



# FOCUS Project Newsletter No. 6

March 2013

Foresight Security Scenarios:

Mapping Research to a Comprehensive Approach to Exogenous EU Roles

FOCUS is co-funded by the European Commission under the 7th Framework Programme, theme "security", call FP7-SEC-2010-1, work programme topic 6.3-2 "Fore sighting the contribution of security research to meet the future EU roles".

## 1. Editorial

During the times of manifest Cold War threat scenarios, Arnold Wolfers, professor and expert in international relations, complained that "national security" was a symbol that left too much room for confusion to serve as a guiding principle for political advice or scientific analysis. He suggested that, as a first step in developing an analytical concept of the term, security should be considered, "in an objective sense, [...] the absence of threats to acquired values, [and] in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked."

After the end of the Cold War, security policy continued to be understood as a normative practice, namely as defending values. The notion of security as a value-laden concept and its essential link to society has been taken up by the new field of security research, which includes a focus on "societal security" in addition to – or beyond – the security of infrastructures, utilities, etc. Security research aims for a comprehensive approach to delivering security (including civil protection) to the citizens – by civil means and without infringing individual rights and freedoms.

The main focus of security research, however, has been on technological solutions for security problems and their thorough check for social and ethics issues, such as the acceptability and impact on citizens' perception of (in)security. This must be an integrated part of the research process.

Reaching beyond this state of the art, what has been termed new security studies aims to integrate concepts and approaches from classical, strategic security studies and civil security research. Embracing academic perspectives within the spectrum of new security studies and those from industry and end-users, the FP7 security research project FOCUS contributed toward shaping research to enable the EU to effectively address future challenges to comprehensive security.

After two years of work, the FOCUS project is now coming to an end. The FOCUS website, the IT-based Knowledge Platform and its roadmap for planning of "security research 2035," scenario wikis, the European Security (Research) glossary, etc. will remain available on <http://www.focusproject.eu>. At the same time, several follow-on actions are planned.

This for example includes use of FOCUS roadmap tracks as checklists for ethics and societal security aspects in the newly started EU security research project AEROCEPTOR on UAVs for home affairs use to support police activity. Another example is the use of FOCUS wikis – by FOCUS partners that are universities – in teaching and the use of another roadmap track to upgrade or develop new curricula.

Thank you for having FOCUSed on us and followed our endeavours! We hope we will be in touch.

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- » First, scenarios for EU security roles in the up to 2035 time-frame.
- » Second, within those context scenarios for EU roles, scenarios for alternative futures of "security research 2035" that contribute toward an enabling of those roles.
- » Third, validated reference scenarios that lead to the FOCUS roadmap proposal for "security research 2035."

FOCUS results were obtained by expert workshops, online questionnaires, analyses of related foresight projects, and large horizon scanning. This was based on a methodology process, which was also part of the project's work. In total, more than 600 experts contributed to the results by scenario information crowd-sourcing and assessments, representing more than 20 countries.

FOCUS concentrated on alternative roles of a future "EU 2035" to prevent or respond to incidents situated on the "borderline" between the internal and external dimensions of the security affecting the Union and its citizens. It did so by elaborating a syllabus of scenarios, based on IT-supported foresight, and deriving five reference scenarios that fed into a roadmap plan." This was performed along the project's five "Big Themes" generated by horizon scanning and study work in the development phase of FOCUS.

At the end of the scenario work, a reference scenario for each of the five "Big Themes" was derived:

- » *Alternative future concepts of the comprehensive approach and resulting role requirements for the EU – Reference scenario: "No Land is an Island"* – A protected EU homeland with external responsibilities
- » *Natural disasters and global environmental change – Reference scenario: "Policy Drives All in a Have/Have-Not World"* – Security research on natural disasters and the global environment

<sup>1</sup> Arnold Wolfers, "National Security" as an Ambiguous Symbol," *Political Science Quarterly* 67:4 (December 1952): 481-502, quote on p. 483.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 485.

<sup>3</sup> Barry Buzan, *People, States, and Fear*. Boulder, CO: Rienner, 1991.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. European Societal Security Research Group, <http://www.societalsecurity.eu>.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. J. Peter Burgess, ed., *The Routledge Handbook of New Security Studies*. Milton Park: Routledge, 2013.

