



EU-CIVCAP

Improving EU capabilities for peacebuilding

Preventing and Responding to Conflict:
Developing EU CIVILIAN CAPabilities for a
sustainable peace

*Best Practices in EU Conflict Prevention
and Peacebuilding*





1. Introduction

Over the past two decades the EU has devoted considerable attention to the role of learning lessons and best practice in the realm of foreign and security policy to help improve its performance.

This approach, or 'learning turn,' also applies to the specific topic of conflict prevention and peacebuilding (CPP), the central research focus of the EU-CIVCAP project. Building on earlier outputs from Work Package 7 (WP7: Learning, Lessons, and Best Practices) and other EU-CIVCAP research findings, this report summarises a range of potential CPP best practices for consideration by the EU, focusing on the Common Foreign Security Policy (CFSP), the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and other policy tools.

This report incorporates contributions from researchers across Work Packages 2-6 of the EU-CIVCAP project. It begins with a review of the general approach to learning and lessons that informs how the project approaches the problem of learning-driven reform in the CPP realm.

The third section provides a definition of best practices and explains the choice of such practices for the purposes of this report. The fourth section addresses the best practices produced by Work Packages 2-4, which focus on the pre- and early stages of conflict: WP2 (Prepare), WP3 (Conflict Prevention), and WP4 (Crisis Response). The fifth section turns to the conflict and post-conflict stages addressed by Work Packages 5-6: WP5 (Management and Mitigation) and WP6 (Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding). In the sixth section (Conclusion), the report reviews the overall findings regarding best practices and speculates on the future of the EU's institutional reform efforts in the realm of CPP and beyond.

Below (and cover): Stari Most in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2016.

Credit: University of Bristol/Gilberto Algar-Faria

Left: Pristina *Credit: University of Bristol/Gilberto Algar-Faria*



2. Experiential institutional learning, lessons identified, and best practices

The core objective of EU-CIVCAP has been to investigate the recent conduct of the EU's various efforts (i.e. 'capabilities') in the realm of CPP and to suggest specific ways to improve or enhance those capabilities. Such capabilities can be framed as both material and non-material (or ideational) resources that directly support the EU's capabilities to conduct various CPP activities, such as early warning or conflict management.¹

Material resources would include personnel, funding, technology, and other types of equipment, while non-material resources would include:

- 1) general concepts/doctrines regarding how the EU should engage in CPP (such as the 'integrated approach');
- 2) short/medium term policies (such as development/humanitarian aid or individual CSDP missions); and
- 3) longer-term, and often 'strategic,' policies/plans devised on a functional/technical basis (such as the Maritime Security Strategy) and/or on a geographic basis, as with bilateral agreements, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), or the EU Strategy for the Horn of Africa.

Non-material resources also encompass lessons identified from practical experience at a political/strategic level or at an operational/tactical level in the field, as well as best practices that can be formalised and shared among actors/stakeholders inside and outside the EU who are directly involved in CPP activities (see below).

In addition, these various capabilities and the resources that support them can involve civilian and military² elements; although EU-CIVCAP focuses on the civilian aspect of CPP tasks, it also includes civilian-military coordination as one of its four central cross-cutting themes that affect all stages of the conflict cycle, from prevention/early warning to crisis response to conflict management to conflict resolution.



Within the specific realm of CPP tasks, these EU capabilities/resources/policy tools can also be deployed to provide some degree of executive authority (i.e. powers to investigate, adjudicate, detain/arrest, and defend) in a particular host country,³ as well as (more commonly) to provide non-executive support (training, mentoring, technical assistance, etc.).

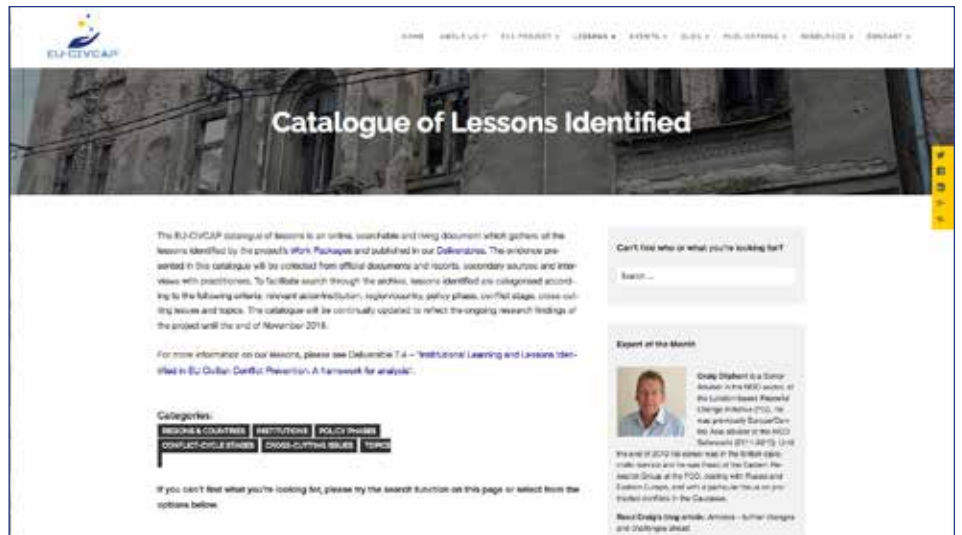
Finally, they can involve conceptual and operational link to many other actors (providers of assistance and stakeholders) in the realm of CPP, such as the UN, the OSCE, NATO, and the African Union.

The EU has already developed its own learning culture (including best practices) to help improve its various capabilities in the realm of CPP,⁴ so one of the purposes of WP7 within EU-CIVCAP is to assess the general performance of this culture as well as to catalogue a range of potential lessons identified and best practices on the basis of our many research outputs or deliverables (DLs).

