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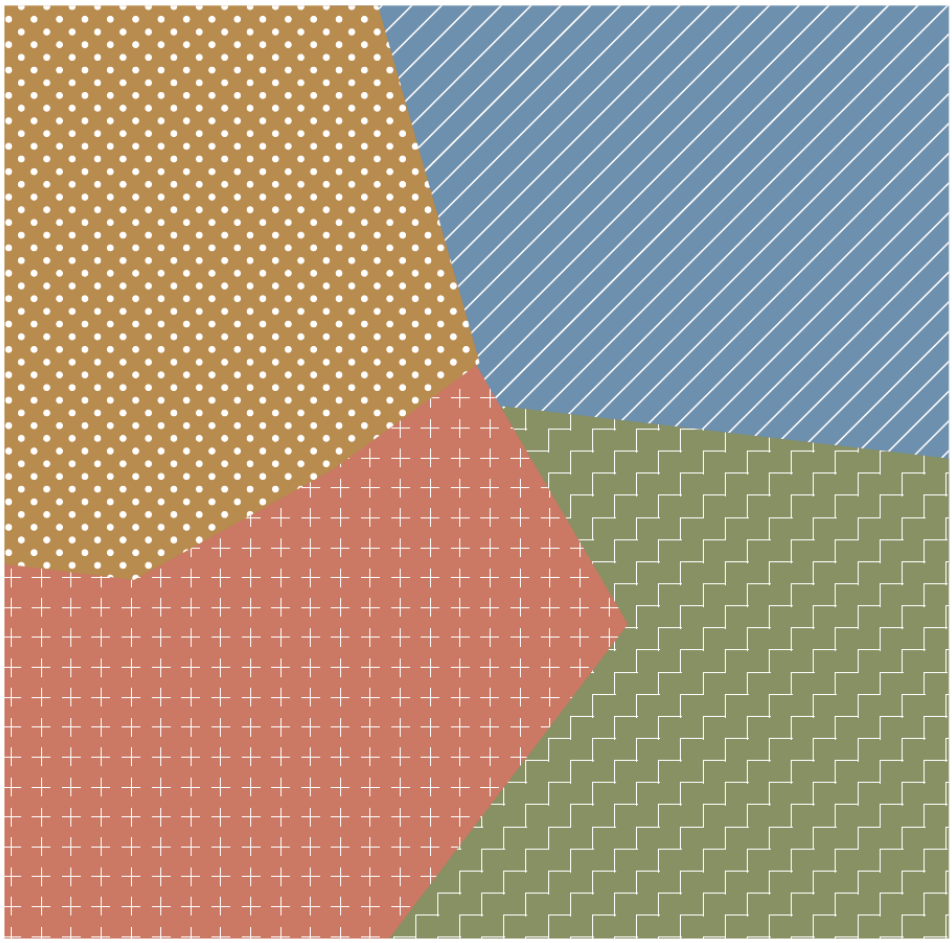

EU Policy Briefing on Whole of Society Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding

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Colophon

EU POLICY BRIEFING ON WHOLE OF SOCIETY CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PEACEBUILDING

31 March 2016

Version 1.1

Deliverable 2.8: EU Policy Brief

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Whole of Society Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding

This scoping study was produced as part of the project "Whole of Society Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding", which aims to enhance the EU's peacebuilding and conflict prevention capabilities.

This paper is part of the first series of orientation papers that were intended to indicate lines of inquiry and propose research questions, as a basis for discussion and input for the project's Theoretical and Methodological Framework. They seek to provide an overview of scholarly knowledge about the EU's capabilities and means for conflict prevention and peacebuilding in relation to several cross-cutting themes and clusters that the project focuses on. More information at www.woscap.eu

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This project is funded by the EU's Horizon 2020
Research and Innovation Programme
Grant agreement no. 653866

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Introduction

The European Union (EU) is currently running 17 external missions and operations under its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) (EEAS, 2015a). This external activity is based on the principles of the United Nations (UN) Charter (EU, 2012, Treaty of the European Union-Article 21), and on the subsidiarity principle[1], and can be explained by the fact that the EU, as an example of peace and stability, is an important regional and global actor of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. In this context, the WOSCAP project aims to enhance the capabilities of the EU to implement conflict prevention and peacebuilding actions through sustainable, comprehensive and innovative civilian means.

This EU policy briefing aims to provide a concise and clear analysis of current EU policies and programmes dealing with civilian peacebuilding and conflict prevention in order to give a picture of the institutional realities and the internal political challenges which confront the EU in its ambition to develop and deploy effective capabilities in that matter. This policy briefing will therefore analyse the political context, and policy-setting and implementation as well as changes occurring among EU institutions and Member States. The analysis focuses on the evolution, generated by the Comprehensive Approach, of concepts linked with conflict prevention and peacebuilding inside the EU, and is intended to generate reflection about the future of these activities.

