

CONTEMPORARY SECURITY STUDIES

European Homeland Security

A European strategy in the making?

Edited by

Christian Kaunert, Sarah Léonard and
Patryk Pawlak



European Homeland Security

This book examines the processes and factors shaping the development of homeland security policies in the European Union (EU), within the wider context of European integration.

The EU functions in a complex security environment, with perceived security threats from Islamist terrorists, migration and border security issues, and environmental problems. In order to deal with these, the EU has undertaken a number of actions, including the adoption of the European Security Strategy in 2003, the Information Management Strategy of 2009 and the Internal Security Strategy of 2010. However, despite such efforts to achieve a more concerted European action in the field of security, there are still many questions to be answered about whether the European approach is really a strategic one.

European Homeland Security addresses two major debates in relation to the development of homeland security in Europe. First, it reflects on the absence of 'homeland security' from European political debates and its potential consequences. Second, it examines the significant policy developments in the EU that suggest the influence of homeland security ideas, notably through policy transfer from the United States.

The book will be of great interest to students of European security and EU politics, terrorism and counter-terrorism, security studies and international relations.

Christian Kaunert is Senior Lecturer in EU Politics & International Relations at the University of Salford, Marie Curie Senior Research Fellow at the European University Institute, Florence, and Editor of the *Journal for Contemporary European Research* (JCER). He has previously published *European Internal Security: Towards Supranational Governance in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice* (2010).

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First published 2012
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2012 Selection and editorial material, Christian Kaunert, Sarah
Léonard and Patryk Pawlak; individual chapters, the contributors

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

European homeland security : a European strategy in the making? /
edited by Christian Kaunert, Sarah Léonard and Patryk Pawlak.

p. cm. – (Contemporary security studies ; 94)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Security, International–Europe. 2. National security–Europe. 3.

Internal security–Europe. 4. Terrorism–Europe–Prevention. I.

Kaunert, Christian. II. Léonard, Sarah, 1978– III. Pawlak, Patryk.

JZ6009.E85.E88 2012

355'.03354–dc23

2011041479

ISBN: 978-0-415-67794-3 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-0-203-12245-7 (ebk)

Typeset in Baskerville
by Wearset Ltd, Boldon, Tyne and Wear

Contents

<i>List of figures and tables</i>	xiii
<i>Notes on contributors</i>	xiv
<i>Preface</i>	xvi
1 Introduction: European homeland security – a European strategy in the making?	1
CHRISTIAN KAUNERT, SARAH LÉONARD AND PATRYK PAWLAK	
2 Homeland security in the making: American and European patterns of transformation	15
PATRYK PAWLAK	
3 Strategic patchwork or comprehensive framework? Upside down security strategy development in the European Union	35
URSULA C. SCHROEDER	
4 The fight against international terrorism: driver and yardstick for European homeland security	57
RAPHAEL BOSSONG	
5 A ‘coordination nightmare’? Institutional coherence in European Union counter-terrorism	72
JAVIER ARGOMANIZ	
6 The external dimension of European homeland security	95
ALEX MACKENZIE	
7 The development of European Union emergency and crisis management structures	111
CÉCILE WENDLING	

8	The fog of border: the fragmentation of the European Union's border policies	126
	PATRYK PAWLAK AND XYMENA KUROWSKA	
9	The role of Frontex in European homeland security	145
	SARAH LÉONARD	
10	Conclusion: European homeland security after Lisbon and Stockholm	165
	CHRISTIAN KAUNERT, SARAH LÉONARD AND PATRYK PAWLAK	
	<i>References</i>	176
	<i>Index</i>	198

Figures and tables

Figure

- 1.1 The norm matrix for the AFSJ [9](#)

Tables

- 4.1 Objectives of the EU counter-terrorism strategy [62](#)
- 4.2 The EU's functional contribution to the fight against terrorism [68](#)

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Preface

This book is about European homeland security, both conceptually and empirically. It highlights an interesting paradox. The term ‘homeland security’ is conspicuously absent from European political debates, most likely due to its controversial association with George W. Bush. Yet, significant EU policy developments suggest an influence of homeland security ideas, despite the lack of usage of this label. Thus, although ‘homeland security’ is not part of the EU’s security rhetoric, we argue in this book that it is both appropriate and beneficial for researchers to use this concept to analyse various developments in EU security in recent years.