The lessons identified by WP7 have been produced on a periodic basis since the start of EU-CIVCAP and can be found in our online catalogue; these also inform some of the best practices discussed below. The EU-CIVCAP lessons identified on this database, which come directly from our research outputs regarding the EU's experience of conducting CPP tasks, suggest specific ideas for reforming the EU's approach to CPP in terms of changes to responsibilities, rules, and resources.⁵

Left: Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2016 Credit: University of Bristol/Gilberto Algar-Faria

Top right: Online catalogue <https://eu-civcap.net/lessons/>



The term **responsibilities** refers to the EU's own conception of its place in the world and the specific types of foreign/security policy activities (such as conflict prevention or peacebuilding) that might reflect or advance its role. **Rules** refers to the institutional structures and policy-making routines, both informal and formal, that govern a particular policy domain, in this case those specifically focused on CPP but also the more general relationship between this capacity and other major European foreign policy initiatives, such as the ENP. Such rules include not just the EU's internal working procedures but also those that structure its relationships with other partners in the area of CPP, such as the UN⁶ and NATO⁷, among others. Finally, **resources** refer to both material and non-material assets the EU makes available for the purpose of CPP, as described above.

While these lessons are inspired by research findings involving the EU itself, it is also important to consider whether other sources of policy-relevant knowledge could be used to enhance the EU's CPP capabilities. This is the objective of including a best practices component of WP7 within EU-CIVCAP. Unlike lessons identified or learned, which merely suggest a possible need for reform, the term **best practices** refers to working procedures that have proved themselves in the field and that are worthy of adoption by other institutions, actors, and stakeholders directly involved in conducting CPP tasks.

As multiple outside actors are often involved in conflict-related situations, it makes sense for professionals in this field to help transform their individual experiences (i.e., lessons identified) into more specific ways of doing things that can be shared among other experts, and contribute to a common body of knowledge for effectively conducting specific tasks in a given area of public policy (i.e., best practices), in this case conflict prevention and peacebuilding. In addition, the 'elevation' of lessons to best practices by experienced experts with extensive practical knowledge may help depoliticise, or at least reduce the potential for disputes about any suggestions for reform that could undermine the role of various actors or stakeholders who might view such reforms as a threat to their role or interests.⁸

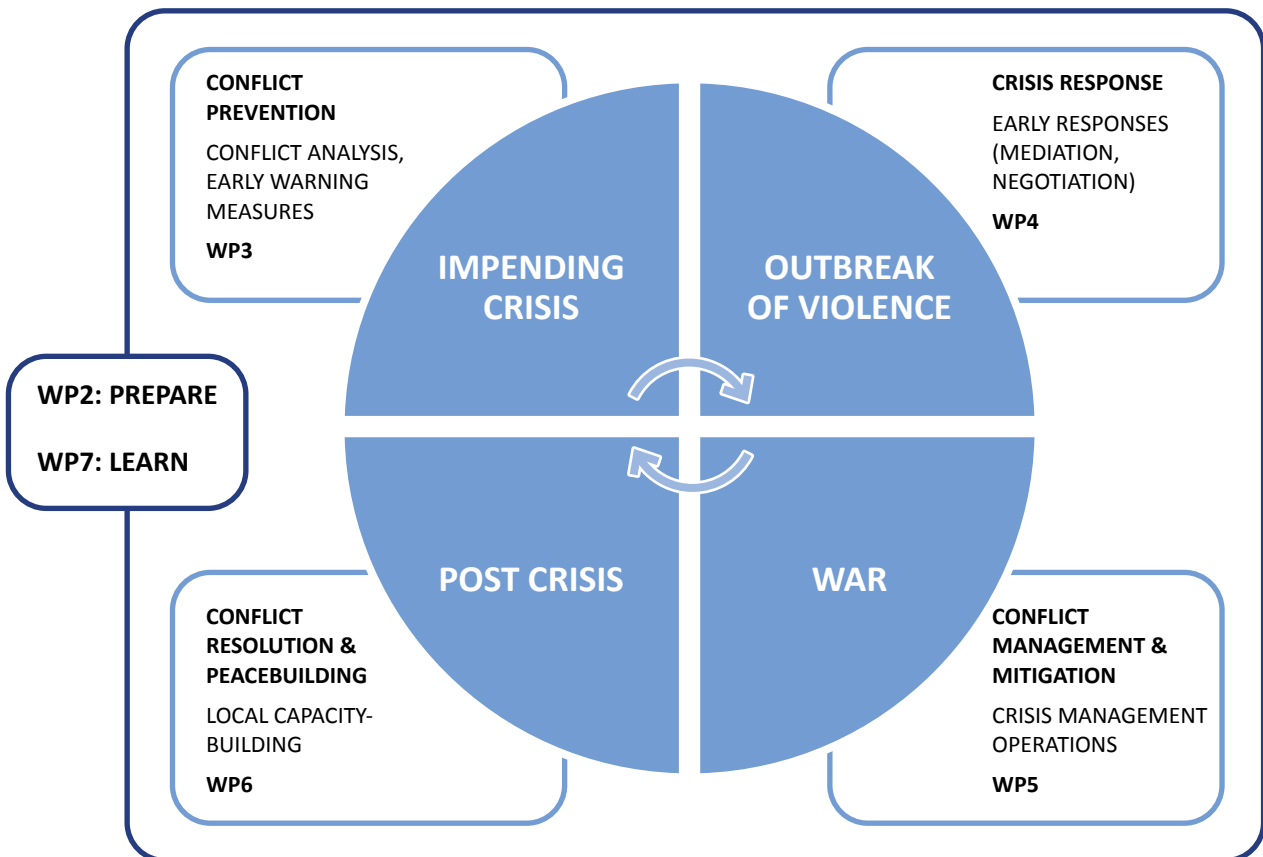
Although EU-CIVCAP has not directly investigated this possibility, it seems worthy of further attention since the EU frequently engages in debate about how to reform its extensive responsibilities and highly complex institutional framework.

3. Defining best practices

Overall, the purpose of policy-relevant learning on the part of the EU is to improve the 'fit' between its existing institutional framework/organisational routines and its stated goals/ambitions, in this case involving CPP. As noted above, this learning has been framed initially in terms of identifying specific lessons during the course of various EU-CIVCAP research activities and including them in our online catalogue. In this report, the focus shifts towards converting these learning-related findings into policy-relevant knowledge in the form of best practices.⁹

In line with EU terminology, best practice is understood most generally as 'an activity which conventional wisdom regards as more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other technique'. Also in line with EU terminology, such best practices can be directly inspired by so-called lessons learnt on the part of the EU, although the source of our best practices is not confined to the EU, as we shall see below. In fact, a critical component of EU-CIVCAP is to systematically compare the EU's CPP activities with those of similar actors, such as the UN,¹⁰ in such a way that best practices in this realm could be generated by those actors, some of whom also work in close partnership with the EU.

