



#### INTRODUCTION

2024 was another successful year for the Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy (CSDS). Let me take this opportunity to thank all of our staff at CSDS, our partners and our sponsors. 2024 saw the Centre build on its growing reputation as a leading research hub in Brussels that tackles the defining security questions of our time. During the year we continued to focus our efforts on the Indo-Pacific, European security and defence, Europe-Japan relations, Europe-South Korea relations, geopolitics and technology, diplomacy, Europe-Taiwan relations, transatlantic security and much more.

As this annual report shows, CSDS has increased the tempo and ambition of its research and outreach activities. We have gained wider acclaim through major events such as the Brussels Indo-Pacific Dialogue, and we specifically thank all of the speakers that have engaged with our events throughout the year. Thank you for sharing your expertise and views. Likewise, 2024 was a successful year for CSDS products such as policy briefs, in-depth papers, conversations and our new podcast series, Strategy Speaks. CSDS has also continued to deliver cutting-edge research in leading journals and books.

In terms of project acquisition and delivery, CSDS has a proven track-record of delivering high-quality, policy relevant, analysis. We want to thank all of our sponsors in 2024 for giving life to our research objectives. In particular, we were extremely pleased to kick-off our two European Research Council projects on US-China rivalry and European autonomy and geopolitics and technology. We also started our work as part of the INPACE project in 2024, and we learned of our success in attracting more exciting projects that will begin in 2025.

Thank you to everyone that supported CSDS' research and activities in 2024. We look forward to continuing our efforts in 2025.

Prof. Dr. Luis Simón

Director CSDS

#### **ABOUT CSDS**



**Luis Simón** Director, CSDS "Our partners and sponsors make our work possible and meaningful. 2024 saw CSDS build deeper partnerships across the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions" The CSDS is a research hub at the Brussels School of Governance (BSoG) of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB). CSDS seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the key contemporary security and diplomatic challenges of the 21st century – and their impact on Europe – while reaching out to the policy community that will ultimately need to handle such challenges.

Our expertise in security studies

will seek to establish comprehensive theoretical and policy coverage of strategic competition and its impact on Europe, whilst paying particular attention to the Transatlantic relationship and the wider Indo-Pacific region. The CSDS is pleased to host the KF-VUB Korea Chair and Japan Chair.

#### **Sponsors and partners**

CSDS would like to thank all of its partners and sponsors for making 2024 another successful year of dialogue, exchange and reflection. Special thanks are conveyed to Asan Institute for Policy Studies, Australian Department of Defense, Australian Embassy to the EU, NATO, Belgium and Luxembourg, Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), Belgian Delegation to NATO, Business Bridge Europe,

"2024 was a successful year for CSDS. We continued to inform academic and policy debates in Brussels and beyond"



**Giulia Tercovich**Deputy Director, CSDS

Center for International Studies (Sciences Po), Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Dickey Center (Dartmouth College), Egmont Institute, Embassy of India to Belgium, Luxembourg and the EU, Embassy of Japan to the Kingdom of Belgium and Mission to NATO, European Hub for Contemporary China (EuroHub4Sino), European Commission, European Research Council (ERC), European Union, EU Institute for Security Studies, French Ministry of the Armed Forces, Japan Government, Keio Center for Strategy (KCS), Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), Korea Economic Institute (KEI), Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP), Logos Public Affairs, MESO Lab (Ohio State University), National Chengchi University (NCCU), National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS), NATO, NATO Public Diplomacy Division, NATO Science for Peace and Security Programme, Polish Institute of International Affairs, Research Foundation Flanders (fwo), Taipei Representative Office in the EU and Belgium, The Korea Foundation, United States Institute of Peace, United States Military Academy and the United States Studies Centre (University of Sydney).

# 26 events

CSDS organised and hosted several conferences, workshops and seminars throughout 2024 on critical issues facing the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions.

# 57 analytical products

In 2024, CSDS continued to produce in-house publications including the Policy Brief, In-Depth Paper and Strategy Debrief series. We also created a new podcast called "Strategy Speaks".

