

Austria: Engaged Neutrality

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This chapter examines Austria's policy of neutrality and Austria's involvement with the European Union (EU) as a security actor and with NATO. The chapter argues that Austrian security policy should be understood as one of engaged neutrality: a strong commitment to stay outside military alliances alongside an equally strong commitment to an engaged—as opposed to passive or insular—security policy. Key elements of Austria's engaged neutrality are support for a norm and law-based international system, support for international institutions, in particular the United Nations (UN), and for causes such as nuclear disarmament and Third World economic development. The chapter shows how neutrality was the only foreign and security policy option available to Austria in the context of the early Cold War in the 1950s, but how Austrian leaders sought, over time, to make use of the political space available to the country to pursue a policy of engaged neutrality which went beyond the narrow confines of non-membership of military alliances. In this context, membership of the EU and the EU's common foreign, security and defence policies have proved compatible with Austria's engaged neutrality. Indeed, the EU's focus on a comprehensive concept of security (based on broad political efforts to prevent conflicts and the recognition of non-military dimensions

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of security) and on crisis management and peace operations (as opposed to more traditional collective defence) reflect central priorities of Austrian foreign and security policy. Austria has also been an active contributor to EU security policy activities, in particular the EU's crisis management and peacekeeping operations in the Balkans. To the extent that NATO too has adopted a comprehensive concept of security and taken on tasks of crisis management and peacekeeping, Austria has also sought to work with NATO through the Alliance's Partnership for Peace (PfP) and contributing to NATO peacekeeping operations (again, in particular in the Balkans). If NATO refocuses on its role as a collective defence alliance and emphasises policies of re-armament and nuclear deterrence, however, Austria's partnership with NATO is likely to decline.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

After the Second World War, Austria was, like Germany, divided into the occupation zones of the four victorious powers. In the eastern part that was occupied by Soviet troops, political and social structures began to develop differently. The Soviet Union claimed that it would prefer to keep Austria's national unity. The Communist Party only got 5 per cent in the elections in 1945 and was largely ignored by the Soviet Union. Still there was the danger that Austria would remain divided as an eastern part and a western part. The only option that would give Austria its sovereignty appeared to be neutrality. In the early-to-mid-1950s, nobody believed that Austria could obtain sovereignty and neutrality. Even the Soviet Union linked Austria's neutrality to the German question. Only after Stalin's death and Khrushchev's rise was the Austrian chancellor Julius Raab able to seize the window of opportunity for successful negotiations. In October 1955, the Austrian National Assembly adopted a Law of Neutrality, under which the country committed itself to permanent neutrality and, as a constitutional act of parliament, is part of the Austrian constitution. The declaration was Austria's guarantee to the great powers that the country would not join any eastern or western military alliance. Ever since, neutrality has been at the centre of Austria's foreign and security policy. In Austria's early formative years, neutrality was synonymous with independence. Neutrality helped Austria to develop a strong identity for the first time since the First World War, which is why Austrians continue to support neutrality by more than a two thirds majority.

As the Cold War was characterised by the development of blocs in Europe and military alliances, Austria's neutrality represented an anomaly. Austria managed to stay out of the spheres of influence created by the two military superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union.

Konrad Adenauer, the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany from 1949, rejected the concept of neutrality out of hand. In his memoirs, he wrote:

The immediate goal of Soviet policy was neutralizing and preventing the integration of Europe. The ultimate goal was the incorporation of Germany and eventually all of Europe into the communist sphere. (Adenauer 1966, 37, author's translation)

Adenauer feared that Germany was going to be removed from the Western bloc and that neutrality would weaken the order, thus generally rejecting the concept of neutrality. On several occasions, he pointed to the danger of a 'neutral belt in Europe' (Adenauer 1967, 284–92). 'Such a belt would signify, in my opinion, the end of Germany and Europe' (Adenauer 1966, 442, author's translation). Behind this categorical rejection of 'neutralisation', Adenauer desired to integrate West Germany firmly into the transatlantic relationship. Adenauer's constructed link between 'neutralisation' and a communist seizure of power throughout Europe served this purpose. However, the link between 'neutralisation' and a communist seizure of power was not necessarily causal or automatic. One could reasonably assume that neutrality would have been possible without a communist takeover. Austria and Finland serve here as the classic examples.