As the EU's formal definition of best practice is somewhat vague, EU-CIVCAP attempts to be clearer in terms of where the 'conventional wisdom' regarding best practice comes from and why we propose a certain best practice for inclusion in this report. As we have organised our empirical research in terms of several WPs that address specific phases of the conflict cycle, the presentation of our best practices is organised according to the WPs and the associated deliverables (DLs) that initially identified them as 'conventional wisdom.' In addition, and to reinforce the extent of 'conventional wisdom' noted above, each of these best practices noted below is supported by some evidence of their previous effectiveness in the field by the EU and/or another actor.



As noted, although many of the best practices below have been derived from conventional wisdom shared by EU experts in this field, other best practices may come from other actors in the realm of CPP that have been closely analysed by EU-CIVCAP researchers. Therefore, the discussion below attempts to be as clear as possible about the original source of the individual best practices, even though they may be shared already by more than one actor. The discussion below attempts, whenever possible, to link specific best practices to some of the lessons in our learning database to help reinforce the degree of conventional wisdom, based on empirical research that is behind each best practice. Finally, and in addition to organising the presentation according to phases in the conflict cycle as noted above, the discussion below also addresses whether individual best practices also address any of the four cross-cutting issues as defined by EU-CIVCAP: the early warning-response gap; short-term vs. long-term approaches; civil-military coordination; and local ownership.



Left: Conflict cycle

Right: Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2016 Credit: University of Bristol/Gilberto Algar-Faria



4. Best practices during pre-conflict phases

As noted previously, Work Packages 2-4 essentially focus on the pre-conflict/early warning and initial outbreak stages of conflict. This section presents the best practices from each of these three WPs, noting that there are overlaps in terms of the conflict stages and other factors they address, such as the four major cross-cutting issues identified by EU-CIVCAP.

WP2: PREPARE

As outlined in the EU-CIVCAP project design, WP2 is primarily concerned with establishing an initial baseline evaluation of the EU's current civilian capabilities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding tasks. As such, it focused on measuring and assessing these various capabilities, particularly in terms of dual-use technologies and the EU's approach to pooling and sharing various capabilities. It also pays special attention to two cross-cutting issues: the warning-response gap and civil-military coordination.

Best practice 1: EU conflict early warning system

The EU's own Conflict Early Warning System can be seen as a best practice in the realm of CPP. It collects conflict-relevant information, both quantitative and qualitative, from a range of sources such as the EEAS, the Commission, EU member states and civil society organisations. In fact, the system works in close cooperation with EU member states, external experts, and civil society organisation, both in Europe and in other regions. Thus, conflict prevention encompasses the systematic collection and analysis of information coming from a variety of sources in order to identify and understand the risks for violent conflict in a country and to develop strategic responses to mitigate those risks. It focuses on the highest global conflict risks: ongoing highly violent (or potentially violent) situations on a four-year time horizon. It communicates the risks or peacebuilding opportunities and generates comprehensive options for EU-wide actions, which are monitored as part of the system's biannual cycle. It also works in synergy with existing EU tools and models such as the InfoRM index for humanitarian and disaster risk supported by DG ECHO of the Commission. In this regard, this system for internal coordination can be seen as a positive example for achieving the EU's objectives in the realm of CPP.

- **Relevant Deliverables (DLs):** DL 2.1 (also see DL 3.1)
- **Key sources:** EEAS, EU Conflict Early Warning System, Factsheet, September 2014: http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/cfsp/conflict_prevention/docs/201409_factsheet_conflict_earth_warning_en.pdf



Best practice 2: Staff training on conflict sensitivity and mediation

This best practice was also inspired by the EU itself. Considering the range and complexity of CPP tasks in different types of host countries, having well-trained personnel is crucial to enhancing the full effectiveness of EU civilian capabilities and to fulfilling the objective of intervening in specific areas (DDR, SSR, confidence building, etc.). CPP-related non-mandatory training activities are available to both Commission and EEAS staff in Delegations and at headquarters. PRISM in the EEAS and the Fragility & Resilience Unit B.7 in DEVCO are both tasked with providing resources on fragility, conflict analysis, mediation and peacebuilding to EU staff. In particular, Unit B.7 in DEVCO is the key provider on conflict sensitivity for the European Commission staff, as per its mandate. The Mediation Support Team in PRISM can also provide tailor-made elective training courses for newly appointed staff, in particular Heads of Mission in conflict-affected countries. The EU has therefore developed diversified courses on conflict prevention and peacebuilding, also in close collaboration with the leading NGOs and training institutes in this sector as Saferworld and Swisspeace.

In addition, the project “Mediation Support to the European External Action Service (EEAS)” provides conflict prevention and mediation support to the EEAS and its partners, including “Preparing and delivering coaching and training formats targeting different levels, individuals and teams within the EEAS and other EU institutions”.

The project “ERMES – European resources for mediation support” aims to strengthen EU support to conflict mediation parties worldwide to help “identify the relevant expertise and/or experts on mediation and dialogue to support third parties engaged in mediation and dialogue processes, including the deployment of experts to the field, drafting of research papers, and provision of training and coaching of individuals and/or groups.” A third example is represented by the institute ESSEC-Irene, which has been providing negotiation training to the European Commission staff since 2007, a series of training seminars since 2009, and a “Negotiation Learning Path” for administrators advising the rotating Presidency of the Council since 2011. In addition, ESSEC-Irene provides a “Personalised Coaching Program” for high-ranking EU managers. These training mechanisms within the EU institutions represent an effective transfer of expertise and are a useful response to personnel rotation and turnover. The EU should consider whether to consolidate them and create mandatory training paths for specific personnel, for instance, for Commission or EEAS staff working on fragile states or for the staff deployed in Delegations in conflict areas.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 2.1
- **Key sources:** Andrea de Guttry, ‘Le missioni civili dell’Unione Europea: le sfide per la formazione ed il reclutamento’, in Azzoni, Alessandro, Pirozzi, Nicoletta (eds.), *Civili in missione: l’esperienza italiana nelle missioni dell’Unione Europea*, 2016, pp. 45-55, http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/civili_in_missione.pdf

Best practice 3: Dual-use technology training

This best practice is based on an Italian initiative launched over a decade ago, involving a dedicated Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) training centre of excellence established in 2006 in the Amendola Base by the Italian Air Forces. Its annual training programme is not only for the Italian Air Force and Army, but also adopts a broader, joint inter-agency approach to cooperation, with participants coming from the Navy, the Carabinieri, and the fire brigades.

