



Quo Vadis Civilian CSDP?

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Since its very early days the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) has followed two separate tracks, military and civilian, that have remained distinct in both doctrinal and operational terms. Over the last two years, the momentum that has characterized CSDP has primarily resulted in advances in the military domain, with decisions on a permanent military headquarters, a European Defence Fund or the latest creation of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PeSCo). Civilian CSDP is nonetheless central to the EU's identity and operational role. This Policy Briefing discusses progress in the past, key developments following the EU Global Strategy in 2016 as well as challenges ahead.

Civilian missions are portrayed in the EU Global Strategy as being a “trademark of CSDP” and constitute an essential component of the newly-framed Integrated Approach. Today the EU runs ten civilian missions with approximately 2,000 personnel deployed, and a budget of € 225 million in 2016.

Civilian CSDP has not escaped the general CSDP crisis; it faces major challenges in relation to its adaptation to current threats, the level of support it gets from member states, and its impact. In this context, the Council called in 2016 for the revision of the civilian CSDP priorities defined in 2000 (the so-called “Feira priorities”¹) so that civilian CSDP can better adapt to evolving security needs. Work is also being done to develop CSDP capability and responsiveness. Altogether, this is supposed to lead to a “Civilian CSDP Compact” that would enable civilian CSDP to fully contribute to the EU's response to world instability.

The wider civilian crisis management architecture

CSDP has to demonstrate its added value in an ever-changing environment. For its civilian component, the challenge is also to respond to the evolution of crisis management and of its main stakeholders. At least three trends need to be factored in.

First, CSDP is only one pillar of the broader EU civilian crisis management architecture, together with the European Commission and, increasingly, Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) agencies. At least for the last twenty years the European Commission has been a key actor of civilian crisis management through its role in fragile states and activities in development, security sector reform (SSR), good governance, support to political processes, etc. More recently, JHA agencies have started to embrace a crisis management agenda

¹ At the European Council in Feira in June 2000, four priorities were identified in the domain of civilian crisis management: police, the rule of law, civilian administration, and civil protection.

by operating at the very frontiers – conceptual and geographical – of home affairs, whether in relation to CSDP missions or not. The following examples attest to an evolution that brings JHA agencies into the world of crisis management: The role of FRONTEX in the Southern Mediterranean in cooperation with the operation EUNAVFOR Med; the cooperation of EUROPOL and EULEX in Kosovo; EUROPOL's and EUROJUST's work with EUBAM in Libya.

Second, there are activities with a clear security focus that the EU conducts outside the framework of CSDP. The creation in August 2017 of a small civilian presence in central Mali (EUSTAMS) on the basis of article 28 of the Lisbon Treaty opens the door to non-CSDP activities that may prove more flexible and therefore match the request for more responsive crisis management. Also in Mali, the deployment of teams of security experts in a program funded by the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, i.e. again outside the CSDP frame, provided another example of an alternative to CSDP missions.

Third, while CSDP is fundamentally a state-controlled activity, member states are also involved in bilateral security programs in third countries where CSDP missions are already deployed. This adds to the number of actors involved, and therefore complicates the quest for internal EU coherence.

Beyond coordination issues, this constellation of actors attests to an evolution in which CSDP is only one player among several others, and not necessarily the most central nor the one that displays the best comparative advantages. This trend is furthermore reflected in current debates about the Integrated Approach and on how various activities or actors can intervene at different stages of crisis response.

Adapting to threats

In this generally challenging context, civilian CSDP is nonetheless to play a key role in meeting the three priorities derived from the EU Global Strategy, namely to “respond to external conflicts

and crises,” to “build the capacities of partners” and to “protect the EU and its citizens.”

This can be achieved through traditional CSDP civilian missions which, for most of them, are about building the capacities of the host countries where they are deployed.

But the challenge is also, and increasingly, that of linking CSDP missions with an internal security agenda, in line with the priority to “protect the EU and its citizens” and the growing nexus between internal and external security. While in the past, CSDP operations were mainly instruments of the EU's external policy, they now tend to factor in internal security concerns through their role in tackling the effects of irregular migration or in countering terrorism.

This has been the case with the opening of an office of EUCAP Sahel Niger in Agadez, which is mandated to monitor irregular migration in northern Niger, as well as with the amendment of the mandate of EUCAP Sahel Mali to include support to the host nation in managing migration flows and border security. To an extent, given the importance of Iraq's stability for the EU's counter-terrorism and migration policies, the recent creation of a mission in Bagdad to assist Iraqi security forces (EUAM Iraq) also falls within that pattern of making CSDP missions instruments of the EU's own security interests, as opposed to broad crisis management tools.

The internal-external nexus is further reflected in the work on “new priorities” for civilian CSDP to update the 2000 Feira agenda. This process is still ongoing between member states and the European External Action Service. However, a few documents adopted since the EU Global Strategy give clear indications about what those new priorities are. The November 2017 Council Conclusions² on security and defence endorse three of the four existing priorities – namely police, rule of law and civil administration – and underline the importance of SSR, monitoring tasks, and the possibility of deploying missions with executive mandates. In the document, the Council also acknowledged the role that civilian

² Available at: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/11/13/security-and-defence-cooperation-council-highlights-the-significant-progress-made/>.