## 8 projects

CSDS was extremely pleased to continue its work on two European Research Council projects, as well as to begin a series of new projects sponsored by NATO, the EU and others.

# 51 staff members

2024 was a year of growth for CSDS as we welcomed new colleagues to help support our efforts. We were pleased to welcome new doctoral and post-doctoral researchers.

### **EVENTS**

CSDS went from strength-to-strength in 2024 for its events and activities. In 2024, CSDS organised a total of **26 conferences, workshops and seminars**. The Centre was honoured to welcome a number of high-level quests at its events.

The CSDS flagship event called the "Brussels Indo-Pacific Dialogue" was organised twice in 2024 due to popular demand. With CSDS' partners, the first Dialogue on 30 January 2024 welcomed the Belgian Prime Minister, Alexander de Croo,

High-level speakers at CSDS events in 2024

Baiba Braže, Maria Castillo Fernandez, Christopher Cavoli, Michael Collins, Javier Colomina, Tsai Ing-wen, Ryu Jeong-hyun, Mélanie Joly, Saurabh Kumar, Roberta Metsola, Masahiro Mikami, Caroline Millar, Ariadne Petridis, Carmen Romero, Stefano Sannino, Jörg See and more.

plus dignitaries and experts from the Australian and Japanese foreign ministries, the European Commission and NATO and universities and think tanks. The second dialogue on 3 December 2024 saw the foreign ministers of Canada and Latvia, as well as the Secretary General of the EEAS and NATO's SACEUR share their views on the interplay between the Indo-Pacific and Euro-Atlantic regions.



"Through our events and partnerships, we are able to inform vital policy debates. In 2024, we went from strengthto-strength through our events and activities"

Natalia Martín Head of Partnerships and Activities, CSDS In addition, CSDS worked with partners in 2024 to organise annual meetings and dialogues. For example, on 9 April 2024 CSDS and CSIS organised the fourth **Transatlantic Dialogue** on the Indo-Pacific in Washington, D.C. The annual conference focused on the NATO Washington Summit and shifts in NATO's approach to China's strategy in the Indo-Pacific.

Additionally, the ERC-sponsored SINATRA and CODE projects started their activities with an event on 14 May to discuss economic security and China-Europe relations. Additionally, during its study trip to Taiwan in September CSDS worked with the National Chengchi University (NCCU) to organise a public event on strategic competition in Europe and the Indo-Pacific.



In 2024, a number of events were the direct result of CSDS projects and initiatives. For example, as part of the CSDS "Bridging Allies" initiative the Centre organised events designed to pull closer the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions. In February 2024, an expert workshop on regional security architectures in the Indo-Pacific was held in Paris

"2024 was a year of increased dialogue between Japan and Europe. As Japan Chair, I was proud to host several important debates"



**Eva Pejsova** Japan Chair, CSDS

under the Bridging Allies initiative. A further event was organised with the US Institute of Peace in February to discuss the growing relations between NATO and the Indo-Pacific 4 nations. In May, CSDS organised an event in Brussels on China-US competition and the implications for Europe and the Indo-Pacific. Finally, on 17 October 2024 CSDS worked with the Korea Foundation and the Asan Institute on a forum in Seoul to discuss South Korea-NATO cooperation.

As part of its engagement with the **INPACE project**, CSDS organised two events in 2024 in Seoul. On 21 October, CSDS organised a meeting focusing on EU-South Korea digital relations, and on 22 October CSDS organised an event on digital technologies in the context of cooperation between Europe and the Indo-Pacific.

Under the **Japan Chair**, closed-door "cluster" meetings were held throughout the year on Japan's economic security, Tokyo's Middle East policy, Japan's approach to the war on Ukraine and supply chain risks and China. In Tokyo on 15 October 2024, the Japan Chair partnered with the Keio Center for Strategy and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung on an event on security challenges for Europe and Japan.