In Central Europe, such a solution was only possible for Austria after 1955. Yet, Adenauer viewed it with suspicion, fearing conspiratorial Soviet tactics:

The pivotal point of the issue regarding Austria was a clever calculated step by Moscow. Without doubt, it was possible that Soviet Russia had the intention among other things to promote similar thoughts and ideas as Austria's neutrality here in Germany that already haunt and are spread in order to strengthen other parts of Europe and the world. The behaviour of the Soviet Union was based on a very clever tactic. (Adenauer 1966, 441–2, author's translation)

While Adenauer saw the concept of ‘armed neutrality’ in Austria as a put-to-sleep-tactic by the Kremlin, at the time it was supported by US President Dwight D. Eisenhower. At a press conference in May 1955 Eisenhower said:

It seems that the idea has developed that one could build a number of neutralized states from North to South through Europe. Now, remember: The Treaty regarding the neutralization of Austria does not mean that Austria would be disarmed. It is not a void, not a military void, it is along the lines of Switzerland. ... This kind of neutrality is very different from a military vacuum. (Quoted in Adenauer 1966, 442)

Austria could also be integrated into the west without having to join NATO. This case also proves that the presumption of neutrality as a conspiracy leading to a communist takeover of Europe was wrong. However, it should be noted that Austria’s neutrality would certainly not have been possible before Stalin’s death in 1953.

The core of Austria’s neutrality depends on its military nature. Military neutrality is enshrined in the Law on Neutrality: Austria may neither join any military alliances, nor can there be foreign troops stationed on its territory. The legal principle that neutral states are not allowed to participate in a war, in the sense of international law, was not included directly in the Law on Neutrality, but this is the prevailing understanding of neutrality.

Austria’s neutrality law of 1955 requires from Austria ‘for the purpose of the lasting maintenance of her independence externally, and for the purpose of the inviolability of her territory’ to ‘maintain and defend this with all means at her disposal’ (Austrian Federal Assembly 1955, Article I (1)). This includes the establishment of independent armed forces. The Austrian military structure had been part of the German Wehrmacht and was largely dissolved. The formula ‘with all means at her disposal’ was very flexible and far-sighted. Austria would be able to adapt its forces according to its constitutional requirements and technological development.

The experience of the 1956 Hungarian crisis had a crucial impact on how Austria formulated and imagined its threat scenario. It took almost ten years, however, for the Council of Ministers to implement a defence concept. In May 1965, three main possibilities were identified: a) a crisis scenario under conditions of international tensions; b) the neutrality case, which may become relevant in case of war in the vicinity; c) the defence case, which comes into effect when Austria is attacked (see the Ministerial

Decree of 11 May 1965 on the objectives of the extensive national defence and tasks for each field; see also Bayer 1995, 1).

The 1968 crisis in Czechoslovakia also influenced the work on a defence doctrine (Wiener Zeitung 1985). After the defence doctrine was approved in 1975 and the national defence plan was developed, the defence budget experienced an annual real growth of more than 3.5 per cent over 12 years.

At the beginning of the 1970s, the concept of pre-emptive defence was contrasted with one of the total spatial defence, known as ‘Spannocchi Doctrine’. Spatial defence meant the defence of key zones in crucial terrain, thus a defence between ‘front’ and ‘rear’. The strategic objective remained the same: disincentive. If Austria were to be attacked from the outside, the country should be defended not only at its territorial borders but also completely from ‘deep within’, much like a hedgehog, in order to increase the risks/costs for any invader. These arguments obtained general acceptance and matched government policy. Nowadays however, there are doubts whether this concept could have ever been implemented in practice.

It was not until 1983 that the Council of Ministers approved the National Defence Plan, which was proposed by the National Defence Council and incorporated the categories of the 1965 decisions by the Council of Ministers (Bundeskanzleramt 1985; for the related concept of ‘extensive national defence’ see Docsek 2001). It claimed to be a basic conception for Austria’s security regarding ‘every’ threat. The security policy was defined as

[t]he sum of all measures, mainly in the areas of foreign policy, of policy for the maintenance of internal stability, as well as defense policy, for the protection of the population and the basic values of this State concerning all threats as well as the maintenance and defense of its permanent neutrality. (Bundeskanzleramt 1985, 19)

Neutrality was increasingly supplemented with an active foreign policy. Contrary to the Swiss model of ‘sitting still’, Austria joined the United Nations the same year it declared its neutrality (1955), the Council of Europe in 1956, and the European Free Trade Association in 1960. Austria presented itself as a meeting point, by hosting in Vienna, for example, meetings between the Presidents of the United States and of the

Soviet Union, John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev in 1961 and Richard Nixon and Leonid Brezhnev in 1973.

The Social Democratic government under Chancellor Bruno Kreisky (1970–83) developed a policy of ‘active neutrality’, understood as active third-party diplomacy, multilateralism on a global scale (particularly within the United Nations), support for the process of détente between east and west and engagement in the conflict between north and south, which culminated in the proposal of a Marshall Plan for the Third World. Chancellor Kreisky was the first western head of government to stand up for the rights of Palestinians. Together with the German and Swedish Social Democrats, Willy Brandt and Olaf Palme, Kreisky discovered an international basis within the Socialist International. In the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), Austria, together with other neutral and non-aligned States, formed the ‘N+N group’, a loose association of neutral and non-aligned European states, which were not members of NATO or the Warsaw Pact. From 1975 until the end of the Cold War, these states offered mediation and good offices and fought against the stagnation of the détente policy.