European Homeland Security is based on many discussions that the editors and the contributors to this book have shared. From exchanges over a glass of wine at various conferences to panels organised at the Annual Conference of the University Association for Contemporary European Studies (UACES), this book has taken shape through vivid intellectual exchanges. It is fair to say that the idea of using the concept of ‘homeland security’ to analyse European security policy developments was originally not warmly welcomed by all audiences. Some of the people attending our research panels rejected it out of hand due to its association with George W. Bush and accused us of promoting a neo-conservative political agenda. This is emphatically not the case. In this book, we argue that using the concept of ‘homeland security’ is beneficial because it highlights certain policy trends, which may not be identified otherwise. Furthermore, we show in this book that, despite the increasing prevalence of homeland security ideas, this process has not led to the adoption of any overarching strategy for European homeland security, not even under a different label. In contrast, we have witnessed the adoption of partially overlapping security strategies, including the European Security Strategy (ESS) and the Internal Security Strategy (ISS).

We are grateful to a great number of people – family members, friends and colleagues – who have helped through the various stages of writing this book. Without these very special people, writing this book would have been impossible. In addition, Sarah Léonard and Christian Kaunert wish to thank the University of Salford for its support, as well as the European

Commission for funding their Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowships (within the 7th European Community Framework Programme) at Sciences Po, Paris and the European University Institute in Florence, respectively, while Patryk Pawlak wishes to thank the European Union Institute for Security Studies in Paris. All these institutions have supported us in this research project. While writing this book, we also benefited enormously from the comments and insights of numerous experts in the field. We would like to thank in particular John Occhipinti, Mark Rhinard, Thierry Balzacq and Oldřich Bureš. The support and expertise of UACES has also been outstanding. Furthermore, Sarah Léonard and Christian Kaunert are also very grateful for the constant support and the critical questioning of their ideas by their doctoral students Kamil Zwolski, Alex MacKenzie, Sergei Mudrov, Viviana Merendino, Briony Callander, Stephen Rozée and Ulrike Hoffmann. Sarah Léonard and Christian Kaunert would also like to thank IBEI, the *Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals*, for its support during their respective research fellowships while they had the good fortune to be on sabbatical from the University of Salford in 2010. Moreover, throughout the entire publication process, Andrew Humphreys at Routledge provided extremely useful comments and suggestions. The support by Annabelle Harris at Routledge was also exceptional and very much appreciated. Finally, we thank three anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions.

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1 Introduction

European homeland security – a European strategy in the making?

*Christian Kaunert, Sarah Léonard and
Patryk Pawlak*

On 7 July 2005, four young Islamist suicide-bombers attacked London's transport system, killing 52 members of the public and injuring several hundreds more. The London bombings were the first attacks on British soil to be carried out as part of the global *jihād*, but had been preceded by other major terrorist attacks on the United States (US) on 11 September 2001 and on Spain on 11 March 2004. Despite setbacks, militants have continued to plan attacks, as evidenced by the 2007 suicide attack on Glasgow airport. In October 2010, warnings against terrorist attacks were issued in France, Germany and other European countries. Subsequently, a package sent from Yemen and containing a bomb device, which had been designed to go off on a US-bound aircraft, was intercepted at East Midlands Airport in the United Kingdom (UK) (BBC News 2010). As highlighted by Europol's (2011) 'EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report' (TE-SAT 2011), Islamist terrorism remains a 'high and diverse' threat to European Union (EU) Member States (Europol 2011: 6).