The European Commission (EC) defines the concept of conflict prevention as measures "undertaken over the short term to reduce manifest tensions and/or to prevent the outbreak or recurrence of violent conflict" (EP, 2001, p.2). On the other hand, "peacebuilding is a long-term process involving activities which aim to reduce tensions and to end or prevent violence. Peacebuilding takes place before, during and after armed conflict and supports the conditions, attitudes and behaviour which lead to peaceful development. Activities include, inter alia, early warning, mediation, crisis management, development co-operation, human rights initiatives, and security policies when undertaken in a conflict sensitive way" (EPLO, n.d). These two concepts are the cornerstone of the EU's external action.

A "policy" refers to a defined programme of action - including official statements, funding priorities, system of laws and regulatory measures - concerning a characteristic topic promulgated by one or several public or governmental authorities.[2] As far as the structure of a policy is concerned, from official declarations to concrete budget implementation, it is important to bear in mind the policy cycle in order to understand the chronological building of a policy: policy objectives are translated into output, implementation and outcome (Metais, Thepaut, and Keukelaire, 2013). This paper will mainly focus on current EU policy objectives

[1] This principle has not been explicitly mentioned in the UN Charter, but is expressed especially in Article 52 of Chapter VIII, which states that the UN should not intervene when a domestic agency or organisation is able to act. The subsidiarity principle was enshrined in EU law by the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, and was incorporated in the Treaty of the EU as a fundamental principle under the Lisbon Treaty (2009).

[2] According to classical definitions provided by Thoenig (1987) and Kilpatrick (n.d)

(statements, declarations and intentions) and policy outputs (instruments and budgets, programming) within the fields of civilian peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

This analysis is mainly focused on official texts (communications, conclusions, regulations, factsheets) produced by the different EU institutions.[3] This methodology is used to provide a broad picture of the institutional realities and internal political changes of the EU regarding its ambition to develop and deploy effective civilian peacebuilding capabilities.

Even though external operations of the EU and peacebuilding activities are mainly regulated by the UN Charter and the EU fundamental treaties, the elaboration of the Comprehensive Approach in the 1990s set a milestone in the development of current EU external policy on conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The first concrete measures in this field were decided in 2001 during the Gothenburg European Council and the terms and policies have continued developing since then.

Conflict prevention and peacebuilding are the result of an historical and political emergence of norms articulated within the concept of the Comprehensive Approach and implemented by specific institutions and programmes (1.). In practice, this normative endeavour has been applied to improving co-operation and synergies in EU action (2.). Despite these efforts, a review of practice shows the need to identify and highlight connections and overlaps in EU actions in order to improve EU efficiency (3.).

[3] The main institutions concerned are the Council of the EU, the European Council, the European Commission, the European Parliament and the External European Action Service.

1. Institutional context and normative evolution of conflict prevention and peacebuilding

The EU's Comprehensive Approach,[4] closely related to the human security concept,[5] generated a need for the development of crisis management capabilities – both civilian and military– and ways to articulate them. The issue of civilian crisis management capabilities and the development of synergies with the military aspects of CSDP evolved through time, and are now part of institutions' policies and programmes. The analysis of this normative evolution will focus first on the civilian capabilities of the EU in terms of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and then on the development of civil-military synergies.

1.1 Institutional evolution of civilian capabilities

The concept of civilian capabilities will be defined historically before describing the relevant EU institutions and programmes.

The definition of "civilian capabilities" was set out at the Feira European Council (2000), and completed at the Brussels European Council (2004). The term "civilian capabilities" is usually used to define a component of non-military crisis management missions within CSDP, to describe the civilian means and manpower deployed by the EU on external operations.

The need for the development and co-ordination of civilian capabilities was first emphasised at the Helsinki European Council (1999), and was later confirmed during the Feira European Council (2000), where civilian capabilities were defined under four main priorities (policing; strengthening the rule of law; strengthening civilian administration; civil protection) (European Parliament, 2000, Annex 1-Appendix 3). Their strategic importance was confirmed later in the conclusions of the Gothenburg European Council (2001), and underlined by the European Security Strategy (ESS) (European Council, 2003). EU crisis management, as a part of the Comprehensive Approach, must include diverse aspects, including non-military ones to address multi-faceted situations, and including economic aspects such as development, within the global frame of crisis management. The relation between security issues and development is obvious, as stated in the ESS (2003) and its revision in 2008 (European Council, 2003; 2008), and falls within the field of civilian resources.

[4] The Comprehensive Approach can be defined as "a coherent strategy for conflict prevention, preparedness and response starting with all relevant players sharing a common understanding of the situation or the challenge" (HRVP, 2013, p.5) set up in order to improve the effectiveness of EU policy-making, working practices, actions and results based on a common strategic vision. (Council of the EU, 2014)

[5] The term "Human Security", developed by the UN, can be used to combine concepts such as "conflict prevention, crisis management and civil-military co-operation" (Kaldor, Martin, Selchow, 2008), that have been developed within the European Security and Defense Policy.