Last, but not least, thanks to the policy of neutrality, Vienna was chosen as the third UN-capital and seat of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), UN specialised agencies (for example, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)), and the secretariats of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE, formerly the CSCE). Furthermore, the PrepCom (Preparatory Commission) for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), the secretariat of the Wassenaar agreement (which addresses the transfer of conventional weapons and dual-use goods), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP) and the World Institute for Nuclear Security (WINS) also settled in Vienna. Vienna also became the central place for the negotiations on Iran’s nuclear programme in 2014–15. In 2015, an Austrian diplomat was appointed as special representative of the OSCE in the Ukraine. Austria is also one of the leaders of the initiative on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons (HINW). One hundred and thirteen states have already adopted the Humanitarian Pledge, launched by Austria after the third HINW conference in December 2014. By contrast, not a single NATO member or nuclear weapon state (NWS) is among the signatories (Kmentt 2014a; Kmentt 2014b; Sauer 2015). In 1995 Austria became a member of the European Union,

emphasising, however, that the country's neutrality would not be undermined by EU membership. This was not absolutely necessary because EU structures (the principle of consensus in relation to foreign policy decisions and freedom for member states to exempt themselves from collective defence measures) do not compromise the concept of neutrality. Russia did not welcome Austria's membership but stated that it was Austria's sovereign decision.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Austria's neutrality has proven time and again that it can adapt to new situations. What are the big new challenges after the end of the Cold War? There is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD); terrorism, which potentially reaches new dangerous dimensions in its combination with proliferation; and fragile and dysfunctional states, which can be breeding grounds for terrorism, a source of uncontrolled immigration, and a source for the development and spread of organised crime. These states also contribute to the loss of important economic areas. As a neutral state, Austria is well suited (in many ways better than other states) to make an important contribution to addressing these new dangers. Moreover, neutral states sometimes have greater legitimacy than members of alliances in the eyes of other states. Assistance for reconstruction and humanitarian aid efforts in war-torn countries may take place within the framework of the UN, the EU, the OSCE or NATO partnerships. Austria's option of participating in the foreign policy and crisis management activities of the EU was explicitly confirmed through a constitutional amendment (23j), which, however, stresses the main responsibility of the United Nations Security Council for peace and security (Austrian Constitution 2013, Art. 23j).

In 2015, Austria contributed 1050 military personnel, 25 police and 25 civilian personnel to international crisis and conflict management operations. In terms of military personnel, Austria's contribution lies in the top one-third of EU members, although in terms of police and civilian personnel, Austria's participation is below the EU average. The balance of personnel deployed between UN, EU and NATO missions varies. Regionally, Austria's military and civilian engagement concentrates on the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, the Black Sea region, the Middle East, and North and Central Africa. The priorities of Austrian activities are: support for peace, stability, human security and development; the promotion of the rule of law, democracy and human rights; security sector reform; mediation; and the prevention of the proliferation of weapons and munitions.

As of the 2010s, the focus of Austria's civilian contributions is on the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) of the OSCE in the Ukraine, on the EU Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) in Kosovo, the European Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia, the EU Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform Ukraine (EUAM) and the EU Coordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support (EUPOL COPPS).

Austria has also been part of robust peace support operations, in particular, those within the NATO PfP. Since the Balkan wars in the 1990s, Austria has become with 550 troops, the third largest contributor to the Kosovo Force (KFOR), after Germany and the United States, and the largest non-NATO contributor. With 400 troops, Austria is the largest contributor to the EU stabilisation mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR Operation Althea). Until October 2015 Austria held the position of the deputy commander of KFOR and the commander of the multinational logistics command. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Austria occupies the post of the Force-Commander of EUFOR-Althea. Austria provides mainly logistical support, communication units and liaison officers.

The Austrian security strategy of 2013 links comprehensive with cooperative security and solidarity with neutrality:

Comprehensive security policy means that external and internal aspects of security are inextricably interlinked, as are civil and military aspects. It extends beyond the purview of the ministries and departments traditionally in charge of security and encompasses instruments from policy areas, like economy and social affairs, integration, development, environment, agriculture, finance, transport and infrastructure, education, information and communication, as well as health. Integrated security policy must be based on a cooperative approach between governmental and non-governmental actors; security must be understood as a 'comprehensive package', as it were. Proactive security policy means working towards preventing threats from emerging in the first place or at least taking steps to mitigate their negative impact (shaping security). Security policy based on solidarity takes into account that the security of neutral Austria is now largely interconnected with the security of the EU as a whole. (Bundeskanzleramt Österreich 2013, 4)

