

The *Internal Security Strategy* and the new security culture

J. Peter Burgess

Question to ask: What can the concept of **(in)security culture** contribute to understanding the next phase of integrate border management? Look in some detail at the recently adopted **Internal Security Strategy**.

Two conclusions:

1. Europe's security culture not only builds upon a set of standard values, but generates values and modifies them
2. Europe's enduring cultural diversity may indicate certain limits to the unity of its security culture.

From Stockholm to the Internal Security Strategy

Among the political priorities set out in the Stockholm Programme was the development of an *internal security strategy*. The aim of the strategy is

to further improve security in the Union and thus protect the lives and safety of European citizens and tackle organised crime, terrorism and other threats. The strategy should be aimed at strengthening cooperation in law enforcement, border management, civil protection disaster management as well as criminal judicial cooperation in order to make Europe more secure. Moreover, the European Union needs to base its work on solidarity between Member States and make full use of Article 222 TFEU ('Solidarity cause')

The Stockholm Programme also set out a number of guidelines for working out the details of a comprehensive internal security strategy. It included, you will recall:

1. a division of tasks between Member States, reflecting a **shared vision** of today's challenges,
2. respect for fundamental **rights**, international protection and the rule of law
3. **solidarity**
4. a proactive, **intelligence-led** approach
5. a horizontal **cross-cutting** approach
6. stringent **cooperation** between agencies
7. focus on **streamlining** and preventive action
8. **regional** initiatives
9. making **citizens aware** of the Commission's work to protect them.

The Internal Security Strategy was approved by the EU Justice and Affairs Councils on 25 February 2010 (7 months ago). A top priority of the Spanish presidency within Justice and Home Affairs.

The content of the Internal Security Strategy

1. The strategy document begins with a **review and analysis of the common threats**: terrorism, organised and serious crime, cyber-crime, cross-border crime, violence and natural or man-made disasters.
2. It adds a **review of the instruments developed to facilitate JHA cooperation**: situation and risk scenario analysis, response mechanisms, the **creation** of institutions (Europol, Eurojust, Frontex and the anti-terrorism coordinator, European arrest warrant, various databases).
3. It **details the principles and values** on which it is based, underscoring their *shared* nature: respect of fundamental rights, Rule of law, privacy, transparency and accountability, dialogue, mutual trust, solidarity.
4. The strategy spells out a **review of strategic action: comprehensive approach to internal security** (featuring judicial and democratic control of action), a **proactive** approach based on information, integrated information pooling, judicial cooperation on criminal matters, integrated border management, a commitment to innovation, information, third-party cooperation and information.
5. The strategy **spells out some new conceptual approaches to internal security**. It is to be understood as 'a wide and comprehensive concept which straddles multiple sectors in order to address these major threats and others, which have a direct impact on the lives, safety, and well-being of citizens, including natural and man-made disasters.
6. The strategy sets out the elements of the **European security model**: *common instruments*, will, cooperation and solidarity, shared views and actions on root causes of insecurity.
7. It outlines **the Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation and Internal Security (COSI)**, with reporting obligations, but no actual democratic review. As an integrated unit the COSI will likely streamline operations and coordination, but not strengthen transparency.

Much of these elements are to be found in the Stockholm Programme and elsewhere. The Internal Security Strategy announces in addition the ambition of consolidating them, unifying them and standardizing them, to a large degree around informational measures.

Stepping back a bit, we can see that the politics, the technology, the perception of threats and the economy of fears that link them together, all take place within what we can call a **security culture**.

The new security culture

Security culture refers to the way that a certain idea of security orders and structures what we understand to be the dangers to our lives, the threats to our values, and the most apparent defences against these. In addition, and more remarkably, **security culture** participates in shaping what is valuable for us. It regulates our moral, economic, and political priorities. It sets the limits and possibilities for what declaring what is important and not important, valuable and not valuable, worth protecting or not protecting.

We know that the 'War on Terror' was not a war in any ordinary sense, and we know that it wasn't 'on' terror in any straightforward way. The 'War on Terror' was the foundation of a security culture. It has arguably had greater consequences for the entire constellation of political, social, cultural and moral values than it has had for the 'terrorists'. The 'War on Terror' has been from start to finish more about **us**, than about **them**.

Research on the 'War on Terror' has taught us that the security culture that grows from it is **also** not about the threats, but about the self-understanding of a society that feels threatened. The new security culture is one in which new institutions, new cooperations, new technologies and above all new or transformed values emerge.

In the new security culture, political discourse of security and security technology, hop quickly over the question of whether we are under threat, what is threatening us and on what grounds. At the same time, there is today massive political, legal and research activity being carried out all on the **assumption** that we know and understand what the threat to Europe is. The Internal Security Strategy carries on, more or less coherently, this path.

In prosecuting the 'War on Terror' in Europe, in justifying spending on police and security measures, security RTD, inventing new and adapting old legal instruments, political discourse have all proudly fallen back on the **shared European values**. We all agree that that the cardinal notions of democracy, rule of law, freedom of expression, etc. are principles we insist should be in vigour. They are in bold letters in all the main documents of the European project. No one will deny them.

Yet if we look more closely, then we will see that these values are not stable, timeless and universal. Our security culture changes them, even reproduces them, reshapes them. The security culture is a values machine: It does not respond to values, providing the foundation for

political action on the basis of eternal truths. On the contrary, it produces new values, often under the same headlines. 'Democracy, liberty, rule of law, freedom of expression'—these words have different meanings today than they had in 1952, sometimes entirely new meanings.

The shared values we know and share, and which seem to have been constant and present everywhere and always in vigour, are bi-products of our security culture. The way we understand and invoke fundamental rights like those enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty is inseparable from a certain kind of threat against them embodied and illuminated by the 'War on Terror'.

Still, the nature of the European project calls for **recognition, recognition** of a **multiplicity** of European cultures and thereby a **multiplicity** of experiences of threat. In many ways, the Internal Security Strategy constitutes a set of measures forming a Europeanization of internal security of the kind we have seen on the political, economic and cultural level: transferring activities, authorities and competencies from the national to the European level. One might ask, in this case, whether the Europeanization of security in Europe, can take place in the same way as the Europeanization of other traditional nation-state ways-of-life and the security cultures they imply. The European threat landscape is highly uneven and fragmented. What is insecurity for **one** European is **not** insecurity for another.

The Internal Security Strategy aims to bring under one 'roof' a standardized and unified set of measures for managing internal security in Europe, and under one regulatory authority, the COSI (Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation and Internal Security). While few of the individual measures are actually new, the novelty of the document is its coordination, centralization and standardization.

The same can be said for the landscape of security-relevant values, which are becoming the core justification for increasingly enhanced security measures. The 'common values' at the heart of the Internal Security Strategy, not to speak of the Lisbon Treaty, are not common in a way that would form the basis for unified security culture. Despite its commonalities, the richness of Europe's reality lies in its varying cultural values. While there will obviously be basic consensus on the 'headline values', democracy, rule of law, freedom of expression, etc., these are lived—and threatened—in many different ways in Europe.

Such a heavily unified security architecture as it is proposed by the Internal Security Strategy many simply be too much for a fragmented European house.

In conclusion, many things fragment Europe: culture, language, religion, economics, politics, etc. The most new and remarkable force of fragmentation of the EU is **security itself**. The attempts

to find a unified security model, like the Internal Security Strategy, will likely collide on the ground level with this reality: the background for a tightly unified institutional approach to security in Europe is a fragmented experience of both threats, values, security and insecurity. This is the reality of Europe's new security culture.

DO NOT CITE WITHOUT PERMISSION