The objectives set by the Feira and Gothenburg European Councils were agreed in 2004[6] (European Council, 2004), leading to the writing of the Civilian Headline Goal 2008 (CHG 2008) (Council of the EU, 2004) which added two new priorities for civilian capabilities: monitoring missions, and supporting EU Special Representatives (EUSRs), in order to make civilian capabilities more operational.

In 2007, EU Member States drafted an additional "Civilian Headline Goal 2010" (CHG 2010) (Council of the EU, 2007), to draw lessons from EU experience and to ensure the capacity of the EU to conduct civilian crisis management missions with the support and equipment required within a short time and in sufficient quantity. The need for co-operation and co-ordination with non-governmental actors and international organisations and their importance for the improvement of EU civilian capabilities were underlined in the Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capabilities (Council of the EU, 2009) and in the Council conclusions on Civilian CSDP (Council of the EU, 2011a) and on conflict prevention (2011b).

Following this work, the European External Action Service (EEAS) presented the Multi-annual Civilian Capability Development Plan (EEAS, 2012), which set concrete actions and milestones for civilian capability development for 2012-2013. The plan proposed establishing a list of civilian CSPD tasks and addressed the issue of rapid deployment of civilian capabilities. The importance of the civilian aspect of crisis management grew so much that a civilian command was preferred to lead a CSDP missions with military components, as stated in the EEAS Guidance Note (EEAS and EC, 2013). The civilian dimensions of conflict prevention and peacebuilding will remain an important aspect of the new EU Global Strategy (to be release in June 2016) in "a more connected, contested and complex world" (EEAS, 2015b).

According to the Treaty of the European Union (TEU) as consolidated in Lisbon, civilian crisis management forms a key part of the Common Security and Defence Policy, which falls under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (EU, 2012, TEU-Article 42). The High Representative/Vice President (HRVP), assisted in his duty by the EEAS, and mandated by the Council, shall conduct, contribute, and carry out this policy (EU, 2012, TEU-Article 18). The tasks for which the EU may use civilian or military means in the frame of the CSDP, are based on Articles 42 and 43 of the TEU.

In taking account of this progressive development of civilian capabilities within EU policies, it is important to sum up how civilian capabilities are now handled within EU institutions and programmes.

[6] The 2000 Feira European Council set targets for prioritising policing, encouraging EU Member States to be able to provide 5.000 police officers for crisis management operations. The 2001 Gothenburg Council demanded that the EU should be able to have 200 judges and prosecutors ready for crisis management operations, established a pool of experts in civilian administration, and provided civil protection teams.

1.2 Institutions in charge of civilian capabilities

This section gives an overview of the main EU institutions (non-exhaustive) which are involved in the development or management of civilian capabilities within the conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities of the EU.

- The European Commission (EC) has administrative, executive, and legislative responsibilities for the various EU programmes concerned with the development of civilian capabilities, conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The Commission is composed of 33 directorate generals (DGs) of which five deal with external relations aspects, and are involved in the programming and management of several EU Instruments[7] (EPLO, 2015).
- The European Parliament (EP) is composed of working committees, of which five deal with civilian capabilities, conflict prevention and peacebuilding.[8] The work of the committees is focused on the elaboration and evaluation of EU policies, and aims to provide recommendations to the EC (EPLO, 2015).
- The European External Action Service (EEAS), which was formally launched on the 1st of January 2011, falls under the responsibility of the HR/VP, and is meant to contribute to the development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the EU in co-operation with the diplomatic services of the Member States. With this major role of co-ordinating and organising co-operation between EU institutions, it has a crucial role in the development and monitoring of civilian capabilities, especially through the work of two of its components: the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD) in charge of the political and strategic planning of CSDP civilian and military missions, and the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) that currently conducts ten civilian CSDP missions[9] (EEAS, n.d).
- The Political and Security Committee (PSC) is composed of EU Member States' ambassadors and works as a preparatory body for the Council of the EU. The PSC is charged with monitoring the international situation in areas covered by the CFSP, helps to define policies within the CFSP, and exercises political control over and strategic direction of CSDP missions, by preparing coherent EU responses to crisis. The PSC can rely on several institutions, including the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM).

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[7] Neighbourhood and Enlargement negotiations (DG NEAR), is in charge of the programming and implementation of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II). Development & Co-operation – EuropeAid (DG DEVCO), is in charge of the programming and implementation of the Development Co-operation Instrument (DCI), the European Development Fund (EDF) and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). The Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), is involved in the management of the Instrument contribution to Stability and Peace (IcSP). Humanitarian Aid (DG ECHO), works on the humanitarian aspects of peacebuilding. Trade (DG TRADE) is linked with the economic and development issues. (EPLO, 2015)

[8] Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET), Sub-committee on Human Rights (DROI),Committee on Development (DEVE), Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM), International Trade (INTA). (EPLO, 2015)

[9] These ten missions are: EUPOL COPPS and EUBAM Rafah in the Palestinian Territories, EUBAM LIBYA, EUPOL AFGHANISTAN,EULEX Kosovo, EUMM Georgia, EUCAP NESTOR (Horn of Africa and Western Indian Ocean), EUCAP SAHEL Niger, EUCAP SAHEL Mali and EUAM Ukraine. (EEAS, n.d)

1.3 Main instruments dealing with civilian capabilities

The EU deploys different instruments and programmes to fulfil the policy objectives defined as part of the development of civilian capabilities.