Depending on the particular situation, the Austrian security forces are committed to deploying at least 1100 soldiers on a permanent basis to international operations. Of the 18 missions which Austria participated in 2016, 6 were purely military. Austria provides 5 per cent of the troops for EU missions and 2 per cent of the budget for EU missions. Civil–military

cooperation is of particular importance in these missions. Some missions require the services of specialised forces, such as battlegroups or rapid reaction forces. Within the spectrum of missions, Austria has developed important niche capabilities, such as: evacuation; support in relations to natural disasters and humanitarian crises (for example, the construction of field hospitals); peacekeeping and reconstruction efforts (for example, engineers); Nuclear-Biological-Chemical (NBC) defence; search and rescue operations; as well as prevention, stabilisation and combat missions. As a small neutral state, Austria is able to perform central tasks, particularly in the civil–military field, as it is much more accepted by International Organisations (IOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civilian forces than allied countries. Moreover, Austria’s neutral status facilitates domestic cooperation between the military and NGOs.

Austria can provide specialist forces in some areas. The Austrian Federal Forces Disaster Relief Unit (AFDRU) is a good example—despite its proportionally small size and underfunded status—as its strengths include protection and rapid response in cases of emergencies on national and international levels. This allows Austria to take on a leadership role in this area and fill a gap within Europe.

The Austrian security strategy stresses Austria’s role as a mediator in international conflicts: ‘Austria playing an active role as a mediator in international conflicts and seizing suitable opportunities for mediation resulting from Austria’s status as both an EU Member State and a neutral country’ (Bundeskanzleramt Österreich 2013, 19).

THE CONCEPTS OF COLLECTIVE DEFENCE AND NEUTRALITY: UNEQUAL PARTNERS

The most important feature of any alliance is a mutual defence obligation amongst its members. Neutrality and alliances are negatively related. When the importance of collective defence obligations—that come into force in case of an attack on a member state’s territory—increases, neutrality becomes less relevant. On the other hand, when alliance obligations are no longer necessary, the status of neutrality is not really required any more. Thus, neutrality means non-membership in an alliance based on constitutional and international law.

NATO and Austria’s neutrality have the same historical origin: the Cold War. They have the opposite meaning, however. Both gave a different answer to the threat situation at that time: NATO was the creation of

an alliance; neutrality meant staying out of the bloc confrontation. NATO was the rule of the Cold War, neutrality being its exception. The only irreconcilable alternative to military alliances is neutrality.

NATO's capacity for change allowed Austria to cooperate more closely with some NATO structures. NATO has been re-developing its basic structure: preparation for a collective defence was no longer the only or even primary item on its agenda and its focus included crisis management and expeditionary missions as a second core task. NATO turned towards new tasks, which have little to do with the collective defence of the Alliance's members. In particular, this included international crisis management, even in those regions outside the defined alliance borders ('out of area'), as in the former Yugoslavia, or Afghanistan ('out of continent'), and the involvement of non-members within the framework of the PfP and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

In 1995, Austria joined the PfP. Austria also participated in NATO-led operations. Austria's engagement with PfP has focused on: general transatlantic dialogue on security policy; the interoperability of Austrian armed forces with those of other European states; defence against cyberattacks; and participation in crisis management operations that are also in Austria's interest. Austria continues to make contributions within PfP in order to ensure military interoperability, participation in operations, and the utilisation of available cooperation opportunities, in accordance with Austria's interests and requirements.

In addition to the existing core tasks of 'collective defence' and 'crisis management', NATO's new Strategic Concept adopted at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010 introduced the new task of 'cooperative security', which provides another area for Austria to participate in NATO activities. This core task involves coordinating the network of partner relationships with non-NATO countries and other international organisations around the globe. Cooperative Security, as defined by NATO, also involves contributing to arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. Here, Austria's armed forces are active in almost all areas, including the nuclear non-proliferation regime, nuclear and conventional arms export controls, small and light weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), land-mines and cluster munitions.

In general, for Austria, the concept of cooperative security provides a framework for political dialogue and regional cooperation, increased military interoperability and preparation for operations. Cooperative security also offers for Austria not only a network of European partners, but a wide range of partners on a global scale.

Indeed, in some situations or operations, Austria may play an even more important role than some NATO members, for example in the field of peace operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (providing food, water and medicine), protection of civilians (POCs), reconstruction and crisis management. Austria as a non-NATO state is able to participate in these types of missions and cooperate with NATO while retaining its current defence profile. Austria is definitively more committed to crisis management than to territorial defence. It is more oriented towards the south than towards the east.