Civilian CSDP and non-CSDP Crisis Management Activities

Current areas of activity	Scenarios for civilian CSDP missions *	Potential future areas of civilian CSDP missions **	Non-CSDP crisis management actors/activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building (training, advising in the fields of the rule of law, security sector reform, governance, counter-terrorism, border management, etc.) Cease-fire monitoring Executive tasks (police and law enforcement, civil administration, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civilian and military rapid response [including military rapid response operations inter alia using the EU Battlegroups as a whole or within a mission-tailored Force package] Substitution/executive civilian missions Civilian capacity building and security sector reform missions (monitoring, mentoring and advising, training) inter alia on police, rule of law, border management, counter-terrorism, resilience, response to hybrid threats, and civil administration as well as civilian monitoring missions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irregular migration and security-related challenges Hybrid threats and cyber security Countering terrorism and radicalization Organized crime Border management Maritime security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> European Commission (good governance, security sector reform, border management, etc.) Actions on the basis of article 28 of the Lisbon Treaty Trust Fund-funded activities Justice and Home Affairs Agencies (FRONTEX, border management / EUROPOL, police activities, etc.)

* taken from Council Conclusions, Brussels, 14 November 2016

** taken from Council Conclusions, Brussels, 13 November 2017

CSDP can play to tackle security challenges that relate to the effects of irregular migration, hybrid threats and cyber security, terrorism and radicalization, organized crime, border management, and maritime security.

In addition, scenarios of CSDP operations and missions have been up-dated, to include, in the civilian domain: “civilian and military rapid response” (including military rapid response operations inter alia using the EU Battlegroups as a whole or within a mission-tailored force package); “substitution/executive civilian missions”; and “civilian capacity building and security sector reform missions (monitoring, mentoring and advising, training) inter alia on police, rule of law, border management, counter-terrorism, resilience, response to hybrid threats, and civil administration as well as civilian monitoring missions.”³

Overall, these various scenarios give a good idea of where CSDP missions are going and what the priorities might be, although for the time being little is being said about format, capabilities (a Civilian Capability Development Plan is to be

updated in 2018, see below), and most importantly about the extent to which member states are ready to support these evolutions.

Work has also been done on “responsiveness,” i.e. ways by which civilian CSDP can be more reactive to emerging security needs. The November 2017 Foreign Affairs Council approved the creation of a “core responsiveness capacity” that could be “complemented through rapidly deployable assets and planning elements from Member States.” In the past, all efforts to develop a civilian rapid response capacity have been hampered by political obstacles (member states’ reluctance to relinquish a decision on the rapid deployment of resources) or very practical ones (difficulty to establish and sustain pools of experts on standby). The plan currently being discussed is in the end not very ambitious. It foresees that about 20 personnel already deployed in existing missions (and a few more in the Mission Support Platform in Brussels) would constitute a pool of persons who could be transferred to support new missions, bridge gaps between an initial start-up phase and full deployment or temporarily provide key expertise to existing missions.

³ Council Conclusions, Brussels, 14 November 2016, available at: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/11/14/conclusions-eu-global-strategy-security-defence/>.

Towards a Civilian CSDP Compact? Challenges ahead

Recent evolutions in the field of civilian CSDP have led to a series of initiatives to strengthen and adapt the instrument to current needs. Those initiatives have so far lacked a sense of strategic vision and tangible member states' support, in an area that has traditionally suffered from weak attention on the part of member states. The process that started with the drafting and then release of the EU Global Strategy has helped reinvigorate civilian CSDP, yet the advances observed in the military domain are more concrete and widely discussed. It is in this context that the idea of a Civilian CSDP Compact has been tabled by a group of member states (including Germany) and endorsed by the 14 December 2017 European Council.

What the Compact is about remains to be defined and it is at this stage unclear what the end product is supposed to look like. The general objective is to consolidate various initiatives in a process composed of three different phases. In a first phase, a conceptual work (called "forward-looking concept") is to examine various challenges that civilian CSDP is facing in terms of relevance, added-value, and positioning in the broader Integrated Approach and conflict cycle. This will also integrate the work being done on the new priorities for CSDP.

Based on the output of the first phase, a new Civilian Capability Development Plan is to be adopted. The Plan will define key capabilities and expertise that civilian CSDP must be provided to deliver on its evolving mandate, taking into account both the new security challenges and the role of actors beyond CSDP (mainly the Commission and JHA agencies).

Member states will be invited to endorse the process and commit resources based on the capability gaps identified. It is this third step, to be completed in 2018, that constitutes the Compact. To an extent, this can be compared with what has happened in the military domain, most notably in terms of establishing a framework to incentivize member states to contribute more to EU crisis management activities.

CSDP has proven quite malleable since it was launched in the late 1990s, and its civilian component is quite different today from what it was at its inception. Fifteen years after the creation of the first civilian mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina in January 2003, civilian CSDP is today confronted by three sets of challenges that pertain to its nature as: (1) a security governance tool; (2) an intergovernmental instrument; and (3) a constituting part of a broader international response to instability.

First, as a security governance tool, civilian CSDP must provide responses to the security needs of the EU and its member states, and therefore demonstrate an added value in an ever-changing security environment.

Second, while the intergovernmental nature of CSDP may be seen as its main added-value in the sense that CSDP reflects what the 28 want to do together in the security domain, the degree of intrusiveness of EU member states in the planning and conduct of the missions is also seen as a major impediment. There exists a tension between, on the one hand, an inevitable member state control and, on the other hand, mission implementation which requires a certain level of autonomy.

Third, CSDP must find its place in the broader constellation of crisis management agencies and activities that presents itself as a market where various actors operate, and often compete. Be it at HQ level or in the field, civilian CSDP is being challenged by the need to think and act bigger. The objective of the Civilian CSDP Compact is partly to reassert the added value of CSDP. Yet, as has been the case in the military domain, any reform process of civilian crisis management will have to reconcile, on the one hand, the impulse by a few member states in the name of effectiveness and, on the other hand, a certain degree of inclusiveness to guarantee the buy-in of all stakeholders, be they institutional or national.

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