Multiannual Financial Framework

The Regulation laying down the Multiannual Financial Framework for the period 2014-2020 (MFF 2014-2020) was adopted in December 2013. The regulations establishing the EU's external co-operation and development programmes such as the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), the Development Co-operation Instrument (DCI), the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), were adopted in March 2014.

The Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)

On the 11th of March 2014, the Instrument for Stability (IfS), which had been the main EU external funding instrument for supporting peacebuilding and conflict prevention, changed its name to include a clear reference to peace in its title. As set in the MFF 2014-2020, the financial allocation for the IcSP is € 2.339 billion for that period.

The objectives of the IcSP, as defined by Regulation 230/2014 are to contribute to stability and crisis response, to increase conflict prevention and preparedness capacities of the EU, and to address specific global and regional threats to peace, international stability and security. Articles 3, 4, and 5 of the IcSP address direct challenges concerning civilian crisis management and capability development.

Article 3 of the IcSP defines the crisis response component of the EU, to be applied in situations of urgency, crisis, or instability (i.e. conflict prevention) (EP and Council of the EU, 2014, Article 3-1). All the measures addressed by this article are driven by the development of effective civilian capacities in a short-term, reactive and context specific vision.[10] Article 4 of the IcSP is focused on the implementation of longer-term structures to address crisis and peace-building issues.[11]

Article 5 of the IcSP is the long-term component of the instrument. This Article is two-folded, and is supposed to address threats to law and order, security and safety of individuals, critical infrastructure and public health; and to support mitigation and preparedness against

[10] Article 3 represents 70% of the total sum allocated to the IcSP (EPLO, 2014, p.3), and encompasses activities such as support for conflict prevention, promotion of mediation, dialogue and reconciliation, gender equality, effective civilian administration and civilian oversight over SSR, civilian measures related to demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims, access to natural resources, development and organization of civil society and its participation to the political process, humanitarian and civil protection assistance.

[11] 9% of the total budget of the IcSP is allocated to Article 4 (EPLO, 2014, p.4) that aims to support early warning and conflict risk analysis, capacity-building in mediation and dialogue, capacities for civilian stabilisation missions, post-conflict and post-disaster recovery, control of natural resources financing conflicts.

risks related to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) materials (EP and Council of the EU, 2014, Article 5-1).[12]

The IcSP also includes, in its Article 9, a reference to civil society consultation, stating that all the "preparation, programming, implementation and monitoring measures under this Regulation shall be carried out, where possible and where appropriate, in consultation with civil society" (EP and Council of the EU, 2014, Article 9). Even though the IcSP is the main policy instrument of the EU for supporting peacebuilding and conflict prevention, other instruments also deal, on a minor scale, with the civilian aspects of crisis management.

The Development Co-operation Instrument (DCI)

As set in the MFF 2014-2020, the financial allocation for the DCI is € 19.662 billion. The DCI does not include any reference to peacebuilding or conflict prevention in its overall objectives but this link can be found in its transversal subjects "the promotion of dialogue, participation and reconciliation, as well as institution building" (EU, 2014, DCI-Article 3-3) as well as in the attention to "conflict prevention, State and peacebuilding, post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction measures" in its geographic programmes (EU, 2014, DCI-Article 12-1).

The European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)

As set in the MFF 2014-2020, the financial allocation for the ENI is € 15.433 billion. The general objectives of the ENI are to develop relationships "founded on co-operation, peace and security" (EU, 2014, ENI-Article 1-1), while one of its specific objectives is to promote "confidence-building, good neighbourly relations and other measures contributing to stability in all its forms and the prevention and settlements of conflicts" (EU, 2014, ENI-Article 2-2), including reconstruction and support to affected populations. The structure of the European Neighbourhood Policy is currently being revised by a process including neighbouring countries, civil society and international organisations (EC, 2015).[13]

The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance II (IPA II)

As set in the MFF 2014-2020, the financial allocation for the IPA II is € 11.699 billion. The general objectives of the IPA II includes contribution to "stability, security and prosperity" (EU, 2014, IPA II-Article 1), while its specific objectives include the "promotion of reconciliation, peace-building and confidence building measures" (EU, 2014, IPA II-Article 2-1). As in the DCI

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[12] This allows support for strengthening the capacity of law enforcement and civil authorities (including police), critical infrastructure and response to threats (including epidemics or climate change) as well as the reinforcement of civilian capabilities in crisis management including better civilian research, best CBRN practices, structures and civilian capacity for disaster-preparedness, emergency planning and response (EP and Council of the EU, Article 5-2).