Naturally, the fundamental priority of a neutral state during security operations and deployments abroad does not consist of alliance obligations. However, modern neutrality does not exclude cooperation with alliance members or alliances, as long as neutral states and allied ones can agree on the key issues. Austria shares the basic threat analyses and goals with NATO within the framework of the Alliance's partnerships, which are not necessarily limited to the PfP institutional framework. In this partnership context, peace operations are fully compatible with neutrality. Within the concept of 'framework nations', interoperability can be tailored to particular circumstances. Austria views cooperation as a functional tool. Nevertheless, Austria views a United Nations mandate as a prerequisite for its participation in any armed peacekeeping operation.

In the wake of the Ukraine crisis 2014–15 those forces within NATO supporting territorial and collective defence once more prevailed. The Ukrainian crisis 2014–15 had a strong impact on the debate within NATO. It bolstered the view that NATO should return to traditional territorial and collective defence rather than focusing on crisis management or cooperative security. For Austria, the issue is a question of priorities. The Ukraine crisis refocused NATO's priorities on the east of Europe. The Austrian perspective, however, is that the threats and challenges to the south have not disappeared. Human security, dysfunctional states, regional conflicts, refugee flows, natural disasters, terrorism and nuclear proliferation will remain with us in the near future. The emergence of Islamic State is a warning sign. The unravelling of the Westphalian system in many states of the Middle East and the Mediterranean will produce dysfunctional states and increasingly radical non-state actors. It would be unfortunate and dangerous if crisis management, conflict prevention, early warning and post-conflict settlement were abandoned, ignored or neglected by NATO. This would narrow the room of manoeuvre for neutral states such as Austria. In Ukraine, if there is a cease-fire agreement and a mandate from the UN Security Council, Austria has committed to sending peace-

keeping troops. In 2015, the Austrian Ambassador Martin Sajdik was appointed as the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group on the implementation of the peace plan in the east of Ukraine.

At the Wales summit in September 2014, the NATO allies agreed to establish a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) which would be integrated into the Alliance's existing NATO Response Force (NRF) in order to enhance the capabilities of the NRF to respond to emerging security challenges posed by Russia. Although the NRF was initially supposed to respond to risks emanating from the Middle East and North Africa, it is now mainly based on collective defence. Austria cannot be part of collective defence operations, therefore, the possibilities for Austrian participation are becoming increasingly limited. An exclusive focus by NATO on the east and on collective defence would reduce the Alliance's cooperative security role, as well as the role of partners. Also, any effort to define crisis management and missions (such as the NRF and the VJTF) in the south as collective defence would leave little room for partners to contribute. Rather, the Alliance should reinforce its common and cooperative security capabilities, which include interoperability, the Connected Forces Initiative, the NRF, civil-military cooperation, counter-insurgency and host-nation-support.

Austria's non-membership in an alliance is anchored in the 1955 neutrality declaration. The most important feature of alliances is mutual assistance obligation, which is incompatible with neutrality. As long as NATO sees itself as a 'military alliance' and Austria as 'neutral', membership in NATO remains impossible. Within the framework of partnerships, crisis management and cooperative security, however, Austria can provide contributions as a neutral state that are similar to those of the members of a transformed non-traditional NATO.

The Austrian security strategy takes a non-traditional stance towards the new challenges:

Conventional attacks against Austria have become unlikely for the foreseeable future. Instead, both Austria and the EU are all more affected by new challenges, risks and threats. These include first and foremost: international terrorism; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (also amongst non-state actors); domestic and regional conflicts or turmoil that affect Europe or have global repercussions; 'state failure'; natural or manmade disasters; attacks against the security of IT systems ('cyber-attacks'); threats

to the strategic infrastructure; transnational organised crime; drug trafficking, crime, corruption, illegal migration; unsuccessful integration; the scarcity of resources (energy, food, water), climate change, environmental damage and pandemics; piracy; and threats to the transport routes, and the repercussions of the international financial and economic crisis on security. In the light of continuously increasing political, economic and social linkages, it has to be expected that the challenges facing Austria's security will become progressively more international in scope. (Bundeskanzleramt Österreich 2013, 7)

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND NEUTRALITY

Austria can neither negate its responsibility to take part in the resolution of regional and global problems, nor should it be solely guided by interests, whether they are its own or European interests. Of course, many new challenges, such as climate change, demographics, organised crime, proliferation and terrorism, have a direct impact on Austria and Europe.

Within the framework of the European Union, the Treaty of Lisbon established a solidarity clause (Article 222), which stipulates support in case of manmade disasters (for example, terrorist attacks) and natural disasters, following a request by the concerned state. However, this clause is not part of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and is thus separate and distinct from the mutual assistance obligations contained in Article 42.7 of the Lisbon Treaty.

