

Beata PRZYBYLSKA-MASZNER

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

ORCID: 0000-0002-8868-1933

Use of Force by the European Union: Between Normative Identity and Geopolitical Coercion

Abstract: The EU is not a military organization, but it can authorize and conduct military operations under specific circumstances, often with a UN mandate. The EU's use of force is generally focused on crisis management, conflict prevention, and maintaining international peace and security. This approach to the use of force has evolved since the 1990s. This article examines the legal regulations and political determinants of the European Union's use of force, based on its involvement in military operations between 2012 and 2024. The author points to the evolution of the use of force by the European Union in the context of its normative identity and shifting geopolitical conditions. By juxtaposing institutional, strategic, and axiological aspects, it presents the EU's transformation from a value-promoting entity to one capable of projecting military force. The use of force by the EU emerges not only as an instrument for defending values but also as a test of the community's political cohesion and institutional resilience. Drawing on the concept of rational institutionalism, the author argues that in the face of specific and exceptionally difficult external challenges, actions utilizing the instrument of force become an essential component of the EU's external action.

Key words: European Union, Use of force, common security and defence policy, EU interventions, normative identity, Strategic Compass

Introduction

Created as an integration project serving peace, stability, and development, the European Union has for decades steadily built its position as a normative actor, promoting international law, multilateralism, and civilian methods of conflict resolution. Yet the dynamics of recent years – above all Russia's aggression against Ukraine, instability in the southern neighbourhood, hybrid threats, and the erosion of the rules-based international order – have put this model to a severe test. Confronted with new security challenges, the European Union faces the necessity of redefining its role with respect to the use of force and the relationship between its normative identity and the geopolitical dimension of action.

This article addresses four interrelated research questions: *what are the legal and institutional foundations of the EU's use of force; how does the changing security environment reshape the Union's role as a military actor; does the EU possess the legitimacy and capability to project force autonomously beyond its member states; and to what extent does the use of force remain consistent with the EU's normative identity?*

The aim of the article is to identify the conditions shaping the evolution of the EU's approach to the use of force in light of its normative identity and shifting geopolitical circumstances. This process is analysed through the lenses of institutional resilience as well as contestation and transformation within the European Union. The study adopts an

interdisciplinary approach that combines institutional-legal and political science analysis. A third component is normative analysis, which assesses the congruence of EU practice with its declared values, the principles of international law, and its identity as a normative actor. Normative analysis focuses on questions of legitimacy and the ethical foundations of decisions on the use of force, and on how norms and values shape policy practice within the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). This perspective captures the tension between the EU's normative character and its growing engagement in geopolitically salient action (Manners, 2002; Sjursen, 2006; Tocci, 2007).

The theoretical framework also draws on rational institutionalism, which assumes that the European Union shapes actors' behaviour through systems of incentives, norms, and constraints, while remaining in a feedback relationship with member-state interests (Hall, Taylor, 1996, pp. 944–948; Pollack, 2006, pp. 33–36). In this view, EU institutions are not passive structures but strategic arenas in which states seek to maximise their gains while maintaining the collective legitimacy of action (Schimmelfennig, 2015, pp. 179–182). This approach enables analysis of decisions concerning the EU's use of force in terms of rational interest calculations, institutional constraints, and normative commitments (March, Olsen, 1989, pp. 22–24; Pollack, 2004, pp. 139–142).

The Prohibition of the Use of Force in International Law

The prohibition of the threat or use of force constitutes one of the cornerstones of the contemporary international legal order. It is explicitly enshrined in Article 2(4) of the Charter of the United Nations, which provides that “*all Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations*” (United Nations, 1945, Art. 2[4]). The principle is reaffirmed in numerous treaties and General Assembly resolutions, including the 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States (UNGA Res. 2625 [XXV]), and is widely recognised as a rule of customary international law possessing the status of a peremptory norm (*ius cogens*) (Dinstein, 2017).

