[4] Interestingly, more members work for these actors than Sherpas because firms are often represented by their lobbyists in Brussels who operate in the area of EU affairs rather than arms industry *stricto sensu*. EU actors represent the absolute majority of the participants (13 Sherpas, 14 members). Finally, the third area entails defence actors. This category encompasses multilateral institutions of defence procurement, such as OCCAR and the Western Union Armament Group (WUAG), think tank in defence and security studies (FRS and EU ISS) and defence R&D centres.

Figure 2 Institutional affiliations – GoP (see online version for colours)



Thus, the GoP is under the sway of the arms industry and military institutions. In terms of policy background, the GoP is located in the direct continuity of the Lisbon Strategy, STAR 21 and, most importantly, the CFSP and EDSP. The choice of three high-profile international diplomats and mediators (Carl Bildt, Martti Ahtisaari and Javier Solana) signal the priority given to the last two policies. So does the absence of any actor who has experience in issues pertaining to the area of justice, security and freedom.

The peculiar constituency of this group sheds light on the content of the report that it produces. In making the case for the ESRP, the 34 pages report articulates a relatively new line of argument, breaking away from the heavy industrial undertones of the '90s debate. It locates the EU within an ambivalent 'global society' full of wonders and dangers. "In *today's global society*, the European Union faces new opportunities as well as new dangers" [GoP, (2004), p.6, emphasis added]. The four freedoms contribute to the silver lining of globalisation: "the *increased flow of people, goods, services, and capital across borders* boosts economic activity and enhances prosperity" [GoP, (2004), p.8]. There is, however, also a dark side to globalisation. International crises in remote regions affect 'Europe's security and interests' as they escalate into humanitarian disasters that might 'spring up on our borders'. Those crises mix up with technical progress that may be 'used malevolently' and 'increase the vulnerability of modern society' [GoP, (2004), p.8].

In this global society, threats go transnational. "These threats call for European responses and a comprehensive security approach that addresses internal as well as external security (…)" [GoP, (2004), p.6, p.10]. Thereupon, security arrangements, once supported by adequate technology, should play out smoothly across borders. Since, however, "the Union must protect its own citizens and its own territory as well", the report lays out its own concept of 'internal security' [GoP, (2004), p.11]. Interestingly,

the authors of the report feel the need to explain themselves about internal security. This echoes the peculiar constituency of the group, where *not one* participant has either working experience or expertise in the area of internal security. By contrast, their understanding of international security literally goes without saying.

Threats are not alone in crossing interstate borders: "(…) there is an increasing overlap of functions and capabilities (…) that often allows the use of the same technology for the development of both security and defence applications" [GoP, (2004), pp.6–7, p.12]. This quote gives away a deep-seated technological determinism, whereby technology travels across sectorial, territorial and functional boundaries. Technology is, in other word, an autonomous vector of transnationalisation as much as it is a crucial factor of security. "Technology itself cannot guarantee security, but security without the support of technology is impossible. (…) in other words: technology is a key 'force enabler' for a more secure Europe" [GoP, (2004), p.12].

What emerges from those lines is a strong belief in technological solutions to security problems. In Bigo et al.'s terms, "technological devices are then considered as mere add-ups to existing practices, as technical fixes to a particular practical problem" [Bigo et al., (2008), 23–24; see also Jeandesboz and Ragazzi, (2010), pp.16–17]. This belief is only as strong as the constituency of GoP allows it to be. In this group, actors who have spent their professional careers developing security solutions are overwhelmingly represented. By contrast, considerations about the rule of law and human rights come as an afterthought. Arguably, members of the GoP admit that "Europe must defend its commitment to a pluralist, open and liberal society", but they immediately reinstate the rhetoric of "striking the right balance between security and freedom." This move remains oblivious to critical security studies, which have shown time and again the flaws inherent to this image (for an overview of such debates, cf. Martin-Mazé and Burgess, 2015).