"With the ever closer Europe-South Korea ties, I was proud as KF-VUB Korea Chair to host a series of important dialogues during the year."

**Ramon Pacheco Pardo** KF-VUB Korea Chair, CSDS As part of the KF-VUB Korea Chair's activities, CSDS organised a meeting in Paris in October 2024 with the EU Institute for Security Studies on EU-South Korea relations. The KF-VUB Korea Chair also organised in June 2024 the annual trilateral trade and economic security event with the Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP) and the

Korea Economic Institute (KEI). Furthermore, the annual "Brussels Korea Forum" was organised on 9 October 2024 in Brussels, and this brought together a host of experts and senior decision-makers to discuss global security cooperation, economic security, technology cooperation and more. The Forum was generously supported by The Korea Foundation.



"In a critical year for European defence, CSDS proudly continued to inform debates with close partners and European actors"

**Daniel Fiott**Head of Defence and Statecraft, CSDS

The **Defence and Statecraft** programme also organised a series events in 2024. In February 2024, CSDS partnered with the US Military Academy at West Point and others for the annual international security seminar, which saw the presentation of a series of papers on security, states and societies. The programme's main event, the

"Defence & Statecraft Forum" took place on 19 April 2024. The Forum is an online conference that brought together high-level speakers to discuss the American and European elections. In April 2024, CSDS partnered with the Egmont Institute and the Belgian Delegation to NATO to organise an event at NATO headquarters on the NATO Washington Summit. In May, CSDS also organised an expert workshop on European approaches to security in the Sahel. Finally, on 16 October 2024 CSDS partnered with Business Bridge Europe and Logos to organise the annual European Defence & Security Conference, which brought together high-level speakers including former EU High Representative / Vice-President Josep Borrell and other senior officials and industry representatives.

The newly created **Geopolitics**and **Technology** programme at CSDS also started to organise events and activities in 2024. For example, in May 2024 the programme organised an expert meeting on "Economic Security and Space" in Brussels. Under the ERC-sponsored "CODE project", the event brought together senior policymakers and industry representatives to discuss the importance of space

"In 2024 we began our activities on our ERC-sponsored 'Geopolitics and Technology' research project. I look forward to seeing our research in this area blossom.



**Antonio Calcara**Head of Geopolitics and Technology, CSDS

from an economic security perspective.



The CSDS Conversations are high-level seminars designed to bring together leading academics, think-tankers and public policy practitioners from Europe and across the world to debate some of the most pressing security and foreign policy challenges of an international system being reshaped by the return of great power competition.

CSDS organised **10 Conversations** in 2024 that brought together Julianne Smith, Wess A. Mitchell, Joseph Nye Jr., Lisa Curtis, Raja Mohan, Robert Blackwill, Richard Fontaine, Dara Massicot, Dima Adamsky, Andrew May, Diego Ruiz Palmer, Beatrice Heuser, Sergey Radchenko, Michael Kofman, Fei-Fan Lin and Nadia Schadlow for online, closed-door, discussions.



### **EDUCATION**

During 2024, CSDS continued to provide education services and trainings. For example, in October 2024 CSDS supported cooperation between the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council by organising two model EU simulations of the European Council, focusing specifically on digital and technological cooperation. The simulations were coordinated by CSDS in cooperation with the EU Delegation to the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Sultanate of Oman.

CSDS also continued to deliver education and training services through its annual programmes including the **Brussels Programme on European Foreign Policy** – a multidisciplinary summer programme organised in cooperation with the University of Southern California – and the Postgraduate Certificate in **Global Risk Analysis and Crisis Management** (GRACM).

Finally, CSDS started work on a new executive training course for 2025 called the "Brussels 360" course, which will provide participants with a deeper and more critical understanding of Europe's role in a world in flux over an intensive three-day set of lectures, policy panels and networking opportunities.



#### **PROJECTS**

2024 was another busy year for projects. In terms of ongoing projects, CSDS continued work on two **European Research Council** (ERC) grants focusing on European strategic autonomy in a context of US-China rivalry (SINATRA) and geopolitics and technology (CODE), respectively.