[13] The Joint Consultation Paper "Towards a new European Neighbourhood Policy" gathers conclusions and issues raised by EU actions in neighbouring countries over the last few years. The document frames the discussion for a re-examination of the European Neighbourhood Policy and suggests solutions to develop stronger partnerships with neighbouring countries.

and the ENI, references to conflict prevention and peace-building are more related to a specific geographic area.

The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)

As set in the MFF 2014-2020, the financial allocation for the EIDHR is € 1.333 billion. The EIDHR Regulation allows available funds to be used to support peaceful reconciliation between different social actors, confidence-building and democratisation.

The European Development Fund (EDF)

The EDF is the EU's main instrument for providing aid to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and to Overseas Countries and territories (OCTs), and funds co-operation activities in the fields of economic, social and human development, and regional co-operation. The total amount allocated to the 11th EDF for the period 2014-2020 is € 30.5 billion (EC, n.d).[14]

1.4 Institutional evolution of civil-military coordination

Regarding civil-military synergies, it is important to recall how this term and its application to EU policies has been evolving in the last few years, in order to understand the role of the institutions currently in charge of these synergies.

With the development of the Comprehensive Approach in the 2000s, the EU had to strengthen and combine the civilian and military aspects of crisis management to fully tackle the situations these tools were addressing (European Council, 2001) (Council of the EU, 2003), hence the creation of the Civil-Military Co-ordination (CMCO) concept in 2003.[15]

As stated by the Council of the EU (2004) in the CHG 2008, the EU's response to crisis must include civilian but also military means to provide a coherent response.[16] Civil-military synergies include sharing the pool of resources, dual use of military personnel and equipment, administrative co-operation and co-ordination. As far as external EU policy is concerned, military actions and functions were defined by the Petersberg tasks[17] that included: humanitarian and rescue tasks; peacekeeping tasks; and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking (EEAS, n.d). The strengthening of civil-military synergies implies the creation of concrete operational tools in common, as stated in the Action Plan for

[14] The EDF is financed by direct contributions from Member States and therefore remains outside of the EU budget, even though its content is discussed in the Council of Ministers, in parallel with negotiations on the external Instruments of the EU.

[15] Within CSDP, CMCO addresses the importance of co-ordination of all relevant EU actors involved in crisis response and underlines the importance of a civil-military culture that must be progressively created within the EU (Council of the EU, 2003).

[16] The "Human Security" concept developed by the UN also takes into account the importance of civil-military synergies (Kaldor, Martin, Selchow, 2008).

[17] The Petersberg Tasks were agreed during the June 1992 Western European Union (WEU) Council of Ministers and incorporated into the TEU in 1997 with the Treaty of Amsterdam.

Civilian Aspects of ESDP (European Council, 2004) and also addressing the long-term issue of training and education.[18]

Military tools and instruments can be useful all along the crisis management cycle to restore order or to assist political, humanitarian and development actors during the post-conflict phase (Council of the EU, 2005). In 2007, the CHG 2010 underlined the importance of civil-military aspects and stated the importance of the Military Headline Goal 2010 (Council of the EU, 2007), as civilian and military capabilities are intended to become closer.

In 2008, the review of the ESS (European Council, 2008) underlined the importance of combining civilian and military expertise to develop EU crisis management capabilities. The Declaration on strengthening capabilities (Council of the EU, 2008) was the first concrete milestone for work in the field of civil-military synergies, explaining the need for development of civilian and military capabilities within the same document. Later, in 2009, concrete studies on possible synergies were launched by the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the EU, identifying 13 areas for developing synergies between military and civilian capacities,[19] setting a two-step work plan to analyse the work done (Phase 1 – June to September 2010) and identifying concrete actions to achieve in the field (Phase 2 – December 2010 to May 2011). This work was aimed at creating new procedures to facilitate the dual use of civilian and military capabilities, to create training packages, synergies in logistics, interoperability and more coherent regular reporting (EEAS, 2011).

Civil-military synergies must also be explored within the chain of command of CSDP missions. The EEAS (2013) underlined that military expertise should be used within civilian EU programmes[20] under civilian command. This aspect was on the mind of European military decision-makers who, in the Conclusions of the 2013 European Council, repeated the importance of the Civilian Capability Development Plan, and of civil-military synergies in research and technology, especially for dual-use equipment (European Council, 2013). The Council of the EU (2014) also reiterated the important role of civilian and military expertise and civil-military synergies.

Article 43 of the TEU states that the use of civil-military means must include "joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilisation" (EU, 2012, TEU-Article 43). Articles 42 and 43 of the TEU are the current legal basis in the treaties for the use and definition of civilian and military means.

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[18] In 2004, the European Council therefore examine the idea of a European Security and Defence College (European Council, 2004).

