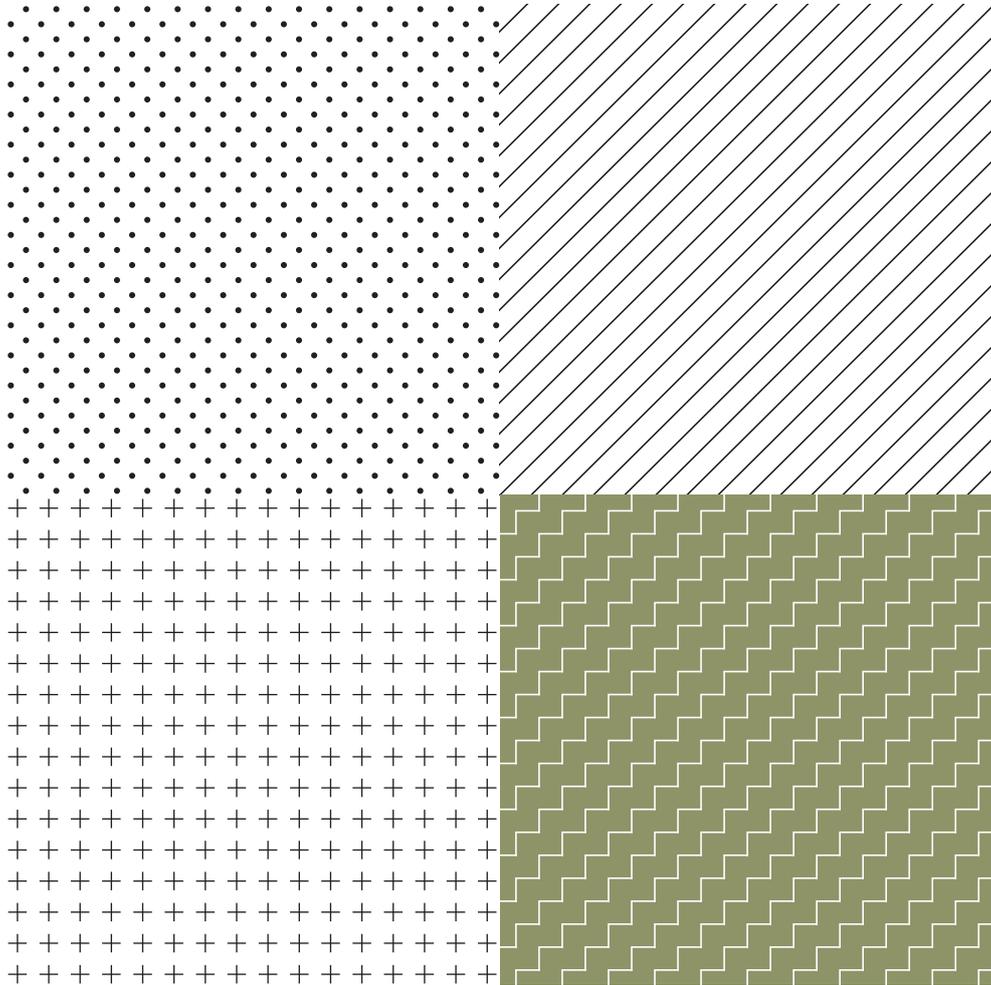


W O S C A P

ENHANCING EU PEACEBUILDING CAPABILITIES



Assessing the European Union's Approach to Multi-Track Diplomacy

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Colophon

ASSESSING THE EUROPEAN UNION'S APPROACH TO MULTI-TRACK DIPLOMACY

30 November 2015

Deliverable 2.5: Scoping Study on Multi-track Diplomacy

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(Julian Demmer provided research assistance for this paper during his internship at Berghof Foundation)

Berghof Foundation



Berghof Foundation

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.

It is one of the seven scoping studies that aim to define the state of the art knowledge about civilian means for conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and identify research gaps 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

Executive Summary

This scoping report defines multi-track diplomacy (MTD) as a specific approach to EU foreign policy, alongside other intervention strategies such as security sector intervention, political reform support or socio-economic assistance. It places a primary emphasis on diplomatic initiatives aimed at supporting conflict prevention and peacebuilding, especially during the various (formal and informal) stages of peace processes.

The purpose of the report is four-fold. Firstly, it reviews the main scholarly and policy trends regarding the use and effectiveness of MTD in contexts of intra-state conflicts. It defines the concept of MTD by anchoring it within the contemporary academic and policy literature on mediation and dialogue support, with specific emphasis on the role of EU institutions. By examining the rationale, dimensions and timing of MTD, it describes the recent policy shift from a sole reliance on traditional state diplomacy and Track I muscled mediation towards multi-track engagement in conflict constellations by mediation/dialogue support teams involving multiple stakeholders, and diversified methods of 'soft power' diplomacy, according to the various stages of conflict and peacebuilding, as well as the degree of power asymmetry between the primary contenders.

Secondly, it reviews and classifies past or ongoing examples of EU MTD intervention – with a primary emphasis on the four country cases at stake in the WOSCAP project (Ukraine, Georgia, Mali and Yemen) – along the three Tracks of engagement in the given contexts, and according to their primary strategy of intervention (power-based, deal brokering diplomacy; interest-based, problem-solving diplomacy; and transformative, long-term diplomacy).

Thirdly, it discusses four clusters of challenges pertaining to the implementation of EU MTD in conflict-affected countries, with a particular emphasis on areas of overlap or tension with other capability clusters and cross-cutting themes covered by the WOSCAP project. The insights are drawn from scholarly assessments of the factors that facilitate or hinder the effectiveness of international mediation or dialogue support efforts, and assessments by EU policy experts on key priority areas for improving the internal coherence and external coordination of EU MTD.

Finally, it concludes by offering concrete recommendations to the field researchers with regards to key areas of investigation and methodological considerations.