PERMANENT STRUCTURED COOPERATION
The Lisbon Treaty introduced the possibility for certain EU countries to strengthen their cooperation in military matters by creating permanent structured cooperation (Articles 42(6) and 46 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU)). In order to do this, interested countries must fulfil two main conditions provided in Protocol No 10 annexed to the treaty:

- They must intensively develop defence capacities through the development of national contributions and their participation in multinational forces, in the main European equipment programmes and in the activities of the European Defence Agency in the field of defence capabilities development, research, acquisition and armaments;
- They must have the capacity by 2010 to supply combat units and support logistics for the tasks referred to in Article 43 TEU within a period of 5 to 30 days and, depending on needs, for a period of 30 to 120 days.

The European Defence Agency regularly assesses the contributions of participating countries. EU countries wishing to constitute permanent structured cooperation must notify their intention to the Council and to the EU’s High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Following this notification, the Council must adopt a decision by qualified majority establishing permanent structured cooperation and the list of participating countries. The membership of new countries or the suspension of some of them is decided by the Council by a qualified majority of the members participating in the permanent structured cooperation. The decisions and recommendations taken within the framework of such permanent structured cooperation are adopted by unanimity of the participating Council members only.

SEE ALSO
- Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)
- European Union agencies
- ‘New-look’ NATO
- NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation)
- European Defence Agency website