Although violations of the prohibition continue to occur, the rule itself is not contested. As observed by the International Court of Justice in *Military and Paramilitary Activities in and against Nicaragua* (1986), even states resorting to force generally seek to justify their conduct within the framework of recognised exceptions – such as self-defence or UN Security Council authorisation – rather than by denying the existence of the rule (ICJ, *Military and Paramilitary Activities in and against Nicaragua*, para. 186). Such practice, the Court noted, “*confirms rather than weakens the rule.*”

The scope of the prohibition is defined by the concept of “force,” which, in the context of the UN Charter, refers exclusively to armed or military force (Randelzhofer, Dörr, 2012, p. 18). Attempts to extend this notion – for instance to economic coercion – were rejected during the San Francisco Conference of 1945. Both state practice and international jurisprudence confirm this narrow interpretation. The prohibition therefore covers all instances of military force between states, whether direct or indirect (e.g., support for armed groups operating against another state). At the same time, there is consensus that

political or economic coercion does not fall within Article 2(4), although it may breach the principle of non-intervention (Randelzhofer, Dörr, 2012; Ruys, 2014).

Non-military forms of physical force between states – such as deliberate cross-border manipulation of natural forces (e.g., the release or withholding of water, or the spread of fire), transboundary pollution, expulsion of populations, or the creation of mass refugee flows – have not so far been treated in practice as falling under the prohibition of the use of force. Contemporary debate also concerns new domains of coercion, particularly in cyberspace. According to Schmitt (1999, 2011) and Roscini (2015), cyber-attacks that cause destruction of critical infrastructure or human casualties may amount to a “use of force” within the meaning of the UN Charter, owing to their physical and destructive effects.

A broad interpretation of the prohibition remains necessary to ensure its effectiveness and to serve the Charter’s fundamental purpose – the maintenance of international peace and security. The use of force by states is therefore lawful only within clearly recognised exceptions, notably self-defence under Article 51 and collective action authorised by the UN Security Council under Chapter VII.

While the prohibition is fundamental to the contemporary international order, it is not absolute. The Charter and customary law recognise two primary exceptions in which the use of force may be lawful: actions authorised by the Security Council under Chapter VII, and individual or collective self-defence as provided in Article 51. In recent decades, scholars and states have debated the status of humanitarian intervention and the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), yet their legality in the absence of Council authorisation remains highly contested (Gray, 2018; Ruys, 2014).

Under Article 42 of the United Nations Charter, the Security Council may authorise the use of force if it determines that the measures provided for in Article 41 – such as diplomatic or economic sanctions – are inadequate to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may be undertaken by member states or regional organisations acting under a Council mandate. Examples include the coalition operations in the Persian Gulf (1990–1991) and NATO’s intervention in Libya in 2011. These operations are regarded as lawful collective uses of force, as they derive from the decisions of the organ entrusted with the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security (Dinstein, 2017, pp. 317–321; Gray, 2018, pp. 264–267).

The second exception is set out in Article 51 of the Charter, which provides that *“nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs.”* This right is inherent and pre-existing, independent of any Security Council decision, though its exercise must be immediately reported to the Council and must not prejudice its authority (Dinstein, 2017, p. 194). The International Court of Justice has elaborated interpretative standards distinguishing “armed attack” from the broader notion of “use of force”: only grave and coordinated military actions may justify self-defence.

Contemporary debate concerns the scope of self-defence against non-state actors, such as terrorist organisations. Following the September 11 attacks, the Security Council recognised that the right of self-defence may be exercised against such entities (UNSC Res. 1368 & 1373). While some scholars accept this extension (Gray, 2018; Ruys, 2014), others caution that it risks eroding the prohibition of the use of force and undermining the primacy of the Security Council.

The concept of humanitarian intervention – the use of force without the consent of the territorial state to prevent or halt gross violations of human rights – remains among the most controversial doctrines in international law. The classical example is NATO's 1999 intervention in Kosovo, carried out without Security Council authorisation. Although aimed at protecting civilians, it sparked a lasting debate about the relationship between legality and legitimacy in the use of force (Wheeler, 2000; Gray, 2018).

In 2005, the UN General Assembly endorsed the doctrine of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), which affirms that the international community has a responsibility to act – including, in extreme cases, through military means – when states fail to prevent genocide, war crimes, or crimes against humanity (UNGA Res. 60/1, paras. 138–139). However, R2P constitutes a political principle rather than a legal norm and does not create a new exception to the prohibition of the use of force in the absence of Security Council authorisation (Evans, 2008; Bellamy, 2015).