It is therefore revealing of the phasing out of this debates that the Commission "subscribes to the main thrust of the recommendations and orientations" of the GoP [European Commission, (2004), p.2]. It sets up a ESRAB in order to "define strategic lines of action (…) and a strategic research agenda for the ESRP" [European Commission, (2004), pp.5–6]. I turn to the constituency and discourse of this forum in the third segment. As employees of small firms of IT security and border guards join the fray, the discourse shifts towards the dataveillance of global flows unleashed by freedom of movement.

5 The shift towards dataveillance

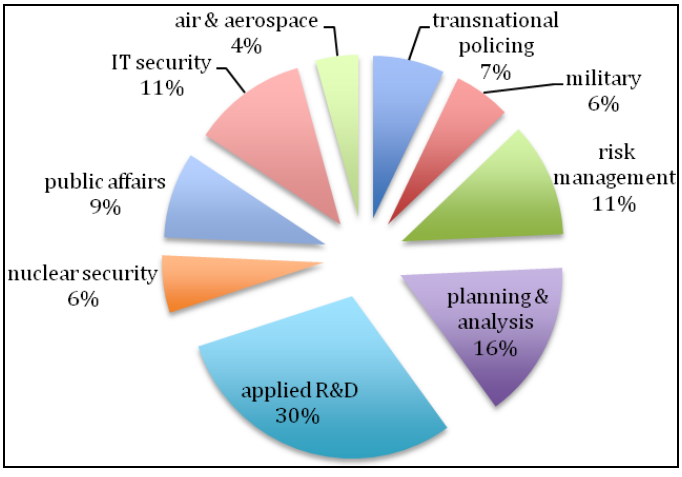
The ESRAB is the next phase of the *dialogue on security*. ESRAB is supposed to make recommendations regarding not only research priorities, but also the operational structure and strategic dimension of the upcoming ERSP (European Commission, 2005). The commission nominates *ad personam* "experts from various stakeholder groups, namely: users, industry and research organisations" (European Commission, 2005). Actually, "nominations for the 50 positions on the board came instead from the EU ambassadors (the permanent representations of the member states), the newly established European defence agency and other unspecified 'stakeholder groups'" [Hayes, (2009), p.15]. Beyond those official members, 300 experts are also associated to the proceedings of the forum [European Commission, (2006), p.6].

Seventy work experiences were sufficiently relevant to receive coding under expertise area. Twenty-one of those pertain to applied R&D, which often corresponds to positions as heads of Research and Technology departments of private or public institutions. Planning and analysis entail positions of researchers in think tanks and managers tasked with developing a strategy or consulting in a sector of activity. Rebecca Bowden provides an illustration of this later type of profile. Working for the National Security Advice Centre under the UK Government, she is tasked with reviewing the science and technology management strategy of major disruptive events from 2001 to 2003. Only four work experiences have been coded under 'military'.

Table 3 Policy expertise – ESRAB

Transnational policing	5
Military	4
Risk management	8
Planning and analysis	11
Applied R&D	21
Nuclear security	4
Public affairs	6
IT security	8
Air and aerospace	3

Figure 3 Policy expertise – ESRAB (see online version for colours)



Major shits can be observed in the constituency of ESRAB with regards to emergent policy areas. One such area is border security (five work experiences). For instance, Markus Hellenthal, who is the Co-Chairman of the forum, receives a PhD in law from the University of Cologne in 1985. He then joins the German federal police he is involved in setting up the data centre of the border guard service for the Schengen information system. In 1997, he joins Accenture Germany for which he wins the bid for the implementation of the US visit program. He starts working for Airbus in 2004 as the Senior Vice President of Airbus Defence and Communications Systems. He then creates