CSDS also moved towards the finalisation of a NATO-financed project on future trends in the Indo-Pacific during 2024. With the support of **NATO's Science for Peace and Security** (SPS) programme, CSDS worked alongside the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS), the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) and the Centre for International Studies (CERI) at Sciences-Po Paris to organise workshops and publish the results through leading outlets such as War on the Rocks.



"Projects are a core part of CSDS' efforts and in 2024 we proved successful in delivering on existing projects, while also acquiring new ones for 2025."

**Paula Cantero Dieguez** Head of Projects, CSDS Furthermore, CSDS continued its work through the EU in the Indo-Pacific Jean Monnet Network and the INPACE project, which supports the implementation of the EU's digital partnerships with Japan, South Korea and Singapore as well as cooperation with India. In 2024, CSDS contributed to INPACE with three events and

an episode of the Strategy Speaks podcast. What is more, in 2024 CSDS successfully began its project on "Alliances in Contested Waters" with publications and many more activities are scheduled for 2025.

CSDS also attained new projects during 2024 that will begin in 2025. This includes projects supporting by the European Defence Fund (SWIFT), the European Parliament and Microsoft, among others.

## **PRODUCTS**

In 2024, CSDS continued to publish a range of publications through the CSDS Policy Briefs, CSDS In-Depth Papers, the CSDS-SWJ Strategy Debriefs and the Korea Chair Explains notes. Overall, CSDS published 57 individual publications.

Throughout the year, CSDS published 37 **Policy Briefs** on a range of topics including the Camp David Summit, Chinese military strategy, EU-Japan relations, European defence industrial policy, European and Indo-Pacific relations, the European space sector, EU-South Korea relations, the High North, NATO maritime security, Taiwan security, the Wagner Group, the war on Ukraine and more.

The **CSDS In-Depth Papers** are extended pieces of analysis on topics related to European security. The papers are a direct deliverables from CSDS projects and in 2024 CSDS published five In-Depth Papers on security in the Sahel, scenarios for the war on Ukraine, NATO's nuclear posture, European grand strategy and the NATO Washington Summit.

The **CSDS-SWJ Strategy Debriefs** are a set of interviews with a range of high-level individuals. In 2024, CSDS published three Strategy Debriefs with Matt Pottinger, Andrea Kendall-Taylor, Robert D. Blackwill and Richard Fontaine covering the Russia-China axis, US grand strategy and the war on Ukraine.

In 2024, CSDS published 12 **Korea Chair Explains** notes which cover topics of interest in Korean affairs in a short and direct manger. During the year, the Korea Chair Explains notes covered topics such as the declaration of martial law in South Korea, the EU-South Korea Security and Defence Partnership, Seoul's aid contributions to Ukraine, the South Korea-Russia relationship and more.

**Speaks**". CSDS recorded nine Strategy Speaks episodes in 2024 on topics including the war on Ukraine, lections in Taiwan, the China challenge in the Indo-Pacific, geopolitics and technology, the NATO Washington Summit, the EU's digital partnerships, EU-South Korea relations and the 2024 American presidential elections.

### **Product Catalogue 2024**

**POLICY BRIEFS** 

Mutual Defence in the EU? The Imperative of Article 42.7 in Case the US Abandons European Defence

Gesine Weber

Manufacturing Defence: Europe, the ROK and Defence Industrial Cooperation

Daniel Fiott & Yang Uk

Proven Partners: Towards the Implementation of the ROK-NATO Tailored Partnership

Sung-han Kim & Ramon Pacheco Pardo

Uncertainty Ahead? The 2024 US Elections and What is at Stake for EU-NATO Cooperation

Nele Marianne Ewers-Peters

Sink or Swim? Revitalising NATO in European Maritime Security Piero Barlucchi

Financial Power Europe? The Challenges of EU Financial Assistance to Ukraine Lukas Spielberger

Is Xi Listening? The 2024 Third Plenum and its Impact on Global Economic Security Laia Comerma

Plus ça change? France and European Defence After the Legislative Elections Gesine Weber

Games of Peace and War: The Olympics and International Politics *Antonio Missiroli* 

Nuclear Puzzles: What can South Korea Learn from NATO's Experiences as a Nuclear Alliance? Jina Kim & Luis Simón

Bound by Uncertainty: What Future for EU-Japan Security Cooperation?