[19] The 13 identified domains are: strategic and tactical transportation, logistic support, communication and information systems (CIS), medical support, security and force protection, use of space capabilities, unmanned vehicles, warehousing and centralised support systems, sharing information and intelligence, training, exercises, interconnecting the civilian and military capability development processes, and lessons learned.

[20] The instruments at stake are especially the ones concerned with subjects such as DDR, SSR, or border control.

Acknowledging the evolution of the whole concept of civil-military synergies within EU policies, it is important to identify the EU institutions charged with their development and implementation today.

1.5 Institutions in charge of civil-military synergies

This section gives an overview of the main EU institutions (non-exhaustive) involved in the development or management of civil-military synergies within the conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities of the EU.

- The European Parliament (EP) is composed of different working committees, of which one is linked to the development of civil-military synergies, the Sub-committee on Security and Defence (SEDE) (EPLO, 2015).
- The European External Action Service (EEAS) falls under the responsibility of the HRVP, who must ensure "co-ordination of the civilian and military aspects" of the Petersberg tasks (EU, 2007, Article 43). This major role of co-ordination and co-operation between the EU institutions makes the EEAS the most appropriate institution to monitor civil-military synergies, in co-ordination with its internal structures, such as the CMPD, created to establish a single civil-military strategic planning structure for EU operations and missions, or the EU Operations Centre, whose aim was to coordinate and strengthen civil-military synergies in the Horn of Africa.
- The Political and Security Committee (PSC) meets at the ambassadorial level as a preparatory body for the Council of the EU, prepares a coherent EU response to crisis and exercises its political control and strategic direction of CSDP missions. The PSC can rely on the work of several institutions, such as the European Union Military Committee (EUMC) that provides the PSC with advice and recommendations on all military matters within the EU, and the Politico-Military Group (PMG) that provides recommendations on the political aspects of military and civil-military issues (EEAS, n.d).
- The European Defence Agency (EDA) was created in 2004 to support the Member States in improving European defence capabilities in crisis management. The EDA has four main objectives and works on defence capabilities development, armament co-operation, the development of a European defence technological and industrial base, research and technology (EEAS, n.d).

2. Facing challenges in order to act more comprehensively

In respect of the application of the Comprehensive Approach, the spectrum of EU policy towards conflict prevention and peacebuilding is complex and spread over all levels of the EU architecture (institutions, policies, programmes). In this regard and beyond the normative evolution of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, the EU as a global actor faces challenges as a result of its own policy framework and customs.

2.1 Challenges revealed by practice

From the institutional and normative evolution of EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding, three main challenges can be analysed: the relation between internal and external EU policies (design of EU policies), the complexity of the EU institutional set-up and differences between Member States (management of EU policies), and the gap between short-term actions and long-term commitments (implementation of EU policies).

2.1.1 Coherence between external and internal policies

A first challenge exists at the policy-design level, as the EU must find coherence between its internal and external policies. The Comprehensive Approach is not only an overarching way to address crisis issues, but also a general working method for EU institutions (Council of the EU, 2014), and encourages the EU to seek coherence between its policies. The HRVP clearly identified the implications of this for internal and external policies: "EU internal policies and actions can have significant external effects on conflict and crisis situations. Likewise, external action and policy can also impact on EU internal dynamics" (HRVP, 2013, p.9).

In addition to this increased internal/external interaction, the EU has expanded its institutional architecture and policy toolkit since the Lisbon Treaty. The new institutional set-up, broadened by the application of the Comprehensive Approach, added more complexity to co-operation and co-ordination between EU institutions with an internal and external policy-making roles.

2.1.2 The EU institutional set-up

On the policy management level, the institutional set-up of the EU is also a challenge, as it creates unwanted competition instead of efficient division of labour. Such a challenge operates within the EU institutions themselves, but also between the EU and its Member States.

In addressing conflict prevention and peacebuilding issues, the EU faces the major challenge of its internal institutional architecture that creates a risk of overlap and duplication

of work. The Council of the EU, the EC and the EEAS all work on civilian peacebuilding issues[21] while the EP or the European Council also have a significant impact on EU policies as part of the policy-making process. The EU institutional set-up is a challenge for the coherence of the EU policies, and a test for the implementation of the Comprehensive Approach that dictates that "a coherent political strategy for conflict prevention, preparedness and response starts with all relevant players sharing a common understanding of the situation or the challenge" (HRVP, 2013, p.5). The paradox between the general aim of the Comprehensive Approach and the institutional reality of the EU was supposed to be addressed with the creation of the EEAS. (EU, 2012, TEU-Articles 18 and 27). The EEAS has a role of co-ordination and internal information-sharing in terms of CFSP to ensure coherence between the different EU institutional actors as stated by the HRVP (2013), and the EEAS (2015b).[22]

