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PANEL 3: CULTURE, IDENTITY AND REPRESENTATION IN  
TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

**European Security Identity since the End of the Cold War**

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The post cold war era – whether ending in 2001, 2003 or 2008-9 – marks the re-emergence of Europe as a subject, by contrast with its “object” status during the Cold war. From a transatlantic point of view, *European Identity* – or ESDI – debates embodied the gradual “reconnaissance” of such an evolution, not only as a historical driving force and a necessity to deal with, but as an opportunity for transatlantic interests. Still, on the one hand ESDI was not well received during the first half of the Nineties, political rivalries re-emerging through technical arrangements; on the other hand there are many challenges ahead, as much for a strong European identity as for a renewed Transatlantic partnership.

From 1989 to 1997, the notion of ESDI crystallizes strategic Transatlantic debates, in particular between Paris and Washington. It first appears as a balanced innovation, whereas WEU appears as an inadequate “lobby” formula. Hence an evolution from Identity to Capacity, which put aside the institutional debate for a while. But in a second phase, the initial misunderstandings come back on the front: ESDI cannot satisfy neither the European demand for a new political transatlantic balance in the Alliance, nor US demand for more burdensharing. Eventually ESDI bears more problems than solutions.

From 1998 to 2003 as ESDI is progressively replaced by ESDP launched by the Saint-Malo Franco-British compromise between capabilities and autonomy, the debate undergoes its evolution from Identity to Autonomy. 9/11 and the intervention in Afghanistan do open a new era, but the following events mainly confirm three “backpedaling” dynamics; the new global dimension of threats and risks, the unilateralist drift of the US Administration and its focus on (central-)Asia at the expense of Europe, and the renewed importance of the special relationship in UK foreign policy at the European level. These tendencies will be catalysed in the Iraqi crisis of 2002-03. From 2003 onwards: European identity implies the emergence of a Strategic culture.