According to Article 42.7, member states must provide each other with 'aid and assistance by all means in their power' in case of armed aggression towards a member state. This includes the promise to use military force. However, the Treaty of Lisbon also includes the so-called Irish guarantees, which supplements this article by stating that it 'shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defense policy of certain member states'. The neutral and non-aligned members of the EU, Austria, Sweden, Finland and Ireland, and their special status, are thus recognised under the Lisbon Treaty.

The Austrian Security Strategy stresses the difference between Article 42.7 and the principle of solidarity of Article 222:

Security policy based on solidarity takes into account that the security of neutral Austria is now largely interconnected with the security of the EU as a whole. ... (A) mutual assistance obligation in the event of an armed aggression was introduced, which shall not prejudice the specific character of the

security and defence policy of certain Member States as well as a solidarity clause stipulating the obligation to provide aid in the spirit of solidarity in the case of a terrorist attack or disaster. (Bundeskanzleramt Österreich 2013, 6)

In theoretical terms, Austria supports the idea of collective security that stands behind the solidarity clause. The concept of collective security aims to enhance security internally amongst a group of states. In contrast, the concept of collective defence, which is enshrined in Article 42.7 and is aimed at an outside enemy, would contradict Austria's neutrality.

It has to be underlined, however, that Article 42.7 makes not only exception for neutral and non-aligned states, but also for NATO members: '(C)ommitments and cooperation in this area shall be consistent with commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which ... remains the foundation of their collective defence and the forum for its implementation'. The Treaty therefore allows opting out for both the neutral and the NATO allies of the EU. For these states, it indicates exceptions that result from their commitments to the NATO treaty. Thus, exception clauses regarding this part of the treaty are valid for all EU member states. Contributions from member states are still voluntary and only provided upon the state's request. After the terror attacks in Paris in November 2015 France, for example, called upon the member states to invoke this defence clause to obtain support for its international missions. The French president called for article 42.7 instead of the 'solidarity clause' (Article 222) of the EU Treaty that was especially designed for cases of terror attack. Austria invoked its constitutional requirements of the 'specific character of the security and defense policy'. It decided, however, to increase its support of the UN operation in Mali (MINUSMA) and the training mission of the EU in Mali in order to ease the French burden in that country.

Austria is aware that the general rules of the Lisbon Treaty emphasise that national security 'remains the sole responsibility of each member state' (Article 4). This does not mean that Austria does not meet its obligations in relation to the CSDP; rather it emphasises EU member states' independence in making their own decisions. It implies that such obligations do not conflict with the neutrality of some member states. This statement is valid from an international legal perspective. From the constitutional viewpoint of Austria, the neutrality law states that Austria 'will never in the future accede to any military alliances' (Article 1.2.).

For Austria it is important that the Lisbon Treaty provides the basis for crisis management. According to Article 42.1:

The common security and defense policy shall be an integral part of the common foreign and security policy. It shall provide the Union with an operational capacity drawing on civilian and military assets. The Union may use them on missions outside the Union for peacekeeping, conflict prevention and strengthening international security in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. The performance of these tasks shall be undertaken using capabilities provided by the Member States.

For Austria a clear authorisation of these missions by the United Nations is not only a precondition because of international law (Article 103 of the UN Charter) but also overrides obligations under any other treaty. A UN Security Council mandate also enhances the domestic acceptability of such operations. Opponents of the requirement of UN Security Council authorisation for Austria's participation in EU missions argue that it is impossible to wait for such a mandate during certain urgent missions—such as evacuations. The argument, however, is spurious. The protection of civilian and mission personnel is always part of any mandate in conflict areas (for example, in Mali, the Central Africa Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Darfur and Chad). Furthermore, evacuation measures do not imply support for a warring party which is forbidden for neutral states.

In the Austrian debate, the understanding of security has transformed from a geographic to a functional one. An analysis of the statement of pundits and officials shows that Austria focuses less and less on traditional territorial defence, but rather on stabilisation and humanitarian operations, conflict prevention and crisis management. Austria developed instruments to improve civilian structures (for example, aid for reconstruction, machines for water purification and experts to advise on developing functioning police, judicial systems and public administration). Notwithstanding its own defence requirements, Austria views itself as having an obligation to contribute to the provision of human security. This is why the Austrian armed forces prepare especially for tasks in the fields of conflict prevention, peacekeeping, disaster relief and the reconstruction of post-war and dysfunctional societies. The Austrian armed forces concentrate on duties enshrined in the 'Petersberg tasks' of the EU and crisis management in NATO rather on territorial and collective defence.