Another challenge for the coherence of the EU's external policy is the disparity between Member States and their actions in conflict management. First, on the policy level, the analysis of a certain geopolitical context can vary from one Member State to another, given their different interests and objectives, and between MS and the EU. This disparity can lead to fraught relations between the different Member States over the development of EU policy. Secondly, Member States can launch individual and bilateral initiatives or agreements in the field of civilian peacebuilding, which sometimes run counter to or duplicate common EU policy.[23] These dynamics between Member States, whether bilateral or multilateral, can have a positive impact on the EU policy building[24] as well as being detrimental to the development of a common European foreign policy.[25] Such a disparity of policies can lead to insufficient sharing of resources and information between EU institutions and Member States.[26]

2.1.3 The gap between short-term action and long-term commitment

A last important challenge the EU has to face is the perceived gap between short-term action and the EU's long term commitment to peacebuilding and development. EU crisis management

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[21] In the EC alone, several directorates are active in conflict and recovery including DG DEVCO, DG ECHO, the FPI and DG Trade (EPLO, 2015).

[22] The new structure of the EEAS, supposed to be achieved at the end of 2015, will maybe address this particular challenge of internal co-ordination.

[23] The EEAS (2015b) draws attention to these various initiatives, and calls for unity and co-ordination of diversity, considering that these diplomatic actions could promote the effectiveness of common priorities.

[24] The French-British Saint-Malo Summit in 1998 is a good example of this, as French President Jacques Chirac and UK Prime Minister Tony Blair called for the development of autonomous and reliable military resources for the EU, leading to the creation of ESDP. At the multilateral level, initiatives such as Norden, the Nordic Council or the Nordic Defence Co-operation (NORDEFCO) treat issues linked to the development of civilian and military capabilities in crisis management for Denmark, Finland, Norway, Iceland and Sweden, complementing European policies.

[25] The political movement advocating for the United Kingdom to leave the EU, is an illustration of individual national policies challenging common EU policy. Multilateral fora such as the Visegrad group (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary) can promote co-operation and policies that affect European objectives.

[26] On the diplomatic level for example, depending on the context, a competition of objectives can appear between the EEAS, the EU Delegations, and the Member States embassies.

instruments and programmes pursue "mostly short-term objectives, whereas development instruments by nature are oriented towards the long term" (HRVP, 2013, p.5). Considering its capacity to embrace complex dynamics, the Comprehensive Approach is seen as the best strategy to address these long-terms issues efficiently.[27] The Comprehensive Approach, defined as a coherent and common strategy for conflict prevention, preparedness and response (HRVP, 2013) set up to improve the effectiveness of EU policy-making, working practices, actions and results (Council of the EU, 2014) also implies a time aspect, as it operates in conflict situations before (prevention), during (intervention) and after (peacebuilding) the eruption of a crisis (HRVP, 2013, p.2). The Comprehensive Approach is intended to create coherence between long-term strategy and short-term objectives, as both can reinforce each other and also improve the role of the EU as a global actor.

2.2 Improving the leverages of synergies

The challenges defined above can be addressed through the leveraging of synergies. Indeed, from a whole-of-society perspective, comprehensiveness implies that the EU seeks to work in synergy within its own institutions, and alongside other state and non-state actors, to leverage partnerships from the local to national and regional levels. As recently recalled by the EEAS, a joined up approach is needed, and the various components of the EU's external action must come together to work in synergy (EEAS, 2015b). Synergies can be developed within the EU institutions, with the EU Member States, and between the EU and other international organisations, or non-governmental actors.

2.2.1 Across the EU institutions and capabilities

The need for co-operation and co-ordination across EU institutions and capabilities, encouraged by the Comprehensive Approach, is expressed in the fundamental treaties of the EU, as the EU is supposed to ensure consistency between the different areas of its external action (EU, 2012, TEU-Article 21). This idea of common planning and unity between different EU actors engaged in crisis management was also expressed by the HRVP (2013) and the Council of the EU (2005; 2014) .The HRVP, with the assistance of the EEAS, conducts CSDP (EU, 2012, TEU-Article 18), holding a nominal power of centralisation, co-ordination and co-operation in EU external policy. The EEAS mandate suggests it should be the place for improved policy coherence in the future, even though the experience of practice has revealed the difficulty of such a task.[28]

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[27] The example of prevention is a good illustration of this. "In the long run, prevention is far less costly than addressing conflicts which have erupted. Prevention contributes to peace, security and sustainable development. It saves lives and reduces suffering, avoids the destruction of homes, businesses, infrastructure and the economy, and makes it easier to resolve underlying tensions, disputes and conditions conducive to violent radicalisation and terrorism" (HRVP, 2013, p.6).

[28] As an example the CMPD component of the EEAS has the clear mandate to bring together different EU policies and to create synergies: it is in charge of co-ordinating the development of civilian and military capabilities,

2.2.2 Developing a wider European approach

Co-operation and synergies could also be improved between the EU and its Member States. The discrepancy between the EU and Member States' external policy is a political matter, directly questioning the issue of national sovereignties and the difficulty of tackling this raises the issue of policy incoherence (HRVP, 2013).