In November 2010, Greece saw the arrival of a large number of irregular migrants and asylum-seekers at the Greek–Turkish border and requested EU support to strengthen its border controls. In response, Frontex, the EU External Borders Agency, coordinated the deployment of more than 150 armed border guards from a large number of EU Member States. Those border guards, who were part of so-called Rapid Border Intervention Teams (RABITs), conducted 24-hour joint surveillance with their Greek colleagues at the land border with Turkey (Frontex 2010b). Italy also requested EU support in February 2011 following the arrival of about 3,000 irregular migrants and asylum-seekers on the Italian coast in the space of a few days, most of whom were heading from Tunisia. EU support mainly took the form of a joint patrolling operation in the Central Mediterranean area, called 'Joint Operation Hermes 2011' and coordinated by Frontex, which was designed to enhance border surveillance (Frontex 2011). Those are only two recent examples of the numerous tasks conducted by Frontex, which has proved to be one of the most dynamic of all EU agencies.

In 1999, the tanker *Erika* had sunk off the coast of France causing one of the greatest environmental disasters in the world (BBC News 2000).

Three years later, another massive oil spill affected the coastlines of several EU Member States following the sinking of the *Prestige* (BBC News 2002). In 2006, heavy rain and melting snow caused significant floods in Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania (BBC News 2006), while severe fires in Greece forced thousands of people to abandon their home in 2009 (BBC News 2009). In October 2010, the Hungarian government had to declare a state of emergency after toxic sludge had leaked from an alumina factory (*Guardian* 2010). Thus, various natural and man-made disasters hit Europe every year calling for a concerted and effective European response.

These examples underline the complexity of the security environment in which the EU operates. In order to tackle these challenges, the EU Member States have undertaken a number of actions, including, among others, the adoption of the European Security Strategy (ESS) in 2003 (which was updated in 2008), the Information Management Strategy (IMS) for EU internal security of 2009 and the Internal Security Strategy (ISS) of 2010. However, despite these efforts aiming to achieve more concerted European action in the field of security, it is not clear to what extent the EU's approach to these security challenges can be considered to be strategic. Indeed, can it be seen as strategic if several security aspects are addressed separately, rather than in the framework of a more general 'homeland security' policy? What would be the potential benefits of examining and conceptualising the EU's security policies as part of 'homeland security', rather than fragmented 'internal security' policies? These are some of the major questions that this edited book addresses. Previous studies have tended to examine empirical developments in specific policy areas (see, for example, Kurowska and Pawlak 2009a; Wolff *et al.* 2009a; Kaunert and Léonard 2010), while conceptual debates have tended to focus on the nexus between internal and external security (Bigo 2000; Eriksson and Rhinard 2009; Balzacq 2009). However, it is also necessary to ask broader questions, notably about the political community that is being secured by security policies and the overall direction of the European integration process. This book puts forward the idea that using the concept of 'homeland security' can illuminate various EU policy developments in interesting ways, despite its cultural and political connotations, which are fully acknowledged and will be explored later.

This book puts forward three main arguments. First, it shows that, although 'homeland security' as a term has been largely absent from European political debates, there have been significant policy developments in the EU in recent years that suggest the influence of homeland security ideas, notably through policy transfer from the US to the EU. This also means, and this is the second argument put forward by the book, that 'homeland security' is an appropriate concept for analysing various policy developments in EU security in recent years, although it is not part of the EU's security rhetoric. This book also argues that using this concept has the advantage of highlighting certain trends, which could not be

identified otherwise. Finally, the third argument developed in this book is that, although homeland security ideas have implicitly underpinned EU policy developments to a significant extent in recent years, the EU Member States have not adopted any overarching strategy for European homeland security yet. On the contrary, European homeland security has seen a plethora of policy initiatives, which have led to the adoption of partially overlapping security strategies, including the European Security Strategy (ESS) and the ISS.