The EU's humanitarian mission in Chad in 2007 is a case in point reflecting the priorities noted above. A humanitarian catastrophe was developing as conflict displaced half a million people or forced them to flee from border regions to the CAR and Sudan. These refugees were regularly victims of violent assaults at this point. EU member states could not remain indifferent, whether or not they were neutral. To provide help in this case was considered to be a moral obligation, but was not motivated only by altruism. The EU's members agreed that the mission in Chad could effectively contribute to the fight against organised crime, drug trafficking and flows of refugees, as well as establish or restore viable economic, trade and investment zones. The stabilisation of the country's situation was therefore also in the interests of the EU and Austria. Austria's participation in the EU mission was legally based on a UN Security Council mandate. The establishment of a broad legitimacy for coercive measures in the form of a UN Security Council mandate was not only crucial for Austria, but also sensible for the international community of states. Austria provided 160 soldiers for the European peace force and the following UN mission. The goals for this mission were primarily the protection of civilians from violent assaults and the safeguarding of the distribution of relief supplies and other humanitarian aid, such as basic health services. The participating troops did not explicitly side with one of the conflict parties, the government or the rebels, which would be the usual procedure in a war. Not a single neutral EU member state stood apart. Finland and Sweden provided troops, Ireland even supplied the operational commander and Austria the commander of special forces.

Austria also agreed to participate in two of the EU's rapid reaction forces or battlegroups. The mandates of EU battlegroups are potentially very broad, ranging from humanitarian assistance and solidarity to robust missions, which may include armed combat for self-defence purposes. The latter missions should be legitimised through a UN Security Council mandate. If there is no authorisation by a legitimate authority, Austria's participation would be problematic. It would trigger a debate about the meaning of neutrality within the EU.

Austria expressed its willingness to be part of so-called permanent structured cooperation in relation to EU battlegroups, a new possibility introduced under the Lisbon Treaty. In the framework of the Lisbon Treaty, EU member states 'whose military capabilities fulfil higher criteria and which have made more binding commitments in this area' may establish 'permanent structured cooperation'. However, the 'criteria and com-

mitments on military capabilities' are established by the member states themselves. This means that Austria can make an independent decision on which capabilities it aims to activate in a battlegroup context. For example, there is no obligation to provide troops for high-tech combat missions. Austria's participation in short-term deployments of a battlegroup or operational reserve forces is independent of its permanent commitments. All of the forces deployed by the Austrian armed forces must, in principle, be designed for dual use in, both national and international operations.

Austria would like to see the EU battlegroups embedded in UN-missions. The Charter of the United Nations called for military contingents for Chapter VII tasks under the command of the UN Security Council (Article 43–47), but this commitment has never been implemented due to member states' unwillingness to make forces permanently available. The protocol of the Treaty of Lisbon regarding the permanent structured cooperation especially stresses that the 'United Nations Organisation may request the Union's assistance for the urgent implementation of missions undertaken under Chapters VI and VII of the United Nations Charter'.

During recent decades, with increasing occurrence of large natural disasters, Austria has provided assistance for disaster relief both within and outside Europe. This is consistent with the Lisbon Treaty. Article 3 of the Lisbon Treaty includes a commitment that '(I)n its relations with the wider world, the Union ...shall contribute to peace, security, the sustainable development of the Earth, solidarity and mutual respect among peoples', which may be viewed as a sort of solidarity clause that goes beyond the EU's member states. The refugee crisis in the middle of the 2010s emerged as a particular challenge from the south. Austria's armed forces have been deployed at check-points on the Austrian border to control the refugee flow and to prevent human trafficking and smuggling. Austria would also be prepared to control the external borders of the EU.

The future of the EU does not lie in collective or territorial defence but in crisis management and collective security. The July 2015 EU report, *The European Union in a changing global environment: A more connected, contested and complex world*, leaves collective and territorial defence to NATO and concentrates on crisis management: 'At the same time, as NATO refocuses on territorial defence, CSDP can work with NATO to sharpen its focus on crisis management and hybrid threats' (Council of the European Union 2015, 13). For Austria, it would be preferable if the EU becomes a collective security actor rather than collective defence

organisation (Gärtner 2015). This means Austria is more likely to participate in crisis management rather than collective or territorial defence.

CONCLUSION: ENGAGED NEUTRALITY

This chapter has sought to analyse Austria's security policy and the country's interaction with the EU and NATO as security actors. The central argument is that Austria's security policy should be understood as one of engaged neutrality, involving a commitment to non-membership of military alliances, alongside a commitment to a proactive policy of supporting multilateralism, conflict prevention and peacekeeping. Domestically, there is a strong political commitment within Austria to the maintenance of a policy of neutrality, but also to the activist elements of engaged neutrality which have been features of Austrian foreign and security policy for some decades now. Austria's relations with EU foreign, security and defence policy and with NATO can only be understood in this context. Central elements of EU foreign and security policy—in particular, a commitment to a comprehensive concept of security and to crisis management and peacekeeping—sit comfortably with Austria's foreign and security policy tradition and Austria has been an active contributor to EU foreign policy and EU operations. NATO's development of partnerships, of a peacekeeping role and to some extent also of a broader understanding of security provided a context in which Austria sought to engage with the Alliance and contributed to its peacekeeping operations in the Balkans. As NATO has arguably returned to a more militarised approach to security in the 2000s and 2010s, however, the political space for cooperation between Austria and NATO has shrunk—and this trend may continue in future.