This provides clear support for the dual-use of RPAS and their interoperability across various users: as of 2017, 350 individuals from the above-mentioned services have been trained in the Amendola’s centre. The centre of excellence prepares five different members of the crew: the pilot, the sensor operator, the person responsible for mission monitoring, the data and image analyst and the avionics technician. This best practice within the Italian RPAS environment and NATO forces could be replicated through an EU-EEAS common training centre.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 2.3
- **Key sources:** Ministero della Difesa, “Centro RISTA-EW” (2017). <http://www.esercito.difesa.it/organizzazione/capodi-sme/comfoter-supporto/Brigata-RISTA-IEW/Pagine/Centro-RISTA-EW.aspx>

4. Best practices during pre-conflict phases

Best practice 4: RPAS and satellites use for CPP

This best practice is a consolidation of examples from various EU member states and the EU itself regarding the use of RPAS and Satellites in CPP activities, as described in pages 37-39 of DL 2.3. For example, regarding satellites, a key task which can easily be achieved through the use of RPAS and satellites is the definition and control of boundaries between disputing states. This task is at the core of the mandate of several missions, inter alia the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia or the European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) in Ukraine. EUMM Georgia is one of the EU missions and operations that are supported by the EU SatCen with IMINT / GEOINT products, and it is not by chance that the EU carefully considered the deployment of RPAS during the draft of the OPLAN for EUMM Georgia. The use of RPAS in a civilian mission can ensure a close and continuous control of potential troops along borders and facilitate the deployment of interposition forces. There are clear examples of this RPAS capability from both Germany and Italy: the German army, already uses the Luna to support peacekeeping force protection for its personnel deployed in the Sahel within the MINURSO mission.

Force protection support is not just limited to the escort during peacetime but can also be used in RPAS deployment during an escalation of violence as an exfiltration tool for European and local populations from a dangerous area. This was the case during the repatriation of Italian embassy personnel from Tripoli during the 2015 uprising in Libya.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 2.3
- **Key sources:** EU SatCen Annual Report, 2017. https://www.satcen.europa.eu/key_documents/EU%20SatCen%20Annual%20Report%20201658e24cb1f9d7202538bed52b.pdf
D. Pelz, "Defense Minister visits German soldiers in Mali." *Deutsche Welle*, December 19, 2016. <http://www.dw.com/en/defense-minister-visits-german-soldiers-in-mali/a-36832469>
D. Cenciotti, "MQ-1C Predator footage of repatriation of Italian nationals from Libya". February 16, 2015. <https://theaviationist.com/2015/02/16/predator-filmed-italian-repatriation/>

Best practice 5: The EU's Satellite Centre (SatCen)

The EU's own Satellite Centre (SatCen) provides a final best practice under the auspices of WP2. Considering the importance of timely, detailed and accurate information in host countries for early warning and crisis response tasks, the EU SatCen helps to bridge the cooperation between EU member state and the EU as well as between various civilian and military capabilities. And given the importance of satellite products and services for the CSDP more generally, the EU institutions as a whole have fostered close cooperation with all EU member states and other international bodies promoting Research and Innovation (R&I) initiatives in this area. This cooperation has been driven by the EU SatCen, defined by Paradiso as the "joining link between commercial and EU civilian space programmes for Earth Observation, on one side, and EDA and other security and military users on the other" (Paradiso, 2013).

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 2.3
- **Key sources:** N. Paradiso, *ESPi Report 45, The EU Dual-approach to Security and Space. Twenty years of policy making*, Vienna: European Space Institute (ESPI), 2013.



Left: "Newborn" Pristina, Kosovo, 2016
Credit: University of Bristol/Gilberto Algar-Faria

Top right: Drought response
Credit: EC Photo/Simon Maina

WP3: CONFLICT PREVENTION

Within EU-CIVCAP, WP3 focuses on conflict analysis, conflict prevention, and early warning measures. It pays special attention to three cross-cutting issues: the warning-response gap, short-term vs. long-term approaches, and local ownership. All the best practices identified by this Work Package were inspired by the EU's own innovations.



Best practice 6: Conflict analysis and development assistance

Best practice 6 involves the relationship between conflict analysis and development assistance, given the EU's role as the world's leading development aid donor. In the realm of CPP, conflict analysis can enhance the design and implementation of development assistance when it is EU-led, thorough, and informed by a wide range of stakeholders in the host country and internationally. The EU has developed a capacity for detailed conflict analysis, although there is still scope to increase the range of actors involved, particularly in host countries. Insiders in the European Commission also note that there is considerable demand within parts of the Commission for more intensive conflict analysis, which, when done well, brings real value to the work particularly of DG DEVCO and DG NEAR. Given the Commission's central role in providing development and humanitarian aid in countries where conflict may break out, the EU should investigate ways of enhancing this best practice for itself and for other development/humanitarian aid providers.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 3.2, DL 3.3
- **Key sources:** Commission, EEAS.

Best practice 7: Conflict analysis workshops

Another best practice involving the EU takes the form of its conflict analysis workshops, which enhance the conduct of EU CPP activities (as assessed by its staff), particularly when they are participatory and led by an expert in the situation or host country. These 'light-touch analysis' workshops seem to have been useful, especially when the facilitator has been an expert in the situation and not only the methodology, as these encounters provide a useful basis for conversation between officials from different parts of the EU machinery. There are also reportedly instances where the workshops have led to a useful exchange between the EEAS, the Commission's geographical experts, and EU delegations.

The sense that the EU delegations are not being used to their full potential and that the EU could 'make better use' of them is reflected in the EU's Comprehensive Approach, its Action Plan and the Global

Strategy. In the future, extending the use of conflict analysis to other policy instruments, such as those of DG Trade, would strengthen considerably the EU's potential for conflict prevention as a way of acting in the world. A key challenge to boosting the impact of the workshops is time and resourcing.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 3.2, DL 3.3
- **Key sources:** European Commission (DG-Near)

European Commission and High Representative, Taking forward the EU's Comprehensive Approach to external conflicts and crises – Action Plan 2016–17, Joint Staff Working Document SWD(2016) 254 Final (Brussels, 18 July 2016), p.4.