The exceptions to the prohibition of the use of force are therefore strictly limited and exceptional in nature. Both state practice and international jurisprudence confirm that any resort to force must rest on a clear legal justification. Attempts to broaden the catalogue of exceptions – whether through doctrinal reinterpretation or unilateral action – remain controversial and risk undermining the fundamental principle of international law prohibiting the use of force in international relations.

Normative Identity and the EU's Restraint in the Use of Force

The concept of the European Union as a “normative power” was popularised by Ian Manners (2002), who argued that the EU's influence derives not from military capability but from its ability to promote international norms and values – democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and multilateralism. In this view, the Union exerts power not through coercion but through the diffusion of standards of appropriate behaviour in international relations. As Manners (2002, pp. 241–243) observes, it is norms rather than military strength that define the distinctive nature of the EU's global actorness.

Scholars emphasise that the EU's normative identity emerged from the post-war culture of peace and integration, premised on the idea that armed force constitutes a last resort, while dialogue and cooperation form the foundations of international relations (Sjursen, 2006, pp. 240–242; Matlary, 2006, pp. 99–103). This orientation was reinforced through the EU's external policies, notably the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the enlargement policy, which promoted legal and democratic norms without recourse to force (Whitman, 2011, pp. 55–59; Whitman, 2013; Lucarelli, Manners, 2020, pp. 11–14).

However, after 2014 –following Russia's annexation of Crimea and the intensification of hybrid conflicts – the EU's traditional role as a “civilian power” came under increasing scrutiny. Tensions emerged between the Union's normative legacy and the need to develop effective instruments of coercion and deterrence. The shifting security environment, renewed great-power competition, and pressure from allies, particularly the United States, compelled the EU to seek a balance between normative commitment and strategic capability (Koenig, 2021, pp. 5–7; Fiott, 2021, pp. 18–21). The EU's nor-

mative identity was not abandoned but reinterpreted – from a value-based conception toward a model in which the capacity to use force becomes a component of normative credibility.

After 2014, the Union also expanded its military engagement in Africa and the Middle East. The EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia (2015–2020) in the Mediterranean represented the EU's first naval enforcement mission, aimed at combating human and arms smuggling. In the Sahel region, through EUTM Mali and EUCAP Sahel Niger, the EU supported the training of armed forces and police in states affected by terrorism and instability. Although these missions were primarily assistance and stabilisation operations, they marked a significant step in the evolution of the EU's operational capabilities under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

At the same time, cooperation with NATO intensified – particularly following the 2016 Warsaw Summit, where both organisations adopted the principle of complementarity and mutual reinforcement (European Council, 2016). The EU assumed a greater role in resilience-building and cybersecurity, while NATO focused on territorial defence. This functional division allowed the Union to concentrate on the “soft” dimensions of security while gradually developing its military instruments.

Destabilisation in the Middle East, the rise of hybrid and cyber threats, and continued criticism of the EU's limited military capabilities by both member states and external partners (e.g., the United States) prompted a reassessment of strategic assumptions. Russia's aggression against Ukraine in 2022 further accelerated this transformation. For the first time, the EU decided to finance arms deliveries to a state engaged in active conflict through the European Peace Facility (EPF) – a historic departure from its traditional self-conception as a post-military actor. As Juncos (2017) argue, these measures illustrate the Union's “strategic awakening,” as it begins to perceive its responsibility for maintaining international peace and order not only in normative but also in practical, deterrence-based terms.

Contemporary European security concepts, including the EU Strategic Compass (2022), emphasise the necessity of linking normative heritage with operational capability (Zandee, Stoetman et al., 2021, pp. 5–6). As Biscop (2023) notes, the Union's normative identity has not been replaced but transformed into a doctrine of “strategic responsibility” – in which the use of force, though still treated as *ultima ratio*, becomes one of the instruments for defending the very norms and values upon which the European project is founded.