The HRVP encourages "early, pro-active, transparent and regular information-sharing, co-ordination and team-work" (HRVP, 2013, p.5) between EU institutions and Member States, and requests more information-sharing to better exploit the resources available for crisis response. In order to solve this lack of information-sharing, the EU must build a common methodology of conflict and crisis analysis, based on available knowledge, including from Member States.

A good start for improving information-sharing could be the EU delegations. The Joint Communication underlines the fact that the Head of Delegation (HoD) plays a central role in delivering and co-ordinating EU dialogue, action and support. The Joint Communication acknowledges that the EU Delegation must therefore be used to bring together EU and Member States present on the ground concerning the full spectrum of external actions, and enhance co-operation and information-sharing at all stages of conflicts or crises.[29]

2.2.3 Interacting with regional and global organisations

The EU as a global actor develops through interaction with other regional and global organisations,[30] and this engagement with other international and regional actors is a global example of the Comprehensive Approach towards conflict issues. The need for global co-ordination was stated by the HRVP: "In facing complex global challenges, the EU needs to engage and work together with other international and regional actors", according to their specialisation, action and expertise (HRVP, 2013, p.11).

At the operational level, European institutions, such as the CMPD are tasked with developing partnerships and synergies with other international actors such as the UN, NATO, the AU, the OSCE or even third countries.[31] The EU can also organise ad hoc exercises and trainings with other international actors.[32]

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emanating from different institutions, and must create more ties between CSDP and the area of Freedom, Security and Justice.

[29] In practice, the HoD often chairs a weekly meeting with all ambassadors of Member States, even though this is not mandatory.

[30] In the field of civilian peacebuilding and conflict prevention, EU external actions are defined in respect to the UN Charter (EU, 2012, TUE-Article 3), and in co-operation with regional organisations such as the African Union, while conforming to the subsidiarity principle (as recalled in Article 4 of the IcSP).

[31] In this regard, it is also important to note that the EU also has special agreements with NATO, such as the Berlin Plus agreement, allowing the EU access to NATO assets and capabilities under certain conditions.

[32] In 2012, the EEAS organised a joint EU – UN seminar on civilian capabilities, with particular focus on civilian capabilities (EEAS, 2012).

2.2.4 Interacting with non-governmental actors

Concerns for transparency of action and the potential (additional) input from civil society actors[33] also generate co-operation with Non-governmental actors. Several official policy declarations have called for the participation of civil society in the decision-making process of EU external policy, such as the European Council (2001; 2004), and above all, the Council of the EU (2009), with the Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue capacities. The IcSP also includes a clear reference to consultation with civil society in the programming process. (EP and Council of the EU, 2014, Article 9).

The association of non-governmental actors in general, and civil society in particular, allows EU institutions access to high quality expertise, and to respect the principles of good governance and transparency in the political process. This approach is consistent with the concept of the Comprehensive Approach that implies that the EU seeks to work in synergy with other state and non-state actors and to "engage more closely with major international NGOs, civil society, think-tanks, academia and public and private actors" (HRVP, 2013, p.12).

[33] Article 15 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFUE) (EU, 2012, TFUE) underlines the importance of the participation of civil society in EU policy-making, and encourages the institutions to work as openly as possible.

Conclusion

This analysis of the current EU policies and programmes dealing with civilian peacebuilding and conflict prevention provides a broad **picture of the institutional realities and the internal political challenges the EU has to face.** The evolution of EU external action towards increased efficiency and influence, driven by the Comprehensive Approach, is clearly observable through the policy objectives and norms set out by the EU in the past few years, and in the policy outputs of European institutions, instruments and programmes. The EU has developed its conflict prevention and civilian peacebuilding capabilities trying to achieve internal coherence, creating tailor-made institutions and instruments, as well as developing partnerships and seeking multi-level synergies.

Despite these efforts inspired by the Comprehensive Approach, and considering the importance of such changes in an entity as complex as the EU, one can logically observe some resistance from the institutions and Member States in sharing their responsibilities, or ceding some of their prerogatives. Practice and behaviour evidence has shown that the EU still faces challenges such as the lack of coherence between internal and external policies, within its institutional set-up or the implementation gap between short-term objectives and long-term strategy. Consequently, the relevance of the Comprehensive Approach can be questioned as a means of further improving EU efficiency.

Moreover, EU instruments and programmes dealing with conflict prevention and peacebuilding often tackle the same issues, sometimes in a complementary way, but also in a competitive and unproductive manner. The EU has adapted its instruments in the light of the Comprehensive Approach. Such an adaptation, that has broadened the general approach to conflict issues, has also complicated EU tools for external policies. The complexification of the EU has generated a problem of overlapping and duplication of work, and must be addressed in the years to come in order to enhance efficiency. In this regard, we can note a lack of literature analysing the downside effects of the Comprehensive Approach and its limits in effectively addressing current EU challenges. In this regard, the ongoing reform of the EEAS is also key to analysis.

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