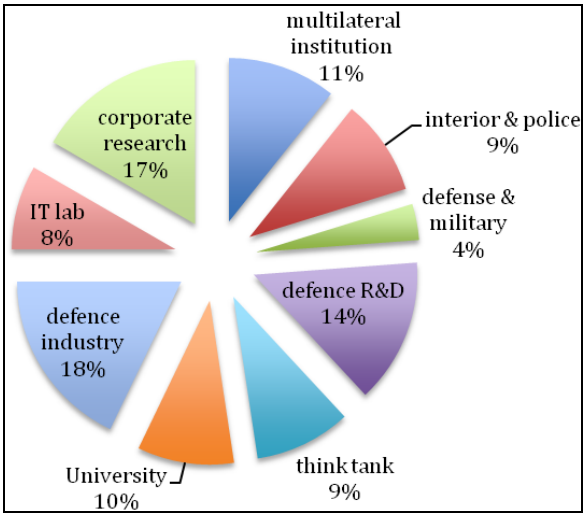
Airbus Global Security, with a heavy focus on border security in Europe and in the Middle East.[5]

Hellenthal's expertise is also coded in IT security, another emergent policy domain. Eight work experiences correspond to this category, such as those of Stephan Lechner. He receives a PhD in cryptography in 1993 from Kepler University in Linz. After working as security officer in mobile phone companies, he takes up the central security research department of Siemens in 2011 – which is the position that he holds at the time of his participation in ESRAB. He then becomes director of Institute for the Protection and the Security of the Citizen (IPSC) at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) in 2007. He also takes part in the Permanent Stakeholders' Group of the European Network and Information Security Agency ENISA.[6]

Table 4 Institutional affiliations – ESRAB

Multilateral institutions	9
Interior and police	8
Defence and military	3
Defence R&D	12
Think tank	8
University	8
Defence industry	15
IT lab	7
Corporate research	14

Figure 4 Institutional affiliations – ESRAB (see online version for colours)



The institutional affiliations of ESRAB members (total of 84) reveal a triangle-shaped social space linking defence industry (15 affiliations), corporate research (14) and defence R&D centres (12). Working for the defence industry can correspond to a wide range of positions that receive illustration along the trajectory of Christian Bréant. At the time of ESRAB, he manages the Research and Technology Department of Thales, thus

working in corporate research for a defence corporation. In his previous position, however, he worked for the Direction Générale de l'Armement (DGA), the procurement agency of the French Ministry of defence, which is therefore coded as a defence R&D centre. Bréant thus straddles the public-private divide, constantly accumulating authority as a top manager of defence R&D. Below this dominant triangle linking the different sectors of defence-focused R&D, one finds five types of institutions with similar levels of representation in ESRAB: university and top-level management in national research agencies (8), think tanks (8), multilateral institutions (9), interior and police (8) and IT labs (7).

Although actors with a solid background in the public-private business of defence R&D still hold sway over ESRAB, one clearly perceives the emergence of border guards, as well as computer engineers with expertise in IT security. Those actors lock in their belief in technology through a funnel-shaped report that channels every issue towards their technological solution [European Commission, (2006), p.10].

In such a deterministic perspective, threats are objective processes that lend themselves to quantification. A gloomy picture of 'illegal immigration' thus comes into focus: "organised crime generates an income of approximately EUR 3 billion per year from activities linked to illegal immigration" [European Commission, (2006), p.24]. A large-scale demonstration programme therefore aims at assembling a "European-wide integrated border control system" [European Commission, (2006), p.7]. The more borders are blurred, the more important they become. "The new threats underline the fact that internal and external security is increasingly inseparable, with the first line of defence often being abroad" [ESRAB, (2006), p.14]. In other words, as their territorial role fades away under the pressure of globalisation, borders take on new functions.

Borders actualise control directly within the flows that constitute the global society wherein Europe is nested. "Regulated border security crossings represent *interception choke points* for such material (…)" [ESRAB, (2006), p.24]. Borders indeed, are not obstacles to the process of globalisation, but enablers. ESRAB thus engages in a delicate act of balancing between the imperative of security and the overarching conditions of fluidity where all technological solutions need to fit. "For Europe, the major challenge will be to reduce both unit cost and screening times to enhance security whilst facilitating legitimate commerce between countries" [ESRAB, (2006), p.24]. This tension opens a space for more business opportunities: "(t)o meet the required future rates of throughput, new affordable solutions are urgently required" [ESRAB, (2006), p.14].