The primary task of a security policy is the elimination of the structural causes of potential violent conflicts: violence avoidance through the granting of minority rights, economic and social stability, and prevention of environmental disasters. Concrete instruments for conflict avoidance can be, among other things: preventive diplomacy, early detection and timely action, peaceful conflict settlement, but also economic sanctions, disarmament and military confidence-building. Membership in a military alliance, like NATO, is not necessary for the prevention of violent conflict. Crisis management and conflict prevention can also be conducted within the framework of the EU, NATO partnerships or the OSCE. Austria actively participates in EU crisis management tasks, as provided for by the Lisbon Treaty. As an EU member and a party to the Treaty, Austria is 'a full and

equal partner' in the planning and decision-making process of these activities. Neutrality is no obstacle to involvement in EU crisis management operations, whatsoever. Austria closely cooperates with NATO in important areas, such as crisis management, humanitarian operations or peace-keeping. Cooperative security and the concept of partnership offer the possibility of co-decision for every operation in which Austria participates.

In the West Balkans, Austria, for example, is the largest troop contributor to the EU mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the largest non-NATO troop contributor to the NATO mission in Kosovo. The amount of money spent on defence does not tell everything about efficiency. In 2015, Austria spent only two and a half billion euros on defence which amounts to 0.8 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). Defence expenditure will increase by two billion over the next decade, however. Nevertheless, Austria deploys more troops abroad than any other non-NATO state in Europe. Austria's focus on peace and expeditionary missions is part of its broader security strategy. 'Engaged Neutrality' means active participation in the international security policy in general, and in international peace operations in particular.

Diplomacy and conflict prevention are traditionally fields in which neutral states can be active. Neutrality should not be interpreted as 'sitting still' in the passive sense of sitting on the sidelines. This definition would support economic neutrality as well as an equidistance between the blocs, which would be incompatible with membership in the United Nations. Austria's neutrality has always proven its flexibility, rather than orienting itself along very fixed lines. A flexible understanding of neutrality and its adaptability to modern requirements should not be interpreted as a loss of its significance. Similarly, nobody would argue that the Austrian constitution has become irrelevant simply because it has been adapted to different historical circumstances repeatedly since 1929.

It goes without saying that there cannot be neutrality between democracy and dictatorship, between a constitutional state and despotism, between adherence to human rights and their violation. The Austrian neutrality law does not relate to these questions. Neutral states are not allowed to offer other states or alliances the prospect of entering into a war at their side. This does not, however, mean neutrality towards glaring human rights violations, injustice, torture or genocide. Rather, neutrality is defined in specific terms as non-membership in a military alliance, not participating in foreign wars and no deployment of foreign troops on

Austrian territory. Even during the Cold War, Austria remained firmly grounded in the community of western values.

Nonetheless, Austria's neutrality allows for a crucial advantage in the debate on these values. It releases Austria from geopolitical and alliance-related considerations. Western democratic constitutional states can sometimes not hold on to their values due to simple pragmatic considerations. Austria, however, does not have any particular global geopolitical interests that would result in the establishment of military bases in or the export of weapons to authoritarian states that neglect human rights and constitutional values. Neither is Austria limited by any alliance obligations in its support for democracy, human rights and constitutional states anywhere. Austria's neutrality does not allow the country to have double standards. However, a reassessment of neutrality is necessary. The old Swiss concept of 'sitting still' should definitely be left behind. False diplomatic caution has to be replaced by a courageous and aggressive advocacy of universal values. There can be no exceptions.

Austrian neutrality cannot mean 'staying out', but rather calls for an intense involvement in international crisis management. Austria does not have global geopolitical interests, nor do any close obligations of alliance restrict the country's involvement in supporting international peace and security. Austria needs to make use of these advantages and possibilities, which result from its engaged neutrality policy. The state of neutrality itself already implies that Austria, from the outset, would not maintain a hostile attitude during conflicts. 'Engaged neutrality' means involvement whenever possible and staying out if necessary; it does not mean staying out when possible and engagement only if necessary.

Multilateralism, willingness to engage in dialogue and global partnership have priority for Austria and the other European neutral states. The use of force must remain the exception. Priority setting is important. There is a significant difference between a policy, which orients itself along the lines of the abovementioned principles, and one that primarily supports military intervention, arms build-up, military alliances or sanctions outside the United Nations.

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