Legal and Institutional Frameworks for the Use of Force in EU

From a legal perspective, the use of force by the European Union is grounded in the Treaty on European Union (TEU), in particular Articles 42–46. Article 42(1) states that the “*Common Security and Defence Policy shall be an integral part of the Common Foreign and Security Policy*” and may lead to a common defence. Article 42(7) introduces the so-called mutual assistance clause, under which member states are obliged to assist one another in the event of an armed attack – an arrangement that closely resembles Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

The European Union does not possess its own standing armed forces, but it has conducted numerous civilian and military missions under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Since 2003, more than 35 operations have been launched, ranging from advisory and training missions to military crisis-management operations. In 2021, the EU established the European Peace Facility (EPF), which for the first time allowed the financing of military equipment deliveries and training missions for third countries, including for Ukraine after 2022 (Tardy, 2023, pp. 4–5).

Decision-making authority in matters of military action rests primarily with the Council of the European Union, reflecting the intergovernmental nature of the CSDP. Under the TEU, decisions concerning the use of force and the conduct of operations require unanimity in the Council. This mechanism ensures political legitimacy but also makes the decision-making process complex and time-consuming, as every operation must secure the consensus of all member states (Juncos 2017, pp. 9–10). It also limits the autonomy of supranational actors, including the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

In recent years, the EU has also undertaken efforts to integrate military capabilities. The Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), launched in 2017, enables member states to jointly plan, invest in, and develop defence projects (Iakovdis, 2018). The European Defence Agency (EDA) plays an increasingly important role in coordinating research, development, and armaments programmes, and in fostering industrial cooperation in the defence sector.

The legal and institutional framework of the CSDP thus represents a unique model of security integration, in which decisions on the use of force derive from political consensus rather than delegated supranational competence. The EU therefore occupies a hybrid position – between an international organisation and a political community – where the legality of military action rests on intergovernmental cooperation rather than a centralised command structure.

The decision-making process on the use of force within the CSDP reflects the complex institutional architecture of the European Union. While the legal basis set out in Articles 42–46 TEU permits the conduct of both military and civilian operations, competences in this area remain largely in the hands of member states, and decisions retain a strongly intergovernmental character (Howorth, 2014, pp. 107–109). According to Article 42(4) TEU, decisions regarding CSDP operations are adopted by the Council, acting unanimously on a proposal from the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy or at the initiative of a member state.

In practice, a central role is played by the Political and Security Committee (PSC), which monitors the international situation, supervises the implementation of missions, and coordinates operational activity (Juncos, 2017, pp. 3–5). The PSC functions as a bridge between the technical and political levels, providing flexibility but also generating delays due to the need to reconcile national positions.

The unanimity requirement within the CSDP is intended to ensure full political and democratic legitimacy for decisions on the use of force, but it also constitutes one of the main constraints on the policy's effectiveness (Toje, 2010, pp. 43–60). Member states, guided by their own national security priorities and domestic political contexts, often diverge on the scope and nature of operations, making rapid responses to international crises difficult. The absence of automaticity means that each operation requires separate

negotiations, reinforcing the consensual nature of the process but limiting the Union's ability to act swiftly in emergencies (Koenig, 2021, pp. 9–10).

At the same time, the institutional architecture of the CSDP is designed to ensure democratic legitimacy and compliance with international law. Every operation requires not only a Council decision, but – at least in practice – also a United Nations mandate, thereby reinforcing conformity with the UN Charter. The European Parliament has gained a growing role in oversight and accountability: while it does not possess formal decision-making powers in CSDP matters, it exercises political, budgetary, and normative scrutiny, contributing to the overall legitimacy of the Union's security and defence activities.

Ultimately, the EU's decision-making system regarding the use of force represents a compromise between the requirements of legitimacy and the need for effectiveness. The Union remains an actor which – although it formally possesses military instruments – continues to base its security policy on political consensus and legal caution. This structure, reflecting its normative identity, determines both the limitations and the unique legitimacy of military actions undertaken in the name of the Union as a community.

Geopolitical Acceleration: The Case of Ukraine

The most striking example of the European Union's redefinition of its approach to the use of force was its response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. For the first time in its history, the EU decided to finance the delivery of weapons to a state engaged in active combat, using the European Peace Facility (EPF) and launching the EUMAM Ukraine (European Union Military Assistance Mission), aimed at training Ukrainian soldiers on the territory of member states (EEAS, 2023).

Although initially controversial among some member states, this decision represented an unprecedented expression of strategic unity, based on the conviction that Ukraine's security is inseparable from Europe's own security. In practice, it marked a symbolic rupture with the EU's traditional taboo on military engagement, while at the same time demonstrating the Union's institutional capacity to act decisively in times of crisis.