In this context, interoperability is seen as a go-to solution across the entire report. Whatever the problem, more interconnectivity between information systems will solve it. Data ought to move even quicker than people and goods in order to "seamlessly and dynamically interconnect multiple agency users" [ESRAB, (2006), p.42]. Thus, interoperable databases will "allow surveillance information to be cross-referenced against multiple heterogeneous sources in order to address illicit access of people and goods, for example integrated visa/immigration control systems" [ESRAB, (2006), p.25].

The smooth circulation of data enables a better detection of abnormal events. This is especially true when it comes to keeping the external border of the EU under watch. Amongst the capabilities that the report single out for further R&D, one finds the "detection and identification of large and small fast boats for blue borders and ports; the detection and identification of personnel and vehicle movements at unregulated borders and their authentication at check-points" [ESRAB, (2006), p.25]. If need be, those

surveillance capabilities can escalate into cruder measures of coercion and identify the '*means to realign the situation*' [ESRAB, (2006), p.38].

Aware that, in "some EU member states these measures have raised a lively public debate on civil liberties" [ESRAB, (2006), p.60], ESRAB treads carefully in order to numb the general public into 'societal acceptance'. "Security technologies, and the government policies accompanying them, raise many different ethical and legal concerns amongst the European citizens. The strength of these concerns directly influences public support and acceptance of both government policies and the security technologies themselves. To address this issue it is proposed to analyse the wider context of government policies and responses to security threats" [ESRAB, (2006), p.60).

Social scientists are called upon to provide this much needed analysis. It is their task to open the way for the unimpeded deployment of technologies of surveillance across European societies. As a matter of fact, the "ethics and justice section should provide a rounded and clearly articulated view as to an appropriate balance between security technology application of citizen's privacy" [ESRAB, (2006), p.38]. Thus, somewhat ironically, social scientists find themselves enrolled under a banner that most of them know to be flawed. Then again, the fact that those social scientists were conspicuously absent from the composition of ESRAB helps understand how they end up in this position of auxiliary troops.

ESRAB finally calls for the "the creation of a European security board (that) should bring together, in a non-bureaucratic manner, authoritative senior representatives from a cross stakeholder community of public and private stakeholders to jointly develop a strategic security agenda and act as a possible reference body for the implementation of existing programmes and initiatives" [ESRAB, (2006), p.8, p.68]. Like genies out of the lamp, civil servants of the European Commission are keen to grant ESRAB member their wishes. ESRAB is followed by the ESRIF (European Commission, 2007).

6 The subterfuge of a balancing act

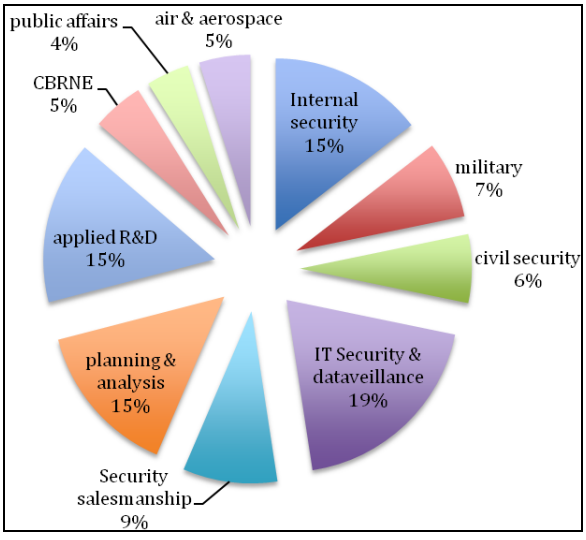
From September 2007 to December 2009, "more than 600 experts and 65 distinguished personalities from all over Europe intensively debated in an open forum aspects of European Research and Innovation deemed essential to enhancing the security of our citizen" [ESRIF, (2009), p.3]. ESRIF is a joint initiative from the European Commission and the member states. Thus, it is the later that nominated the 'distinguished personalities', responding to an invitation of the European Commission. Those personalities sit in the plenary session, whereas experts participate in ad hoc working groups [European Commission, (2007), p.10].