Eva Pejsova

Losing Escalation Dominance: The US, the First Island Chain and Japan's Nuclear Outlook

Kristin Lerfald Grostad

Navigating the Indo-Pacific
Strategic Priorities for the New EU
Leadership
Giulia Tercovich et al.

Linking Europe and Asia for the Future: Time for the JUKE Grouping?

Henry Haggard

Keep it Moving: From Mobility to Logistics in European Defence Daniel Fiott

Security of Supply: How Can the EU Help Ensure Defence Preparedness? Daniel Fiott

Power for Progress: Why the EU Needs a New EU Global Strategy Giovanni Grevi

Shadow War: What Estonia and Poland Tell Us About Russia's Clandestine Operations in Europe Ivan U. Klyszcz

#### **POLICY BRIEFS**

Two Elections, One Challenge: How the European and Taiwanese Elections Mean a New EU Taiwan Playbook is Needed

Giulia Tercovich & Laia Comerma

Doubly Dangerous? How Norway Copes with Security Dilemmas in the High North

Bjørn Olav Knutsen & Elisabeth Pettersen

Outer Limits? Economic Security and the European Space Sector Giovanni Tricco & Antonio Calcara

From Kabul to Kyiv: The Long Shadow of NATO's War in Afghanistan

Michael John Williams

War Economy: Ukraine, the EU and the Defence Technological and Industrial Base Daniel Fiott

Wagner Reborn? The Metastasis of Russian Mercenarism Patrick Wouters

Sisyphus at Work: The Japan-ROK Rapprochement and its Implications for Europe Eva Pejsova

Lame Ducks? Seizing on EU-UK Security Cooperation in a Year of Elections

Gesine Weber

In Whose Interests? Regulating Europe's Defence Industry and the Politics of Exemptions Daniel Fiott The Long Shadow? China's Military Rise in the Indo-Pacific and its Global Implications Masayuki Masuda & Alexander Mattelaer

Competitor, Rival but Partner No More? EU-China Economic Relations and the European Elections

Francesco Giovanni Lizzi

Four In, Two Out and one in Between: European Political Parties and EU Defence Lukasz Maslanka

Germany's Las Sonderweg: How Germany Learned to Love Strategy, in its Own Way Roderick Parkes

Brothers in Arms? The South Korea-NATO Relationship Ramon Pacheco Pardo

Self-fulfilling Prophecy? The Consequences of America's and China's Decoupling

Olivier Sueur

All Along the Watchtower? The EU and the Geopoliticisation of Migration

Diego Caballero-Vélez

Arming Ukraine: Can Europe's
Bilateral Defence Agreements Make
the Difference?
Lotje Boswinkel

De-Risking: How Germany's Indo-Pacific Deployments Support Berlin's Economic Strategy Towards China Maximilian Ernst

#### **POLICY BRIEFS**

By Any Other Name? The Camp David Summit, US-Japan-ROK Trilateral Security Cooperation and Military Alliances Tongfi Kim

**IN-DEPTH PAPERS** 

Wait and See? The Dynamics of Europe's Evolving Approach to the Sahel

Daniel Fiott

Shades of Grim: Scenarios for Ukraine and Global Order Lotje Boswinkel & Luis Simón

Modernise, Expand or Complement? NATO's Nuclear Posture in the Post-2022 Strategic Environment Robert Bell