European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), Report of the CSDN meeting "Peacebuilding in the EU Global Strategy: Gathering civil society input". Brussels: EPLO, 2016.

4. Best practices during pre-conflict phases

Best practice 8: Mediation support capabilities

The EU's mediation support activity is maintained and enhanced in part because of the existence of, and articulation between, both its in-house expertise (Mediation Support Team) and its external expertise (service contracts involving NGOs and experts working with third parties). The EU has enjoyed some notable mediation successes in recent years, such as the Iran deal and the Belgrade/Pristina processes, which provide some degree of real-world evidence for the identification of this best practice. In addition, and unlike conflict analysis and early warning, the development of the EU's mediation capacity has been accompanied by a specific policy. Here the EU's PRISM's Mediation Support Team provides the EU machinery with important resources, including expert staff members tasked with mediation support initiatives and external expertise for mediation support within the EEAS. The PRISM Division is able to make innovative use of service contracts to work with third parties, which observers identify as an important asset in certain situations, because it allows the EU to be engaged with non-governmental organisation partners to support processes on the ground, rather than take the form of a more hands-off donor/grant recipient relationship.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 3.2
- **Key sources:** Council of the European Union, "Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities", "I/A" Item Note 15779/09 (Brussels, 2009).

Best practice 9: Conflict prevention and multilateralism

The EU's modus operandi of operating multilaterally is well established in practice and is arguably a source of strength for its approach towards conflict prevention. The EU is by nature a multilateral actor: unilateral activity by the EU is the exception rather than the rule, and conflict prevention is also a field of activity, or a way of acting, that favours multilateralism over unilateralism. The EU's focus on multilateralism within conflict prevention (and foreign policy more generally) can be seen in the way it engages with third parties from the UN and regional organisations, with non-EU states, and with local authorities, non-governmental organisations, and other non-state actors; this occurs on the international stage, in the EU, outside the EU in regional and national capitals, as well as locally in host countries where the EU has a presence. This multilateralism is arguably a source of strength for the EU as a foreign policy actor in general, particularly when it comes to conflict prevention.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 3.2
- **Key sources:** EEAS and Commission (DG NEAR)
L. Davis, EU foreign policy, transitional justice, and mediation (London: Routledge, 2014).

Best practice 10: Institutional design for early warning/ conflict analysis

The fact that early warning, conflict analysis, and process design is now located in the same department (PRISM) and higher in the EEAS organigramme hierarchy has not only favoured coordination but may also have helped policy-makers balance the urgent and the important. Coordination and cooperation within the EU presents a major challenge, given the complexity of the EU and of the problems associated with undertaking various CPP tasks, and is intimately connected to the question of leadership. The intra-institutional battles that dominate scholarship on coherence, for example, may not have been solved with the creation of the EEAS, but some observers believe there is the necessary spirit of coordination and cooperation across the EU machinery when it comes to conflict prevention. The PRISM Division in the EEAS has developed and provided key resources for other parts of the EEAS and the European Commission and has created demand for their services, which in turn has enabled greater cooperation and coordination across relevant parts of the system.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 3.2
- **Key sources:** EEAS and Commission (DG NEAR)

Right: Building in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2016. Credit: University of Bristol/Gilberto Algar-Faria

WP4: CRISIS RESPONSE

Crisis response is the central focus of WP4, which includes efforts involving mediation and negotiation to prevent or mitigate conflict. It also addresses three cross-cutting issues: the warning-response gap, short-term vs. long-term approaches, and civil-military coordination.



4. Best practices during pre-conflict phases

Best practice 11: Budget flexibility for rapid response

One of the challenges for effective crisis response is the rigidity of the EU budget, which includes both multiannual and annual cycles (see pp. 36–37 of DL 4.1). These budgets are set following negotiations between the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission; all civilian CPP missions need to be deployed within the fixed constraints of these budgets. This creates considerable challenges when unexpected crises emerge and require a rapid response from the EU. A key example was the launch of the SSR mission to Ukraine in 2014, which was “possible only because of the transfer of funds from other budget headings”. A relatively recent best practice, in this respect, is the development of a new funding line for “emergency measures” in addition to the already existing (yet much smaller) “preparatory and follow-up measures”. The emergency measures include tens of millions of euros precisely for unexpected crises such as the one in Ukraine. This is a best practice, not only in the rigid EU budgetary context, but also for other international organisations such as the UN and OSCE, which face similar challenges regarding budgetary flexibility for rapid response.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 4.1
- **Key sources:** High Representative. *Contribution to the June 2015 European Council*. 2015: http://eeas.europa.eu/csdp/documents/pdf/report-ahead_european-defenceagency.pdf

Best practice 12: Centralised training for civilian staff deployed in CSDP missions

The quality of civilian missions ultimately comes down to the quality of the deployed civilian staff. Since EU missions largely depend on seconded experts, the quality of staff is a key responsibility for EU member states. At the same time, the EU can do much more in terms of centralised training (pre-deployment, in-mission, specialised training) for both seconded experts and contracted staff. While the UN and OSCE have a dedicated infrastructure and resources for centralised training, the EU lacks resources. The European Commission has made an ambitious attempt to address this shortfall by providing funding for the ENTRI consortium, which has organised pre-deployment and specialised training free of charge and paid for travel and accommodation. ENTRI project funding has now run out, so the ESDC has partially taken over the role of ENTRI by offering some regular pre-deployment training in Brussels, but it does not have the resources to cover participants’ travel and accommodation.