The difference of status between 'distinguished personalities' and experts reminds us that the "power elite are not solitary rulers. Advisers and consultants, spokesmen and opinion-makers are often the captains of their higher though and decision. (…) such celebrities and consultants are part of the immediate scene in which the drama of the elite is enacted. But the drama itself is centred in the command posts of the major institutional hierarchies" [Mills, (2000), p.4]. In what follows, I first bring under examination the composition of this plenary body, before analysing the ESRIF Final Report in more details. The first series of graph and figure showcase the area of expertise that members of ESRIF have accumulated in their last two working positions. 124 of those were coded as relevant for the present study.

Table 5 Policy expertise – ESRIF

Internal security	18
Military	9
Civil security	8
IT security and dataveillance	24
Security salesmanship	11
Planning and analysis	18
Applied R&D	19
CBRNE	6
Public affairs	5
Air and aerospace	6

Figure 5 Policy expertise – ESRIF (see online version for colours)



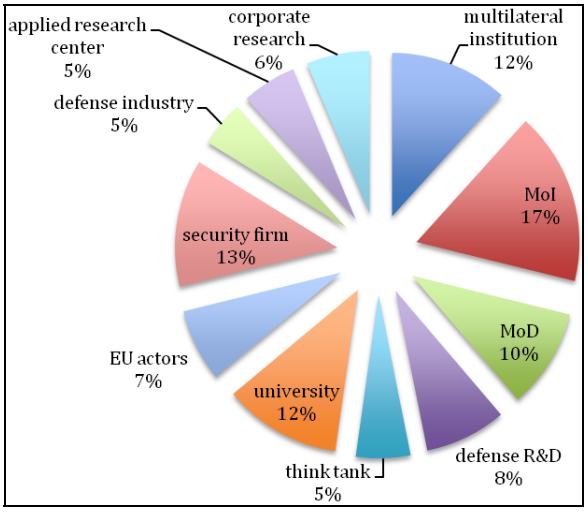
The military constituency of the high-level public-private dialogue in security research continues to be gradually phased out (7%). On the contrary, experiences in internal security represent 15% of the population, including six experiences in border security and seven in international policing. Thus, the presence of those professionals consolidates in ESRIF. The same goes for specialists of IT security and dataveillance (19%). But the change here is also qualitative. IT specialists of ESRAB were mostly computer engineers. In ESRIF, most IT specialists are national directors of the Communications Departments of either central police organisations or dedicated IT security agencies. Thierry Delville is one such profile. He graduates from the *École National Supérieure de Police* in 1994. He becomes director of the office for information system in the central direction of public security in 1998. From this moment on, he is involved in managing the information systems of the French national police. He then heads the Service of the Technologies of Internal Security until 2009.[7]

One last category of professional expertise appears in ESRIF that was not present in ESRAB: civil security. Eight professional experiences were coded in this category, which refers to disaster prevention and management. With a background in the police administration of a German Land, Christoph Ungarn moves into the field of civil protection in 2003. He becomes director of the Department of Civil Protection of the Ministry of the Interior of Lower Saxony. In September 2004, he is appointed President of the Federal Office for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief.[8]

Table 6 Institutional affiliations – ESRIF

Multilateral institution	13
Ministry of the Interior (MoI)	19
Ministry of Defence (MoD)	11
Defence R&D	9
Think Tank	6
University	13
EU actors	8
Security firm	14
Defence industry	5
Applied research centre	6
Corporate research	7

Figure 6 Institutional affiliations – ESRIF (see online version for colours)



