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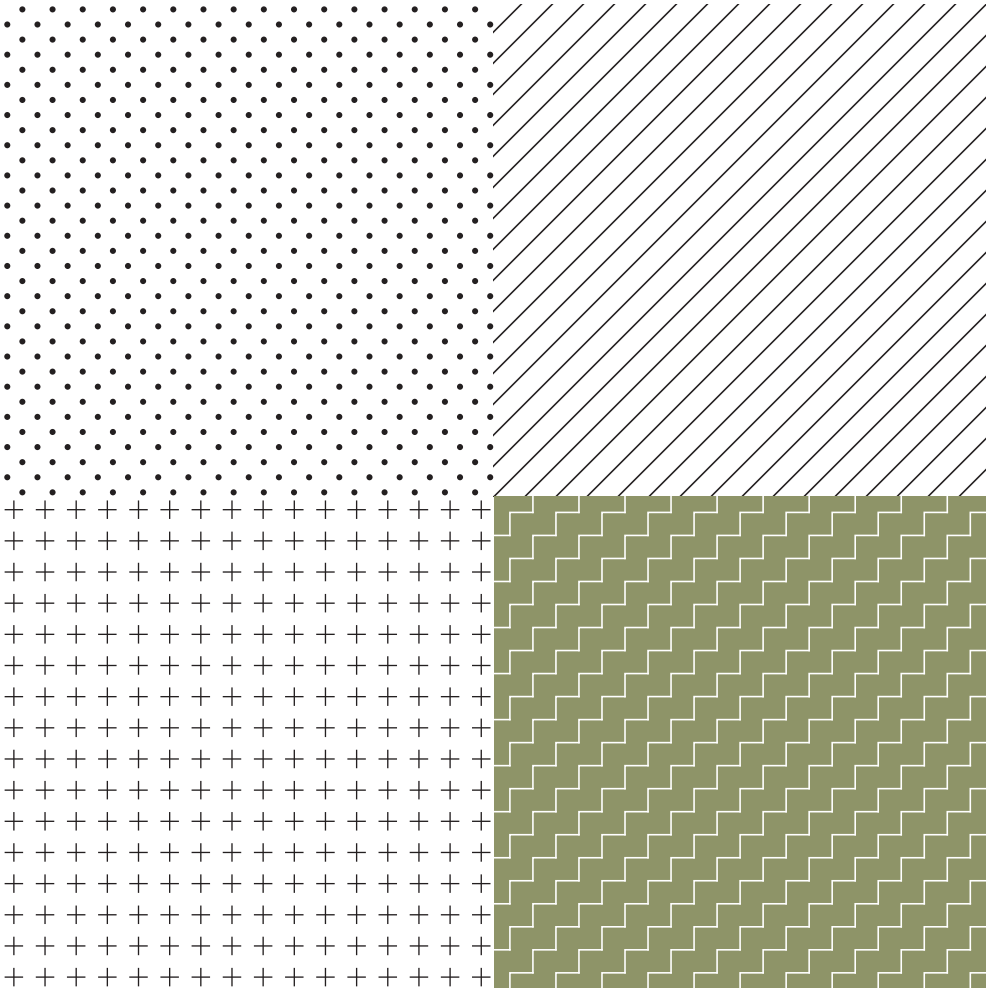

Gender in EU Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Policy and Practice

María Villellas, Pamela Urrutia
Ana Villellas, Vicenç Fisas

Escola de Cultura de Pau

Colophon

GENDER IN EU CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PEACEBUILDING POLICY AND PRACTICE

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Deliverable 2.2: Scoping Study on Gender

María Villellas, Pamela Urrutia, Ana Villellas, Vicenç Fisas

Escola de Cultura de Pau

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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Executive summary

This scoping study examines the integration of the gender dimension and the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda into the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the EU, an emerging area in EU foreign policy and its literature. Firstly, it briefly reviews the evolution of gender mainstreaming in the EU and the development of the global WPS agenda led by the UN and followed by the EU. Secondly, it summarises and analyses EU policy concerning the policy framework on women/gender, peace and security. Thirdly, it covers the institutional architecture and stakeholders involved. Fourthly, it studies the EU's approach to multi-track diplomacy, security sector reform and governance reform from a gender perspective. Finally, in the conclusion, it identifies key issues and research directions in this area.

The adoption by the EU of the gender mainstreaming strategy in the 1990s gave impetus to the incorporation of gender in its foreign policy, since it committed the organization to making gender equality an objective in all its policies. Its integration into its conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts was influenced by the UN-led WPS agenda, which provided an important framework of reference from which the EU developed its own policies and instruments.

The EU has developed an ambitious and comprehensive policy framework on WPS/gender, peace and security that involves all EU actors and areas of action (mainly political dialogue, funding programming and CSDP missions and operations) in mainstreaming gender in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The backbone of EU policy on WPS consists of *Comprehensive approach to the EU implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security* (CA 1325) and key documents on implementing the UNSCR as part of the CSDP. The EU has also developed its own architecture of actors that combines specific functions to support gender throughout the organization (e.g. EEAS Principal Advisor on 1325, the informal Task Force on UNSCR 1325, and gender advisors and gender focal points) and that makes gender mainstreaming the responsibility of all actors (EU institutions and EUMS).

This gender comprehensive approach has permeated EU's interventions in areas such as multi-track diplomacy, SSR and governance reform and has strengthened the EU's capacities in the area of conflict prevention and peacebuilding as it constitutes a foundation for promoting more inclusive and sustainable processes.

Regarding the inclusion of gender in EU interventions, in the case of multi-track diplomacy, CA 1325 commits the EU to adopting specific measures like support for women's participation through diplomatic and financial means, an increase in the number of women mediators and chief negotiators and support for local women's organisations in peace processes. In relation to SSR, the CA 1325 (2008) specifies areas where the EU should pay attention: identification of security needs, inclusion of women in relevant institutions, investments in infrastructure to attend to victims of gender-based violence, strengthening of women's participation, and access to justice, among others. With regard to gender responsive governance, the CA 1325 stresses that transition periods provide opportunities to create new systems of governance and urges that special attention be paid to protecting the rights of women and eradicating discrimination, to supporting women in processes of reconciliation, and to women's participation in political decision-making.

The literature has detected many gaps and challenges to these directives, such as the gap between commitments and implementation or the gender imbalance in the top positions. There is also a need for greater coherence and coordination between EU institutions and the EUMS and a risk of isolation between the WPS agenda and the general conflict prevention and peacebuilding agenda. Simultaneously, some reductionism has been detected in the EU when translating and implementing the global WPS agenda by focusing mostly on the security sector, while neglecting other areas. Other more specific shortcomings include insufficient clarity and guidance on how to mainstream gender in the various areas and levels of action. All of these challenges point to possible future lines of research for the EU.

Regarding the WOSCAP project, the scoping study identifies important connections between the gender perspective and the WPS agenda of the EU and other cross-cutting approaches such as local ownership processes. This raises questions about inclusiveness, intersectionality and accountability. At the same time, the EU's WPS agenda acknowledges the need for multi-lateral relationships with other international, regional and local stakeholders, leading to questions about the degree of multi-stakeholder coherence in practice regarding WPS implementation. In turn, the EU's gender mainstreaming strategy involves all stakeholders and areas of action, including civilian-military relations. Finally, the study on the WPS agenda in the EU raises questions about the role of ICTs in preventing conflict, the gendered impacts of the use of ICTs, the EU's level of support for ICTs as a useful tool for implementing the WPS agenda, and for EU visibility and public diplomacy regarding WPS. All of these issues are relevant to the WOSCAP project.