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## *Recommendations to improve the effectiveness of EU CSDP crisis management operations and EU's conflict prevention capabilities*



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# Recommendations to improve the effectiveness of EU CSDP crisis management operations and EU's conflict prevention capabilities

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## Foreword

Based on the 8 case studies and 12 missions/operations analysed within IECEU as well as three policy dialogues with relevant stakeholders and institutions, this paper opens briefly the six core capabilities of Common Security and Defense Policy crisis management operations (CSDP CMO's) and summarizes recommendations for further steps to enhance the effectiveness of the CSDP crisis management and EU's conflict prevention capabilities. From IECEU consortium, all beneficiaries have contributed to the tasks to analyse approaches and solutions in terms of enhancement. This chapter is based on the work and studies conducted by IECEU researchers in WP7 New Approaches to improve the EU effectiveness.<sup>1</sup> AIES has led the work from analysis towards identification and testing of new solutions. The work will be finalised by end of year 2017.

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## A TRANSITION TOWARDS MORE PREVENTIVE ACTIVITIES?

The Lisbon Treaty highlights conflict prevention as key objective for EU's foreign policy and external relations.<sup>2</sup> The CSDP missions and operations are one part of the EU's preventive engagement globally. The civilian missions and military operations together with the EU's diplomatic and development activities are the most visible conflict prevention activities.

From the long-term perspective, the structural instruments such as regional cooperation, financial assistance through access to EU markets as well as security sector reform programmes aim to tackle the root causes of potential conflicts. On the other hand, the short-term preventive activities are operational policy dialogues, mediation and peace talks, fact-finding and monitoring missions. Moreover, the economical and political sanctions can be seen as sort-term conflict prevention instruments or policies.<sup>3</sup>

The Council Conclusions on security and development<sup>4</sup> highlighted the nexus between development and security and pursued conflict prevention as a priority goal. Also, the surveys conducted in the early stage of IECEU –project<sup>5</sup> revealed a need for better understanding between EU's conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The same studies showed the need for clearer linkages between EU's operational missions and operations and political goals. Even the high ambitious of conflict prevention, the CSDP instruments were seen in a limited role as part of overall conflict prevention activities. The complexity of EU engagement and current conflict and crisis areas requires continuous assessment on the effectiveness of different conflict prevention and crisis management activities. The challenges in this complexity are identified through several studies and research projects. The key recommendations are around knowledge management between policies and operational activities, interoperability and learning from the lessons of CSDP missions and operations.<sup>6</sup>

## IECEU RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CRISIS MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES AND LESSONS

By focusing on the six capabilities as defined in the methodology of the IECEU project, IECEU case studies led towards a proposal of 14 recommendations that are also further analysed and tested. The six core capabilities were

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<sup>1</sup> Mainly to the deliverables D7.1 The improvement of the effectiveness of EU capabilities. 2017. IECEU, 653371 and D7.2 New Policy Approaches and Solutions. 2017. IECEU, 653371.

<sup>2</sup> The Treaty of Lisbon, entered into force on 1 December 2009.

<sup>3</sup> D1.2 Analysis of the current preventive activities. 2015. IECEU, 653371. p. 11-13.

<sup>4</sup> European Council, 2007. Conclusions of the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on Security and Development.

<sup>5</sup> D1.2 Analysis of the current preventive activities. 2015. IECEU, 653371. p. 17.



identified and used to research the crisis management operations: 1) *Planning*, 2) *Interoperability*, 3) *Competences*, 4) *Comprehensiveness*, 5) *Technology* and 6) *Operational capacity*.<sup>7</sup>

The aim of the studies were to analyse and evaluate different case study areas where a CSDP mission or operation is or has taken place. The geographical variation was ensured by selecting the regions from different areas (Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Central African Republic, DR Congo, Libya, occupied Palestinian Territories) and the variation of different mandates was also analysed. This was to ensure the descriptions of variations and in order to maximise the results. The triangulation and mixed methods aimed to meet with multiple interest that IECEU stakeholders and end users have related to effectiveness of EU's crisis management capabilities. Each case study was completed by responsibility organisations and group of researchers. This was to ensure the understanding of context which is seen very relevant in research of conflicts and crisis management.

The IECEU recommendations to improve EU's crisis management and conflict prevention were categorised according to key focuses they had and in line with key stakeholders relevant from recommendation (e.g. political/strategic, Member State). For each capability, the main points of the findings and recommendations to overcome the identified problems are presented. The recommendations introduced in this chapter are presented under capabilities/themes of IECEU research. The more detailed descriptions and further analysis can be found from the final deliverables of IECEU WP7 (D7.1, D7.2 and D7.3).<sup>8</sup>

## PLANNING

Planning is multi-faceted. It involves politics, strategy, logistics, co-ordination, collaboration and implementation. Planning is the means of turning abstract political aims, strategic objectives and security policy into tangible results on the ground.