A relative majority of ESRIF members have worked for institutions of internal security in their last two jobs. Large corporations of the defence industry have clearly taken a backseat in ESRIF. On the contrary, small and medium firms commercialising security services, such as risk management, or surveillance technologies, such as body scanners, are more heavily present. This testifies to the changing structure of the market that is being assembled under the umbrella of security research. Whereas the GoP targeted large defence consortia, ESRIF focuses on small and medium security firms. This is

compounded by the fact the remaining large defence corporation in ESRIF are actually represented by branches specialised in the commercialisation of security services. The trajectory of Jean-Paul Herteman is particularly interesting in this regard. A graduate from École Polytechnique, he starts his career as a defence engineer in the Délégation Generale de L'Armement. He goes through the revolving door of the defence industry in the mid-1980s. After becoming a high-level executive of SAGEM in the early 2000, he creates SAGEM defence and security in 2007.[9] The shift of the *dialogue in security* from defence towards security is thus reflected by the public institutions well as by the corporations, by the demand-side and by the supply-side of this market in the being.

ESRIF (2009, p.11) produces a 324 pages long document, which argues for the implementation of a "European Security Research and Innovation Agenda (ESRIA) over the next 20 years." Like that of ESRAB, ESRIF's report focuses on border security, traces the vulnerabilities springing out of the 'global risk society' [ESRIF, (2009), p.233], and emphasises the need for the automated detection of anomalies [ESRIF, (2009), p.15]. The document also proceeds from the same technological belief, which remains locked in as a method going from missions towards capabilities through threat analysis. Thus, ESRAB and ESRIF display an apparently seamless discursive fabric.

ESRIF, however, does two things, which are worthy of note. Firstly, it revamps parts of the GoP's analysis. Thus, external security returns, but with a twist: "the European Union and its member states are part of a highly interdependent complex world. Failed states, border disputes, environmentally induced migration, resource conflicts: all increasingly have intercontinental, if not global, repercussions. Europe cannot ignore these external risks and threats – or their potential impact – on its domestic security" [ESRIF, (2009), p.12]. Apparently, this observation stands at odd with my overall argument because actors with a diplomatic or military background have either disappeared or taken the back seat in ESRAB and even more so in ESRIF. Thus, how is one to account for the fact that, even in the absence of actors interested in foregrounding these issues, external crises come into the focus of ESRIF?

This particular section of the report is entitled 'external dimension of Europe's civil security' [ESRIF, (2009), p.12]. This phrasing echoes the framing of the external dimension of area of freedom security and justice that was at stakes in negotiations between the commission and the council in 2005 and 2006 (Council of the European Union, 2005; European Commission, 2005). These texts testify to the keen interest that security professionals take in grafting internal security onto external relations (Alegre et al., 2009). As a result of this process, a body without diplomats or military officers can deal with topics pertaining to external security, for they were hijacked by professionals of internal security (Pawlak, 2009).

The most significant discursive transformation between ESRAB's and ESRIF's reports deals with societal security. At first glance, the text explicitly does away with any balancing act between security and liberty. "'Human dignity' is the most precious and is an 'end' by itself and as such it can never become a 'means'" [ESRIF, (2009), p.3]. This discourse relocates human beings at the centre of security: "they endure and respond to natural disasters. They perpetrate or are victimised by organised crime, trafficking and terrorism. Technological innovation cannot fully contribute to security unless it focuses on the human being" [ESRIF, (2009), p.13]. The report integrates human and societal issues into security research in three ways.

First, ESRIF aims to appease society. It strives to calm societal concerns about the intrusiveness of technologies of surveillance. In order to sell technological solutions, security researchers must alleviate the concerns that those raise amongst potential customers and the general public. "Research and innovation in security demands a framework of legal and ethical guidelines – a '*legitimacy perimeter*' – to ensure social acceptance and trust, alongside effective political leadership and communication. These will open markets for trusted new solutions" [ESRIF, (2009), p.13]. It befalls to social scientist to scout for security devices. It is they, who should gauge the lines of resistance in the societal fabric, identify strongpoint's of critiques and devise ways to circumvent them. They are expected to "lay the foundation of broadly acceptable policy options and new technical provisions" [ESRIF, (2009), p.49].