As a result, the current situation is that contracted staff do not automatically benefit from any sort of pre-deployment training and that national pre-deployment training still varies significantly per member state. The best practice, in this respect, is the UN which has dedicated training centres in Brindisi, Italy and Entebbe, Uganda. The EU is also advised to follow this best practice and to increase the resources and facilities of the ESDC.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 4.1
- **Key sources:** United Nations *Peacekeeping Resource Hub*: <http://research.un.org/en/peacekeeping-community/training>



Right: Federica Mogherini visit to EULEX Kosovo
Credit: EC Photo/Armend Nimani



Top: UN Secretary-General Holds Meeting With UN Logistics Office Staff, 2007
Credit: UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

Above: OSCE, Vienna
Credit: EC Photo/Vladimir Simicek

Best practice 13: Standing capacity for rapid deployment

When rapid crisis response is under consideration, it is often necessary to have advance teams in theatre within days of taking a decision. The EU lacks capacity in this respect. It can occasionally draw on staff in the relatively small CPCC or experienced mission staff from other missions can be flown in, but it does not have a nucleus for rapid deployment. This contrasts with the UN, which has a standing police capacity and a standing justice and corrections capacity, although these remain relatively modest. For example, the UN Standing Police Capacity only comprises 36 officers (which is short of the 100 officers recommended by the Brahimi report of 2000) and is relatively modest compared to the 20,000 deployed civilians by the UN. However small, this has still turned out to be a useful capacity, not just in terms of mission establishment, but also as a source of expertise and emergency capacity for existing missions. The OSCE, which is much smaller and under budgetary constraints as well, has instead a virtual roster of staff that can be quickly deployed. A combination of the UN and OSCE models seems to be a best practice for the EU to implement.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL4.1
- **Key sources:** UN and OSCE

Best practice 14: Diplomatic support for other international organisations

The EU stresses the need for partnership with other international actors in the EU Global Strategy. While there are a variety of ways the EU can support other international organisations, it is important to realise how important simple diplomatic support, through high-level statements, can be. The best practice is, in this case, EU support for OSCE Minsk Group (Armenia-Azerbaijan). While the OSCE has long taken the lead in mediating between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the OSCE format is also questioned by both parties. Azerbaijan, for instance, wants to bring in other parties, such as Turkey. There is also the question whether the OSCE format has enough authority. In this context, following the 2016 April war, the EU came out with strong diplomatic support for the OSCE. The EU High Representative made a number of statements that the OSCE was the appropriate format for mediation and negotiations between the parties. While this was a relatively cheap intervention by the EU, such diplomatic support for the OSCE really provides the organisation with additional authority. This is a best practice example of how the EU can empower other international actors to reach mutual objectives.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL4.2
- **Key sources:** OSCE

5. Best practices during crisis management and post-conflict phases

Best practices in this section address the acute intervention and resolution phases of the conflict cycle, although as with other phases it should be clear that there are no hard divisions between these phases in actual conflict situations.

WP5: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT/MITIGATION

Research conducted under the auspices of WP5 focuses on the EU's direct involvement in conflict management/mitigation efforts, including the deployment of various types of crisis management missions. It also pays special attention to three cross-cutting issues: short-term vs. long-term approaches, civil-military coordination, and local ownership.

Best practice 15: Strategic coordination with other actors

The EU should embrace opportunities for using its high-level competences to offer leadership for coordinating multiple actors with overlapping mandates on the ground where no other lead agency is apparent. This is a key finding from DL 5.3, where the EUFOR BiH role in coordination of disposal cycles of Ammunition, Weapons and Explosives (AWE) set a prime example. In the highly complex multi-actor environments of international crisis management, the EU has two core strengths: one is legitimacy (as an IO compared to unilateral actors) and the other is the high level of skills and training of its staff. Both are highly valuable in leading coordination. They are, however, often falling short at capacity-building at lower levels (e.g. military training in Somalia) where other donor actors might have better 'cultural understanding' and also an ability to provide equipment as well as training (e.g. the UAE and Turkey in Somalia). Drawing on the experience of the Western Balkans, the EU should further develop a best practice to enhance the support of host countries in coordinating and advising on multi-actor support to avoid problems associated with fragmented and uncoordinated institutions.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 5.3
- **Key sources:** EU, host countries

Below: Johann Luif, on the left, and Federica Mogherini, in the centre, reviewing the EUFOR Althea guards, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2015.

Credit: EC Audiovisual Service/Elvis Barukcic



Best practice 16: Task-based mandates to coordinate

The EU's overall approach to specific crisis response situations is often framed in terms of a formal mandate, but these documents must offer a more detailed and task-based approach to coordination. Based on the research summarised in DL 5.3, we find that civil-military coordination is only really happening on the ground when mandates are either:

- (1) overlapping (leading to institutional competition for mandates to optimize performance), or
- (2) directly tasked to coordinate specific tasks in the mandate or OPLAN.

In this regard EUNAVFOR and EUCAP in Somalia have had many positive operational-level synergies established through the closeness of their mandates and the fact that they have been directly tasked to coordinate and deliver synergies. In the interfaces to EUTM Somalia, however, this has not been successful – mainly due to ‘personal interpretations’ of the necessary and possible coordination – since they have simply been tasked to coordinate with ‘relevant partners’.



Best practice 17: Planning for flexibility on the ground

All EU crisis interventions begin with some degree of planning, which attempts to anticipate the tasks (mandate), necessary resources, and other factors of deployment (logistics, security, evacuation, etc.) before launching a mission. One EU best practice here involves the use of planning missions to engage in fact-finding within a host country before a full deployment is undertaken. This is not practice for all such deployments, however, and the EU could consider making it so. In addition, no planning process can anticipate all possible problems, so there also must be some built-in capacity for adjustment on the ground (i.e., flexibility or discretion) to react to changing circumstances as necessary. EUCAP Nestor/Somalia, for example, has proved flexible in adapting to the dynamics of the piracy problem, scaling its engagements and scope to improve its response. The EU renamed and refocused EUCAP Somalia, shifting its mandate to focus on Somalia from 2016 onwards. Consequently, the mission expanded its Hargeisa field office, established an operations base in Puntland, and increased its presence at the Mogadishu headquarters, all of which indicate not just the importance of local adaptation as a best practice but also the role of feedback loops between locally deployed staff and Brussels staff in terms of changing mission mandates as the situation develops on the ground.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 5.1
- **Key sources:** Host countries

Left: Atalanta operation in the Gulf of Aden

Credit: EC Photo/Laurent Chamussy

5. Best practices during crisis management and post-conflict phases

Best practice 18: Comprehensive host country training and workshops

The EU's experience in Africa suggests another best practice, based on the role of EUCAP's training and workshop programmes throughout the Horn of Africa. These have facilitated the sharing of suggestions based on extended professional expertise that focus on both the theoretical and practical aspects of maritime security, a capacity that was severely lacking in this region. In this sense, and as a best practice, when undertaking any major conflict management or crisis response mission the EU should also consider the possibility of building into their mandates a series of comprehensive host country workshops to address the indirect or root causes of the conflict. In the case of Africa, these training workshops have been a success both in terms of skills and knowledge transfers, but also in terms of increasing the practical cooperation between EUCAP staff and regional actors as well as between the regional actors themselves. Additionally, these training efforts benefited from utilising a variety of EUCAP Nestor staff, from trainers and experts from the Seychelles and Djibouti to navy and coast guard personnel from a number of countries, both in the Horn of Africa and outside of it.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 5.1
- **Key sources:** Host countries

