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# Which way to go? Defence technology and the diversity of 'dual-use' technology transfer

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## Abstract

In recent years, 'dual-use' policies have become a widely promoted response to the problems faced by defence producers confronting the decline in defence expenditures, the continuing growth in the cost of new weapons systems, and the changing relationship between military and civilian technologies. A consensus has developed on the importance of dual-use policies, but no agreement seems apparent on what they are; such confusion derives from the variety of dual-use technologies, and the even broader array of mechanisms by which they can be transferred across military and civilian applications. By suggesting a typology of dual-use technology transfer mechanisms this paper provides a platform for the comparison and analysis of different dual-use policies. It identifies four main types of dual-use technology transfer mechanisms, all different in nature and purpose. The main difference is established between straight and adaptational mechanisms, depending on whether the technology

transfer mechanism is concerned with adapting the technology to its new applications. Straight mechanisms do not require any change in the ways in which defence-oriented R&D and production is organised. In comparison, adaptational mechanisms are more ambitious policies and riskier, but may be a necessary answer to the structural problems faced by the industry.



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## Keywords

Defence technology; Arms production; Dual-use technologies; Technology transfer

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