Secondly, security research must protect society against threats springing out of its midst. Some of those threats result from impossible societal trade-offs between divergent political perspectives. Those that remain outside of the dominant consensus might therefore pose a threat to the overall society. "Societal coherence is an essential prerequisite for a secure society. However, a society fulfilling the ambitions and ideologies of all individuals and groups of citizens is a utopia. There is always a societal trade off of different desires and views in order to reach broadly shared, common social, cultural and political values. The dissatisfaction of certain individuals or groups can become a kernel for societal disturbances" [ESRIF, (2009), p.51]. Those words resonate vividly with Foucault's analysis of bio-power as a technology that sorts out good from bad life, with a view to better controlling the latter, and, if necessary, to bring it to end for the greater good of the former [Foucault, (1997), pp.227–229].

Thirdly, and crucially, security research enrols society for the purposes of its own security. This enrolment occurs under the label of societal resilience, whose necessity peaks in the immediate aftermath of a security crisis. Thus, a "resilient society, in event of security incidents, requires appropriate behaviour from well prepared citizens and the efficient, flexible and proportional reaction of security organisations" [ESRIF, (2009), p.49]. The imperative of resilience results from the absolute unpredictability of risks, which are, at the same time, certain to materialise. Indeed, "certain risks cannot be planned for or avoided. Resilient societies are those whose citizens, infrastructures and organisation can face shocks and recover from them. This ability to reduce vulnerability, mitigate effects and recover quickly requires resilience at all levels of society" [ESRIF, (2009), p.13]. Resilience is everyone's business. It trickles down to the level of the single individual, who should not expect too much of an overburdened public administration. In a resilient society, laypersons are expected to take matters into their own hands. "Citizens have to be prepared for security incidents and to behave optimally to avoid personal harm. A significant challenge is to strengthen their behaviour in case of security incidents and calamities" [ESRIF, (2009), p.52].

7 Conclusions

This article highlights the 'rise of an elite of power' through security research [Mills, (2000), pp.28–29]. To do so, it traces the four steps through which the *ESRP* took shape. In phase one, civil servants of the European Commission fail at unifying European markets for defence procurement. To circumvent the obstacles into which they run, they enrol executives of the defence industry. In phase two, those actors get to know their way

around the intricacies the 'Brussel's bubble' (Georgakakis, 2011). In so doing they also get a say in what security research is. For defence industrials, security is a technicality. It is a problem that one solves by applying appropriate technical solutions. In the blind spots of this widely shared but scientifically shallow technological belief, crucial tenets of the democratic order and fundamental rights are being silently but irremediably displaced, shattered and weakened (Bigo et al., 2014; Jones, 2017; Fotiadis, 2017).

Figure 7 Evolution of institutional affiliations (GoP-ESRAB-ESRIF) (see online version for colours)