The emergence of ‘homeland security’ on the US political agenda

Crenshaw (2005) has argued that US policy-makers have long recognised the dangers of terrorism. After the Iran hostage crisis, President Reagan entered office with terrorism being at the top of the political agenda. President Clinton was also concerned about terrorism after the attacks on the World Trade Center in 1993 and on Oklahoma City. Thus, there was general awareness of the terrorist threat in the US, but not of the threat posed by Al-Qaeda in particular (Crenshaw 2005). It all changed on 11 September 2001, which saw the worst event of modern international terrorism, with nearly 3,000 people being killed (Martin 2006; Hoffman 2006). Many commentators instantly drew a parallel with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. As a result, ‘homeland security’ gained an increasingly significant place as both a rhetorical tool and an important policy area in the US and beyond (Cameron 2007).

Its significance is confirmed by its high profile at all levels of the governmental and societal agendas. Both the private and public sectors now devote a lot of attention, as well as human and material resources, to ‘homeland security’. The Patriot Act virtually abandoned post-Cold War-era barriers between foreign intelligence and domestic law enforcement. Major structural and institutional changes have been undertaken at the state and local levels. In particular, the decision of President George W. Bush to create the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2002 was seen as ‘the most ambitious effort to recognise and expand the federal government in the area of foreign policy since 1947’ (Rosati 2004: 211). Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge was named as the first office holder. His mission was defined, in George W. Bush’s words, as to ‘lead, oversee, and coordinate a comprehensive national strategy to safeguard our country against terrorism and respond to any attacks that may come’ (Relyea 2002a: 400).

According to several scholars, the idea of ‘homeland security’ is rooted in historical efforts of civil defence (Relyea 2002a, 2002b; Seiple 2002; Bullock *et al.* 2006). US President Bush recognised this in his address on homeland security on 8 November 2001 (cited in Relyea 2002b: 218): ‘We will ask state and local officials to create a new modern civil defense

service, similar to local volunteer fire departments, to respond to local emergencies when the manpower of governments is stretching thin'. Civil defence began during the First World War, but due to the lack of a real threat of air attacks on the US, it did not develop in the US until May 1941 (Bullock *et al.* 2006). As the war ended, the US Administration examined the successes of British, German and Japanese civil defence. The new Office for Civil Defense Planning adopted a document entitled 'Civil Defense for National Security' (Relyea 2002b: 218), which served as a programme for the Cold War era. However, with the end of the Soviet Union, civil defence as a concept also became a relic in the US.

In light of these developments, Relyea (2002a: 397) critically observes that 'homeland security' may be a substitute for the Cold War-weary 'national security' concept, 'devoid of its intellectual development, but prone to the same use as a justification for the exercise of prerogative powers in ways harmful to constitutional arrangements of government and guaranteed citizens' rights'. He suggests that some might regard this concept as being unpleasantly linked to past nationalist invocations of the 'fatherland' or the 'motherland', and therefore possibly reminiscent of national leaders pursuing cultural or racial purity, such as Hitler or Stalin. This is emphatically not the understanding of 'homeland security' underpinning this book, which emphasises that importing 'homeland security' into political and academic debates in Europe has both advantages and drawbacks. It is therefore necessary to critically reflect on the concept of 'homeland'.

Smith (1981) refers to the concept of 'homeland' in a triangular relationship between culture, state and territory. He identifies four dimensions to the homeland: boundaries, culture, self-sustainability and nation-building. In the US, after 9/11, homeland security also included a 'concerted national effort', implying that the former is not only the task of governmental agencies, but actually of the entire society, including the federal government, state and local authorities, the private sector and the American people. Why was a mere reference to the territory not enough to mobilise society? Why was it seen as necessary to frame the policy problem as a 'national' one, which includes a discussion about homeland, territory and ethnicity? While a 'territory' is the underlying feature of autonomous and abstract institutions within a modern state, a 'homeland' constitutes a space on the basis of which a sense of given historic community emerges as a modern nation (Smith 1981: 187). Therefore, speaking in terms of 'homeland security' has the advantage of capturing the important symbolic dimension of the 'homeland' with regard to political cohesion and nation-building.

'Homeland security' in Europe

One of the major characteristics of the European approach to homeland security rests on the fact that there has been hardly any effort on the part