## 2. FOCUS approach and "dataset"

Scenario foresight in the FOCUS project was carried out via critical and creative – yet methodologically guided – forward thinking at the strategic level in order to increase the EU's ability to cope with relevant alternative futures from the near future until 2035. The FOCUS approach presented the results of the performed foresight on three scenario levels:

» *Critical infrastructure and supply chain protection – Reference scenario: “Security as Societal Science” – Critical infrastructure and supply chain research driven by societal factors*

» *The EU as a global actor based on the wider Petersberg tasks – Reference scenario: “Borderless Threats = Mission Creep” – The EU’s forced march toward a stronger Common Security and Defence Policy*

» *The EU’s internal framework (and the emerging system of EU Homeland Security) – Reference scenario: “Inside Out” – Inward coherence and governance opens the door to external policy*

All FOCUS scenarios and related proof of concept information are available as wikis for further use on the IT-based Knowledge Platform: <http://www.focusproject.eu/web/focus/wiki/-/wiki/Main/FrontPage>.

### 3. FOCUS conclusions for “security research 2035”

With its emphasis on foresight (not prediction) and the transversal, ethical and broader societal implications of its scenarios, the FOCUS project and its results point to the emerging Horizon 2020 programme by supporting security research planning activities. However, the time frame of the FOCUS project is 2035, thus reaching beyond Horizon 2020. Thus, FOCUS is not dedicated towards Horizon 2020 itself but to longer-term planning for security research that supports the anticipated future roles of the EU as a security provider.

FOCUS foresight yielded the following ranked top 10 drivers for determining what security might mean in a future “EU 2035,” with the factors of resources and resilience being the two most important groups of drivers:

1. Crises resulting from scarcity of resources (e.g. energy-caused stress, most importantly the increasing scarcity of conventional oil; dependencies on supply chains);
2. Societal Resilience and preparedness: Certain risks cannot be catered for, nor avoided – Societies must prepare to face shocks and must have the ability to recover;
3. Changing borderlines between internal and external security, including the extent of relations with leading countries;
4. Technological change, including new technologies driving or changing security needs;
5. Mass migration flows, e.g. due to economic disparity, global conflicts, natural catastrophes and climate change;

6. New possibilities for international conflicts with main the leverages being the cyber dimension, energy, and scarce resources;
7. Diffusion of power within and among nation-states, marked by the rise of population-rich and economically powerful China and India and the increased importance of energy-rich states and regions;
8. Dependency on information and communication technology, and technology in general (including cascading breakdown of systems);
9. Demographic shifts with pressure on resources;
10. Increased reliance on critical infrastructures that are vulnerable and have little spare capacity, operate at the edges of performance and loads, and are critically dependent on other infrastructures.

These driving challenges will strongly influence the evolution of the concept of security, as well as the capability-related and operational ingredients of the EU’s comprehensive approach. Covering the internal–external security continuum, the future comprehensive approach will focus on a holistic nature of societal goals in order to increase the security of the EU and its citizenry. Future security research should help identify and address – and not just note and implement – challenges and requirements in both technological and non-technological aspects.

The instruments in support of the EU’s global roles may include stronger justice and law enforcement capabilities; improved EU intelligence and early warning capabilities; financial instruments for influencing economic developments on a global scale; good governance and institution building in security sectors; or civil society-related and cultural instruments, including media, social networks, etc. Future security research should contribute to and build on those instruments. For an effective European homeland security system to emerge, future research should address organizational issues such as integration of national and international agencies.

Future security research should also increasingly consider the societal impact of comprehensiveness. This will mean bringing together and applying various disciplines. It should aim to mainstream terminology to improve linguistic interoperability between different communities of practice and of knowledge, provide a better connection of the disciplines involved, establish networked expertise to provide rapid decision support for end users and contribute to continuous evaluation of strategies of national and European civil security strategies. Moreover, future security research should essentially include research into societal security. For example, it should involve a track dedicated to quick response mechanisms for managing social stress resulting from interruption of supplies.

Future security research should overall emphasize and help promote the principle of societal/citizen ownership (which views citizens as the final/ultimate end-users). This will be of increasing importance for the ethical and factual acceptability by the public of its results. At the same time, future security research should clearly address the risks of creating an uneven distribution of security across society, for example by technologies that only add to the security of the wealthy or security solutions that may even harm certain parts of society.

Future research tracks should finally include critical thinking about past and existing concepts and how they may develop in the future. Also, mechanisms such as public consultation should be explored to increase transparency about the aims of security research and the potential use of technologies developed under its aegis.

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**FOCUS Website and entry point  
for the IT-based Knowledge Platform:**

» [www.focusproject.eu](http://www.focusproject.eu)



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