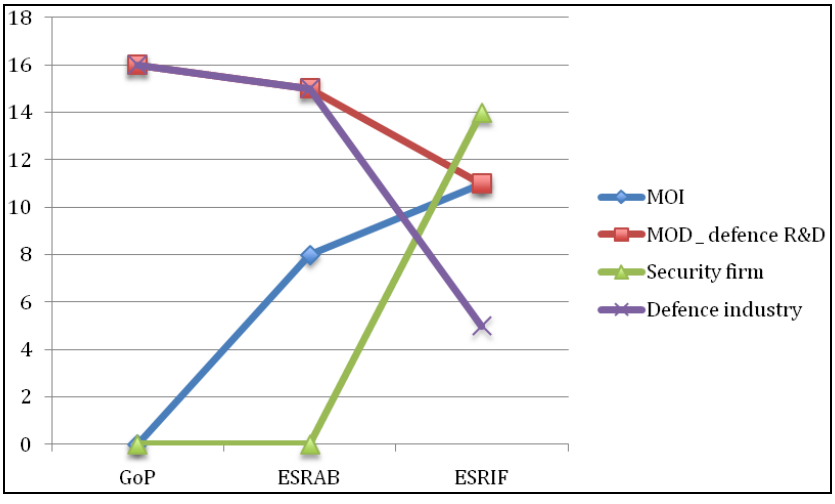
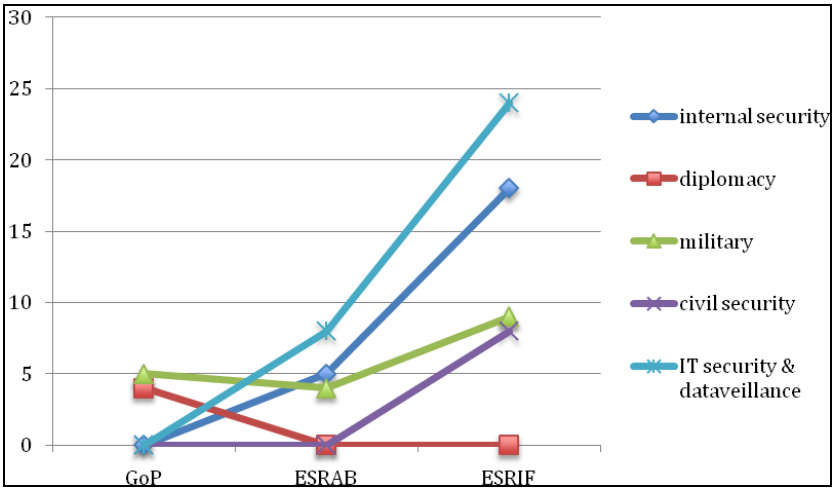


Figure 8 Evolution of policy expertise (GoP, ESRAB, ESRIF) (see online version for colours)



Once started however, the process attracts more actors with more diverse background, thereby diversifying the power elite of security research in Europe. Indeed, in Mill's own terms, "it would be naive to interpret any major elite group merely in terms of its ostensible personnel" [Mills, (2000), p.15]. Studying the constituency of the *dialogue on*

security reveals how the power elite surrounds itself with experts and consultants. Thus, the composition of the GoP, ESRAB et ESRIF shifts from diplomats and staff officers, who, together with the defence industry, hold sway over the GoP, to border guards and developers of IT security, who dominate the ranks of ESRAB, and to professionals of civil security who join those of ESRIF. The graphs below represent the evolution of expertise and institutional affiliations over time. In the dialogue on security – but solely in this context, large defence consortia are replaced either by their subsidiaries or by smaller firms commercialising security services or devices. It should be noted that this observation is only valid for the policy context of security research in the 2000s. It does not stand at odd with the subsequent creation of the European Defence Fund in the 2010s.

With regards to the dialogue on security, sociological shifts are reflected in the changing discourse of forum, which testifies to the robustness of the homology between position and position-takings upon which the theoretical framework of this study is posited. Preoccupations framed in terms of industrial competitiveness and external security and stability inform the first two steps. But when border guards and IT developers enter the fray, the focus shifts towards dataveillance of transnational circulation of people and goods. It then furthers moves towards societal security.

At first glance, this discourse resorts to a balancing act, providing a counter-weight to the strong technological belief that GoP and ESRAB have enshrined as a core tenet of the *dialogue on security*. Societal security supposedly brings the human back in. A closer analysis reveals, however, that societal security actually works so as to align the whole of European societies with the imperative of total defence. Society must be able to defend itself against threats springing from its midst, even without the assistance of security professionals. Paradoxically enough, social scientists who were excluded in the first place become re-included, but from a subordinate position. It befalls to them to alleviate fears in the general public about security technologies, so as to ensure their smooth, and profitable, commercialisation.

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