The EU's reaction to the war in Ukraine reflects not only a gesture of political solidarity, but also a moment of geopolitical acceleration (Przybylska-Maszner, 2024) – a phase in which the Union transitioned from a “*normative power*” to a strategic actor capable of using coercive means to defend its values. New financial instruments, accelerated decision-making procedures, and closer cooperation with NATO – particularly in the areas of defence planning and interoperability – indicate a process of institutional maturation of the EU as a security actor.

In this sense, the war in Ukraine has served as a test of the EU's institutional and normative resilience, accelerating the transformation of its security policy toward greater agency and strategic autonomy. The events of 2022 revealed that the EU's ability to protect its own values requires not only normative legitimacy but also credible instruments of power projection. Consequently, a new phase of integration in the field of security and defence appears to be emerging – one in which “*Normative Power Europe*” and “*Strategic Europe*” are no longer opposing concepts but mutually reinforcing dimensions of the Union's evolving identity.

Internal Contestation and Political Tensions

The European Union's ability to use force is constrained not only by technical and financial limitations but also by political and ideological contestation within the Union itself. In the literature, this phenomenon is described as internal contestation, encompassing both divergences among member states on security and defence matters and disputes concerning the legitimacy and direction of defence integration (Karlsrud, Reykers, 2019, pp. 10–17).

Member states differ significantly in their strategic ambitions, their relationship with NATO, and their preferences regarding the defence industry's role. France and several Southern European countries have consistently promoted the concept of strategic autonomy, understood as the EU's capacity to act independently in matters of security and defence (Fiott, 2021, pp. 27–29). By contrast, Poland, the Baltic States, and the Netherlands maintain that European security must remain closely tied to transatlantic guarantees and cooperation with the United States (Biscop, 2023, pp. 10–12). These divergences hinder the emergence of a shared strategic culture and generate tensions over the interpretation of the principle of defence solidarity.

Another factor undermining consensus in the security domain is the rise of populist and eurosceptic movements, which question the rationale for a common defence policy, portraying it as costly and threatening to national sovereignty. Such parties – both on the political right and left – often oppose increases in EU-level defence spending and resist the expansion of supranational competences in the security field.

A further source of tension lies in the issue of democratic legitimacy in EU decision-making on the use of force. Although the Council of the European Union formally represents the collective will of the member states, the absence of direct parliamentary oversight and the limited transparency of the decision-making process can lead to a deficit of public and political trust (Guerrina, Chappell, Wright, 2018, pp. 494–495). The European Parliament plays only a consultative and supervisory role, which, as many scholars argue, does not correspond to the scale of responsibility associated with CSDP operations (Christiansen, Fromage, 2019, pp. 112–113).

As a result, internal contestation has become one of the main factors shaping the pace and scope of the EU's defence policy development. On the one hand, the pluralism of national interests reflects the democratic nature of European integration; on the other, it constrains the Union's ability to act as a coherent geopolitical actor. The future of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy will depend on the Union's ability to balance state sovereignty with collective legitimacy – a prerequisite for the effective and democratically grounded use of force.

Summary

Ultimately, the question of the European Union's use of force constitutes, at its core, an inquiry into the future trajectory of European integration and the Union's international identity. In the face of mounting geopolitical challenges, the EU is compelled to reconcile the foundational values upon which it was built – peace, human rights, and

multilateralism – with the imperative of developing a credible capacity for action. This tension between normative legacy and pragmatic adaptation underpins the dynamics of the ongoing transformation of European security policy.

The *Strategic Compass for Security and Defence*, adopted in March 2022, represents a pivotal moment in the redefinition of the EU's identity as a defence actor. The document envisages the establishment of an EU Rapid Deployment Capacity of up to 5,000 troops, the enhancement of industrial and defence cooperation through the European Defence Fund, as well as the advancement of capabilities in the domains of cybersecurity and infrastructural resilience. Its significance, however, extends beyond the operational dimension: it constitutes an attempt to reconcile the Union's normative identity with its geopolitical agency – thereby advancing the vision of a “European Security Union” capable of both deterrence and defence.