The planning of civilian CSDP missions is based on the EU's Crisis Management Procedures, which outline EU engagement in a crisis from the political level down to the mission level, how responses are planned, carried out and terminated. Civilian missions have been developed from the ground up by the EU. On the other hand, EU military planning is very much based on NATO standards, that is seen as the reference and norm for the EU military functions.<sup>9</sup>

Civilian and military planning procedures have common elements, such as a reaction mechanism and political decision making procedures but differ in terms of involved actors, specific procedures and deployment tools. Such differences to impact the integrated approach in the field.

Furthermore, the research indicates that, at times, the initial planning phase has been too rushed, at times it has been too slow. And more often than not, planning produces interventions that are too brief, and goals that are overly ambitious.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> D7.2 New Policy Approaches and Solutions. 2017. IECEU, 653371. & European Parliament, 2012. CSDP Missions and Operations: Lessons Learned Processes. European Union, 2012. Directorate-General for External Policies, Policy Department. ISBN: 978-92-823-3756-1.

<sup>7</sup> D1.5 Conceptual Framework revised. 2016. IECEU, 653371.

<sup>8</sup> D7.1 The improvement of the effectiveness of EU capabilities. 2017. IECEU, 653371.

<sup>9</sup> D7.2 New Policy Approaches and Solutions. 2017. IECEU, 653371 and D7.3 Preventive activities for pre-existing structures. 2017. IECEU, 653371.

<sup>10</sup> D7.1 The improvement of the effectiveness of EU capabilities. 2017. IECEU, 653371.

The net effect is that planning tends to inhibit a mission's operational effectiveness. For EU institutions the planning aspect is difficult. Member states have different self-interests, as do other intervening nations and the host nation that requires help. The political scene can be as complex and fractious as the security situation on the ground.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PLANNING

### *Civilian-Military Interoperability in CSDP Planning*

Civilian and military elements within the EU should, on future missions deployed in a crisis situation, combine the initial planning phase and remain in close partnership thereafter. Advanced communications between both the head of the military and the head of the civilian command and conduct capability at Brussels level and between the mission commanders in joint or adjacent theatres on all aspects of the missions were analysed to be further developed. In order to support this kind of communication, consideration should be given to a programme of staff exchange and expanded purposeful training between the military and civilian institutions.

### *Desired End-State*

The desired end-state, purpose or overarching strategic objective of the mission should reflect an appropriate action relevant to the needs of the nation it is operating in, at that juncture. Invariably, this may be to stabilise the territory and make it safe for its people.

### *Involvement of local and international actors*

Local actors should be involved in the planning phase, particularly at the start. The same applies to partner agencies. In the same vein, the mission should have more influence on the mission implementation plan. A core planning team with accurate equipment should be immediately established on the ground in order to report political developments and to adjust the strategic and planning documents accordingly.”<sup>11</sup>

## INTEROPERABILITY<sup>12</sup>

Interoperability is a widely used but rarely defined concept. In the IECEU-project interoperability is a mixture of cooperation, collaboration, coordination and civ-mil/civ-civ/mil-mil synergies. The project follows the definition provided by the Presidency for the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management in 2011 as “*The ability of systems, units or forces to provide services to and accept services from other systems, units or forces and to use the services so exchanged to enable them to operate effectively together.*”<sup>13</sup>

Interoperability has been a key focus of the European Union from its inception. From an interoperability point of view, the institutional framework of the CSDP crisis management operations is challenging, as all 28 member states, the European Commission, the Council General Secretariat, and the European Parliament (as budgetary authority) have their role to play. The impact of this complex decision making matrix varies between civilian missions and military operations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTEROPERABILITY

### *Divergent, non-standardised and sometimes contradictory national practices*

Combined civilian and military platforms should be created to discuss interoperability in different fields, fostering the dialogue needed to build the mind-set and culture.

### *Need for better intelligence gathering and sharing tools*

Tools to collect, analyse, store and share CSDP-related intelligence should be further developed and enhanced and interoperable, i.e. supporting a common operational picture for the crisis management operation (civilian and military).

### *Need for better mechanisms to support organizational learning*

Continue the development of a shared platform for lessons identified as it can build synergies and enhance the learning process of crisis management operations, and strengthen the mechanisms to monitor the lesson implementation process.

<sup>11</sup> Some developments on this are already implemented in the structures of EEAS.

<sup>12</sup> More on interoperability on D6.3 The interoperability of resources. 2016. IECEU, 653371.

<sup>13</sup> Council document from 2. April 2003 on Interoperability of Integrated Police Units and Police Headquarters (8009/03).

## COMPETENCES

The IECEU defines competences as knowledge and skills, and as resources put into action. The actions that the definition refers to are understood as collective (social) interactions that part of the organisation can perform proficiently and repeatedly. They are contextualised social routines based in explicit and tacit knowledge.<sup>14</sup>

In the reviewed case studies there are repeating mentioning relating to (lacking) soft skills competences. These are defined not as cultural awareness in its superficial meaning of learning things such as history, habits and cultural norms, but rather a “dignity” oriented mind-set, which would allow the personnel to function in multiple various theatres and would also have the flexibility in situations when the mission focus might change radically. Based on further discussion and research, it seems that mapping of the soft skills in the recruitment process is superficial.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPETENCES

#### *Improvement of Soft Skills Assessment*

At management level in crisis management operations, a separate test of soft skills could be beneficial, implemented in a standardized way.