Right: Visit of Federica Mogherini, Vice-President of the EC, to Mali
Credit: EC Photo/Habibou Kouyate

Best practice 19: Local/ regional mission coordination

EU-CIVCAP has focused on two regions where the EU has undertaken several crisis management missions, some of which involve both civilian and military elements: the Balkans and the Horn of Africa. The use of multiple such deployments in the same host country or region obviously creates a need for ongoing coordination among those missions and operations, both in Brussels and in the host country/region. In Africa two important CSDP actions – EUCAP Nestor and EU NAVFOR Atalanta – have supported each other in practical terms. Representatives from the two missions frequently visit one another and attend similar events as well as planning joint activities such as trainings. The complementary nature of EUCAP Nestor with other EU activities in the region, specifically EU NAVFOR Atalanta, is a successful feature of EUCAP Nestor and provides an excellent example of coordination potentially to be reproduced in other regions.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 5.1
- **Key sources:** EEAS, host countries



WP6: CONFLICT RESOLUTION & PEACEBUILDING

Finally, WP6 within EU-CIVCAP focuses on the post-conflict phase of the conflict cycle, which includes resolution, peacebuilding, and local capacity building within host countries. It also stresses three cross-cutting issues: the warning-response gap, short-term vs. long-term approaches, and local ownership.

Best practice 20: Intra-institutional coordination

Given the highly decentralised, even fragmented, way that many international actors handle foreign policy in general and peacebuilding in particular, intra-institutional and inter-institutional co-ordination are important examples of EU best practice that have obvious relevance for others, whether states or organisations. This includes, namely, the EU's establishment of a 'rule of law' team in the EU Delegation to coordinate all the different EU activities in this area, which has improved the coordination of all relevant actors in the country. In Bosnia, this external-local coordination also involves programmes that meet local needs and avoid duplication, which follows on from several best practices from WP5 noted above. Similarly, the implementation of agreements between Pristina and Belgrade, with funds to support them, also provides an example of best practice in terms of both intra- and inter-institutional coordination (since 2011 the EU has invested 58.6million euros just for this purpose). This also involves sub-contracting other international actors for the implementation of projects, such as the selection of UNOPS for construction of border and boundary checkpoints with Serbia in northern Kosovo, due to the UN's perceived neutrality towards the

status of Kosovo's statehood. Even without sub-contracting, the EU has recognised the political salience and expertise of other international organisations for the sake of implementation of Brussels Agreement. A case in point here is the EU's request to the OSCE to support the implementation of the Brussels Dialogue by delivering training for civil protection units run by local Serbs in northern Kosovo during their integration into Kosovo's system; a similar programme is planned for the incorporation of the Serbian judiciary in northern Kosovo into Kosovo's structure. This 'logo switching' strategy for the purpose of securing acceptance of assistance by local political elites and citizens is an effective way of EU leadership without necessarily implementing all capacity building activities. For this practice to be replicated in future situations, it is important to develop among EU decision-makers an understanding of political standing, unique expertise, and capacity for deployability of other international actors so as to create synergies.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 6.1 and DL 6.2
- **Key sources:** *Host countries in the Western Balkans (Bosnia, Kosovo)*

Best practice 21: Pre-deployment needs assessments

In order to achieve a better fit between planning and deployment of EU capacity building initiatives, several interviewees mentioned the importance of needs assessments prior to the launch of the programmes, consultations with local actors, and the setting up of monitoring and evaluation systems.

The establishment of the Bosnian border police was mentioned as a successful example, where there was a strong commitment from the international community (in this case the EU and the member states), but this was done based on a realistic needs assessment and committing adequate resources. Following the completion of a project or initiative, the EU and other actors must also take the time and make the effort to disseminate their findings and outcomes to the local community in a contextually appropriate and adaptive way.

In Somalia, WP6 research found that many in the local population feel a sense of exhaustion, disconnection, and misuse due to frequent capacity-building projects and few, if any, groups reporting back about the impact their participation had. Locals have the feeling that external organisations are receiving funding in their name, but that they are receiving very little in return and that the funds are instead funnelled into the civil society and NGO organisations.

In order to change this, the EU and other actors need to ensure that local communities are receiving feedback for each initiative that they are involved in, ideally in their local language. One positive example from an organisation was the holding of a workshop at the end of a project to inform the community of the results and to thank them for their participation, which also reinforces Best practice 17 above. This would help to

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change the dynamic between external actors and the community, reminding actors such as the EU that they are not carrying out their projects and initiatives mainly for their own purposes but rather for the local population.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 6.1, DL 6.2, and DL 6.3
- **Key sources:** *Host countries: Western Balkans (Bosnia) and Horn of Africa (Somalia/Somaliland)*

Best practice 22: Recognising failures

External aid providers, crisis responders, and local capacity-builders involved in peacebuilding tasks should also be honest and transparent about what has failed. Recognising failure and taking lessons learned seriously can facilitate corrective action for future activities. Lesson learning is most effective if consolidated through mechanisms for preserving institutional memory and continuity of effort. The

example of EUCAP Nestor/Somalia can illustrate some of these issues. EUCAP Nestor was a civilian mission launched by the EU in 2012 to support maritime security capacity-building in five countries in the Western Indian Ocean region: Djibouti, Kenya, Seychelles, Somalia and Tanzania. Its aim was to provide a long-term solution to the problem of piracy off the coast of Somalia and provide an exit strategy for EUNAVFOR Atalanta, the EU naval mission. The mission faced major challenges in its first few years. Its initial needs assessment process was perfunctory; the ambition of its mandate was not matched by available resources (financial or staff) and it struggled to achieve 'buy in' from partner states. The direction of Nestor's activities from the EU in Brussels was centralised and bureaucratic, with an emphasis on rapid results linked to the mission's two-yearly mandate extension and budget cycle. However, following an Interim strategic review in 2015, a number of changes were made to the mission in response to these challenges. The mission was re-focused

to work in Somalia, renamed EUCAP Somalia in 2016, and its headquarters moved from Djibouti to Mogadishu. In addition, its activities in Djibouti, Kenya, Seychelles and Tanzania were phased out, while its remit was also broadened to include aspects of maritime security more in line with local priorities, such as illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. Finally, its focus was shifted from anti-piracy training to developing Somali maritime governance, institutions and operational capacities. EUCAP Somalia remains an ambitious mission and continues to face challenges. However, the changes introduced since 2015 demonstrate a capacity for reflexivity in the face of failure and a capacity to reorganise and refocus activity, in functional and geographic terms, in direct response to lessons learned.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 6.1
- **Key sources:** *Local policy-makers and officials; Horn of Africa (Somalia); Western Balkans; also BPT, 2018, pp. ix, 24*