This transformation entails both opportunities and risks. On the one hand, it may strengthen the EU's institutional resilience and enhance its strategic credibility as a global actor. On the other, it intensifies internal tensions regarding the direction of defence integration and the democratic legitimacy of decisions concerning the use of force. The Union thus finds itself at a crossroads between the continuation of its normative heritage and the pragmatic adaptation to evolving geopolitical realities. The evolving approach to the use of force therefore constitutes not only an institutional challenge, but a fundamental test of identity upon which the Union's survival depends.

Bibliography

- Bellamy A. J. (2015), *The responsibility to protect: A defense*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Bickerton C. J., Irondelle B., Menon A. (2011), *Security co-operation beyond the nation-state: The EU's Common Security and Defence Policy*, “Journal of Common Market Studies”, 49(1), pp. 1–21.
- Biscop S. (2023), *War for Ukraine and the rediscovery of geopolitics: must the EU draw new battlelines or keep an open door?*, Egmont – Royal Institute for International Relations.
- DGAP (2022), *Strategic Compass: Ambition, Achievements, and Pitfalls*, German Council on Foreign Relations.
- Dinstein Y. (2017), *War, aggression and self-defence*, 6th ed., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- EEAS (2023), *EUMAM Ukraine – European Union Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine*, European External Action Service, <https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eumam-ukraine>.
- Evans G. (2008), *The responsibility to protect: Ending mass atrocity crimes once and for all*, Brookings Institution Press, Washington, DC.
- Fiott D. (2021), *Strategic autonomy: Towards “European sovereignty” in defence?*, EUISS Chaillot Paper No. 171, European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris.
- Gray C. (2018), *International law and the use of force*, 4th ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Hall P. A., Taylor R. C. R. (1996), *Political science and the three new institutionalisms*, “Political Studies”, 44(5), pp. 936–957.
- Howorth J. (2014), *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union*, Palgrave Macmillan.
- International Court of Justice (ICJ) (1986), *Military and Paramilitary Activities in and against Nicaragua (Nicaragua v. United States of America)*, Merits, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports.
- Juncos A. E. (2017), *Resilience as the New EU Foreign Policy Paradigm: A Pragmatist Turn?*, “European Security”, 26, pp. 1–18.

- Karlsrud J., Reykers Y. (24 Jan 2019), *Multinational Rapid Response Mechanisms: From Institutional Proliferation to Institutional Exploitation*, eds. J. Karlsrud, Y. Reykers, 1 ed., Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group. Global Institutions Series, London–New York.
- Koenig N. (2021), *The EU's strategic compass for security and defence: Key deliverables and implementation paths*, Jacques Delors Centre, Berlin.
- Lucarelli S., Manners I. (eds.) (2020), *The search for a European identity: Values, policies and legitimacy of the European Union* (pp. 11–14), Routledge, London.
- Manners I. (2002), *Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?*, “Journal of Common Market Studies”, 40(2), pp. 235–258.
- March J. G., Olsen J. P. (1989), *Rediscovering institutions: The organizational basis of politics*, Free Press, New York.
- Matlary J. H. (2006), *When Soft Power Turns Hard: Is an EU Strategic Culture Possible?*, “Security Dialogue”, 37(1).
- Iakovidis I., Galariotis I. (2018), *Permanent structured cooperation : a game changer?*, EUI MWP, 2018/07.
- Pollack M. A. (2004), *The new institutionalisms and European integration*, in: *European integration theory* (pp. 137–156), eds. A. Wiener, T. Diez, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Pollack M. A. (2007), *Rational choice and EU politics*, in: *Handbook of European Union politics* (pp. 31–56), eds. K. E. Jørgensen, M. A. Pollack, B. Rosamond, SAGE, London.
- Przybylska-Maszner B. (2024), *Wpływ wojny w Ukrainie na rozwój polityki bezpieczeństwa i obrony Unii Europejskiej*, “Politeja” 21(1(88/1)).
- Randelzhofer A., Dörr O. (2012), *Article 2(4)*, in: *The Charter of the United Nations: A commentary* (3rd ed., vol. 1, pp. 208–245), eds. B. Simma, D.-E. Khan, G. Nolte, A. Paulus, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Roscini M. (2015), *Cyber operations and the use of force in international law*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Ruys T. (2014), *The meaning of “force” and the boundaries of the jus ad bellum: are “minimal” uses of force excluded from UN charter article 2(4)?*, “American Journal of International Law”, 108(2), pp. 159–210, <https://doi.org/10.5305/amerjintlaw.108.2.0159>.
- Schimmelfennig F. (2015), *Liberal intergovernmentalism and the euro area crisis*, “Journal of European Public Policy”, 22(2), pp. 177–195.
- Schmitt M. N. (2011), *Cyber operations and the jus ad bellum revisited*, “Villanova Law Review”, 56, pp. 569–605.
- Sjursen H. (2006), *The EU as a “normative” power: How can this be?*, “Journal of European Public Policy”, 13(2).
- Tardy T. (2023), *The New European Defence and Security Agenda*, ELF Policy Brief, Policy Brief.
- Tocci N. (2007), *Who is a Normative Foreign Policy Actor? The European Union and its Global Partners*, CEPS Working Document No. 279, Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels, December.
- Toje A. (2011), *The European Union as a small power*, “Journal of Common Market Studies”, vol. 49, pp. 43–60.
- United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) (1970), *Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations*, Resolution 2625 (XXV).
- United Nations (1945), *Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice*, San Francisco.
- Wheeler N. J. (2000), *Saving strangers: Humanitarian intervention in international society*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