## COMPREHENSIVENESS

Comprehensiveness, as it is defined in the IECEU project, encompasses cooperation and coordination activities conducted by CSDP missions and operations – with both EU and non-EU actors. Across all the CSDP missions and operations appraised in the IECEU-project, there is evidence of efforts made to strengthen cooperation and coordination with other EU actors in the field. In particular, efforts have been made in countries, where one or more CSDP missions/ operations have been deployed alongside another EU actor(s). In particular, a country coordination platform could be set up. This could also ensure better partnership with local actors. Information should be available in local languages.<sup>15</sup>

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPETENCES

#### *Country coordination platform*

Review ways in which to strengthen both competences of mission and operations staff as well as creating or augmenting existing platforms in order to strengthen cooperation and coordination with other EU actors in the field.

## TECHNOLOGY

IECEU focused on analysing the technological capabilities of EU operations, while taking into consideration also the technology available to the local counterparts (e.g. police and customs). Both the EU and non-EU perspectives were aimed to be assessed, as well as the functionalities of information systems, and the specific needs and characteristics of operation’s technological requirements. All case studies also evaluated the possibilities for pooling and sharing of technologies and information.<sup>16</sup>

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TECHNOLOGY

#### *CMO/User Centric technologies, including the local dimension*

Strengthen the technological component of missions in terms of having technologies that deliver in the field, with a key role for the mission support platform and sufficient funding to buy appropriate technological tools.

<sup>14</sup> D1.5 Conceptual Framework revised. 2016. IECEU, 653371.

<sup>15</sup> D7.1 The improvement of the effectiveness of EU capabilities. 2017. IECEU, 653371 and D7.2 New Policy Approaches and Solutions. 2017. IECEU, 653371.

<sup>16</sup> D7.1 The improvement of the effectiveness of EU capabilities. 2017. IECEU, 653371.

### *Need for training*

Include in Pre- Deployment training on available technology and equipment in the field.

### *Relevance of local ownership*

In CSDP crisis management operations, the starting point for selecting technologies for local capacity building should be sustainability.

## OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

IECEU defines capacity as the capability to deploy a combination of resources through collective organisational routines to achieve goals.<sup>17</sup> Operational capacity of a CSDP missions and operations consists of various factors that are both internal and external to the mission. However, the IECEU-project focused only on the EU-internal factors, which can be adjusted and developed, while the EU-external factors depend strongly on specifics of the country where the mission functions and include political situation in the country, dominant views among the host state actors, key counterparts towards the mission and the EU, general working and living environment. EU-internal factors are obviously closely interlinked and much dependent on the planning capacity.<sup>18</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

### *Management of Human Resources*

Deployment cycles ought to be managed in such a way that the proper execution of the mission is not endangered with the replacement of staff.

### *Dynamic Conflict Analysis*

Improvements in conflict analysis in advance of deployment should be made by involving the broad spectrum of civil society in order to have an accurate and timely local operational picture.

### *Communications from the field*

All EU delegations and CSDP crisis management operations should have systems in place enabling the exchange of classified information.



<sup>17</sup> D1.5 Conceptual Framework revised. 2016. IECEU, 653371.

<sup>18</sup> D7.1 The improvement of the effectiveness of EU capabilities. 2017. IECEU, 653371.

## CONCLUSION

The testing of the lessons identified and recommendations are being implemented in two phases. Phase 1 happened in Spring 2017 and tested the lessons identified and recommendation during three policy dialogues and advisory board meetings organised in Brussels and Helsinki. In total 86 external CSDP-experts were involved in the phase 1 debate.

Phase 2 started in September and will continue until December 2017. It will include further research and testing of a key finding, with an aim to identify a key recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of EU CSDP crisis management operations and conflict prevention activities. Fourteen key recommendations following from the policy dialogues are currently being analysed in terms of impact and feasibility as well as state of play. This analysis is done with stakeholders in online polls, interviews and during the final conference. The results will be shared in the final deliverable of the project.

The final deliverable will also include a forward perspective focusing on systemic elements and the ‘agileness’ of the current system of crisis prevention and CSDP missions. This is a relevant question, when taking into account the changing security environment and the variety of threats and challenges that the EU and its member states are confronted with and analyzing the current promising dynamics in security and defence policy within EU. Agile systems also have outstanding learning capacities, and the final analysis will look into how the current evaluation systems can be strengthened by an integrated quality assurance system.

## FOR FURTHER READING:

D7.1 The improvement of the effectiveness of EU capabilities. 2017. IECEU, 653371.

D7.2 New Policy Approaches and Solutions. 2017. IECEU, 653371.

D7.3 Preventive activities for pre-existing structures. 2017. IECEU, 653371.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AIES	Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy	EU	European Union
CMO	Crisis Management Operation	IECEU	Improving the Effectiveness of Capabilities in EU Conflict Prevention
CSDP/ESDP	The EU Common Security and Defence Policy/(prior to the Lisbon Treaty) the European Security and Defence Policy	UAS	University of Applied Sciences
D	Deliverable	UN	United Nations
EEAS	European External Action Service	WP	Work Package