What Grand Strategy for Europe? Three Competing Visions and One Proposal

Giovanni Grevi

The Turning Tide? A European Agenda for the Washington Summit Daniel Fiott

STRATEGY DEBRIEFS

Interview with Matt Pottinger
With Octavian Manea

Interview with Andrea Kendall-Taylor With Octavian Manea

Interview with Robert Blackwill and Richard Fontaine
With Octavian Manea

#### STRATEGY SPEAKS

A Pivotal Moment: South Korea, European Security and Alliances Ramon Pacheco Pardo & Daniel Fiott

Digitalising Together: The EU, the Indo-Pacific and Digital Partnerships

Koichiro Komiyama, Raluca Csernatoni & Daniel Fiott

The Second Coming: Trump,
Ukraine and Transatlanticism After
the US Elections

Linde Desmaele, Luis Simón & Daniel Fiott

Europe in the Indo-Pacific: The EU and Swedish Approaches
Calle Håkansson & Daniel Fiott

The "Geo-Tech" World: Strategic Competition, Europe, Geopolitics and Technology Antonio Calcara & Daniel Fiott

What Went Down in D.C.? NATO and the Washington Summit

Alexander Mattelaer & Daniel Fiott

Facing the China Challenge: Europe, Australia and the Indo-Pacific Rory Medcalf & Daniel Fiott

A Year of Elections: EU-Taiwan Relations Giulia Tercovich & Daniel Fiott

The War in Ukraine: Four Scenarios and Wild Cards
Lotje Boswinkel, Luis Simón & Daniel

**Fiott** 

### OUTREACH

In 2024, CSDS continued to engage with a wider public audience through the publication of academic and policy papers, media activities and speaking engagements.

CSDS researchers published a range of **academic and policy papers** with leading outlets including 38 North, Agenda Publishing, ARES Group, the Austrian Ministry of Defence, CELIS Institute, CIDOB Barcelona, Council on Geostrategy, DokDoc, DSI Magazine, European Liberal Forum, Foreign Affairs, Instituto da Defesa Nacional, Intereconomics, International Studies Review, Internationale Politik Quarterly, Italian Institute for International Political Studies, Journal of Common Market Studies, Journal of European Public Policy, Larcier Intersentia, LUISS School of Government, Martens Centre, Pandora Rivista, Politics and Governance, Real Instituto Elcano, Review of International Political Economy, Review of International Studies, Robert Schuman Centre, Routledge, Royal United Services Institute, Survival, SWP Berlin, Trans-European Policy Studies Association and War on the Rocks.

In terms of **media activities**, CSDS researchers provided their expertise through ABC News, Asahi Shimbun, Associated Press, Business Insider, Christian Science Monitor, CNN, Defense News, The Economist, Euronews, Financial Times, Foreign Affairs, Kristeligt Dagblad, Le Monde, Nikkei Asia, The Hill, The Japan Times, JoongAng Daily, Knack, The Korea Herald, Munhwa, The Parliament Magazine, Politico Europe, Reuters, South China Morning Post, Transatlantic Leadership Network, Voice of America, The Wall Street Journal, The Warzone, The Washington Post, YLE Svenska and Yonhap News Agency.

Finally, CSDS researchers were invited to speak at **public engagements** by the ARES Group, Asian Leadership Conference, Belgian Ministry of Defence, Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU Berlin Security Forum, Carnegie Europe, CELIS Institute, CERI - SciencesPo, Clingendael Institute, CSIS, Eamont Institute, EISS, European Chamber of Commerce in Korea, European Defence Agency, European Economic and Social Committee, European External Action Service, European Parliament, EU Military Staff, European Security and Defence College, European Values Summit, German Council on Foreign Relations, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Hungarian National Assembly, Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the EU, Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue, IRSEM, Italian Trade Agency, Istituto Affari Internazionali, Korea Foundation, National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, NATO Allied Command Transformation, NATO Defence College, Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement, PISM, Real Instituto Elcano, Renew Europe, SHADE MED 2024, Slovakia Tech Expo, University of Bologna and University of Leuven.