- Whitman R. G. (ed.) (2011), *Normative Power Europe: Empirical and theoretical perspectives*, Palgrave Studies in European Union Politics, Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Whitman R. G. (2013), *The neo-normative turn in theorising the EU's international presence*, "Cooperation and Conflict", 48(2), pp. 171–193.
- Zandee D., Stoetman A. Deen B. (2021), *The EU's Strategic Compass for security and defence. Squaring ambition with reality*, Clingendael Report, March.

Użycie siły przez Unię Europejską: między tożsamością normatywną a geopolitycznym przymusem

Streszczenie

UE nie jest organizacją wojskową, ale może autoryzować i prowadzić operacje wojskowe w określonych okolicznościach, najczęściej w oparciu o mandat ONZ. Użycie siły przez UE jest na ogół ukierunkowane na zarządzanie kryzysowe, zapobieganie konfliktom i utrzymanie międzynarodowego pokoju i bezpieczeństwa. Podejście do użycia siły ewoluowało od lat 90. Artykuł podejmuje zagadnienie prawnych regulacji i politycznych uwarunkowań użycia siły przez Unię Europejską na przykładzie zaangażowania w ramach operacji wojskowych w latach 2012–2024. Autorka wskazuje na ewolucję użycia siły przez Unię Europejską w kontekście jej tożsamości normatywnej oraz zmieniających się uwarunkowań geopolitycznych. Zestawiając aspekty instytucjonalne, strategiczne i aksjologiczne, tekst przedstawia transformację UE z podmiotu promującego wartości w duchu multilateralizmu ku aktorowi zdolnemu do projekcji siły militarnej. Użycie siły przez UE staje się nie tylko instrumentem obrony wartości, ale i testem odporności oraz spójności politycznej wspólnoty. Wykorzystując koncepcję racjonalnego instytucjonalizmu, autorka argumentuje, że w obliczu szczególnych i wyjątkowo trudnych wyzwań zewnętrznych działania z wykorzystaniem instrumentu użycia siły stają się istotną składową działań zewnętrznych UE.

Słowa kluczowe: Unia Europejska, użycie siły, wspólna polityka bezpieczeństwa i obrony, interwencje UE, tożsamość normatywna, Kompas Strategiczny

Author Contributions

Conceptualization (Konceptualizacja): Beata Przybylska-Maszner

Data curation (Zestawienie danych): Beata Przybylska-Maszner

Formal analysis (Analiza formalna): Beata Przybylska-Maszner

Writing – original draft (Piśmiennictwo – oryginalny projekt): Beata Przybylska-Maszner

Writing – review & editing (Piśmiennictwo – sprawdzenie i edytowanie): Beata Przybylska-Maszner

Competing interests: The author have declared that no competing interests exist
(Sprzeczne interesy: Autor oświadczył, że nie istnieją żadne sprzeczne interesy)