Best practice 23: Managing external assistance

Governments that rely on support from donors and international organisations must carefully manage external assistance to ensure that it serves the country's needs. They need to steer and coordinate donor projects, as well as negotiate and monitor implementation. A case in point here is the Kampala Process. Addressing Somalia's maritime resource and security needs required cooperation between its federal government and regional administrations, and the establishment of a single maritime focal point as mandated by the Djibouti Code of Conduct. Beginning in 2009 as a series of informal meetings convened by the UN Political Office for Somalia between representatives from the Transitional Federal Government, Somaliland, Puntland and other regions, the Kampala process is a good example of a participatory, bottom-up approach to coordination. By enabling effective information-sharing and open discussion, these meetings established shared knowledge and problem definitions among international and Somali authorities in areas of legislative review, prisons, fisheries and maritime safety and security. By way of incremental steps and relationship-building, the Kampala Process culminated in the collective endorsement in 2014 of the Somali Maritime Resource and Security Strategy (SMRSS). The SMRSS remains the sole maritime strategy endorsed by all Somali administrations and provides a crucial road map for the countries developing maritime sector and the role of international partners within it.

The success of the Kampala Process can be attributed to three factors:

- Its informal membership structure and flexible approach to coordination limited the discussion to technical maritime concerns and insulated the process from potential political tensions.
- Collective drafting of the SMRSS through dialogue and consultation ensured that the process reflected the diversity of interests at stake.
- Maintaining an inclusive forum focused solely on fostering cooperation meant that participants' specific maritime concerns and priorities remained adaptable to external developments.

At a minimum, a best practice demands that the relevant local actors in a host country be meaningfully included in the design and implementation of projects. For instance, another approach by SEESAC aiming at local ownership was taken in its gender projects when the institutions i.e. their representatives were engaged in developing and applying methodology for gender analysis. At project management level, DCAF has made efforts to include representatives of targeted institutions in project boards.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 6.1
- **Key sources:** *Host countries; also see BPT, 2018, pp. viii, 23.*

Best practice 24: Employing local staff in capacity-building efforts

This best practice was identified by WP6 research based on their fieldwork in the Horn of Africa and the Western Balkans. The employment of local staff both increases the likelihood that capacity-building programmes will align with the needs of the local community but is also a significant step towards local ownership. Local stakeholders both know their community's context and have existing networks, giving them the potential to be effective in their roles and strengthening ties between the project and the community. While local employment has already been implemented by some organisations, many of these positions are tokenistic or low-level; as a best practice, locals must be integrated into the organisation and project team as well as in leadership positions. Enabling bigger NGOs to subcontract grassroots organisations, small businesses, or other individuals is also perceived as an effective way to incorporate local needs in circumstances when donors such as the EU presume considerable capacities for project management and administration as a condition for funding. Such practice could also facilitate building administrative capacities of smaller NGOs.

- **Relevant DLs:** 6.3
- **Key sources:** *Various international donors including the EU; host countries (including local NGOs)(Kosovo).*

Left: EU flags, square

Credit: EC Photo/Christian Lambiotte

5. Best practices during crisis management and post-conflict phases

Best practice 25: Capacity-building at the local and/or regional level

To ensure sustainability of the reforms in the medium and long term, peacebuilders should focus on establishing local initiatives which build capacity at the local and/or regional level. In the case of Bosnia, an example of sustainable project was the Peace Support Operations Training Centre – PSOTC – which was an international project consisting of 12 countries helping Bosnia to develop capacity for training its own personnel before being deployed to Peace Support Operations. In the past five years, it has become completely self-sustaining; it has turned into a Bosnian structure and now hosts international officers from several countries, particularly from the Western Balkans. The centre has been given NATO certification, there are two courses which are EU and UN certified, and at the end of 2016 it hosted a big international conference with 65 participating countries. As explained by an interviewee, this Centre is also “a sort of a proof of how this capacity-security community is created, because other countries were not only participating with the students, not only with the professors or officers, but also in terms of monetary participation and they were participating in the management board, which is an excellent example of a success.”

While certain problems (such as a tendency among countries to compete with each other) are evident in the implementation of local ownership efforts, some international actors have made additional efforts, such as regional dialogues to facilitate local ownership of programming, implementation and project evaluation. Linked to this: another way to share best practices was to organise study tours and visits within the Western Balkan region itself, rather than organising these in EU member states. It was argued that when this was done outside the region participants would sometimes be demoralised. By contrast, “it was important to show the participants the recent experience of situations in other countries around the Western Balkans. This promotes cooperation, but it also means that the participants can see where they are doing better. In short, these study trips ensure trust-building amongst professionals, engaging them in comparative analysis and benchmarking, especially within the region, which demonstrates to them their progress or lack thereof.”

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 6.1
- **Key sources:** *Host country local policy-makers (Western Balkans)*

Best practice 26: ‘Hard’ capacity-building

‘Hard’ capacity-building, in the sense of equipment and infrastructure that will endure, tends to be valued more highly by local recipients; these resources are also very visible signs of commitment and rebuilding. In the case of Kosovo, local NGO practice in the ethnically divided city of Mitrovica in Kosovo indicates that programmes addressing everyday issues, such as infrastructural problems (e.g. street lights), and offering concrete results and products to ordinary citizens can be identified as a successful model for fostering local ownership. According to an NGO representative, focusing on everyday issues and avoiding political topics helped his organisation establish contacts with citizens both in Northern Mitrovica (ethnic Serb majority) and Southern Mitrovica (ethnic Albanian majority). In fact, avoiding ‘high politics’ is regarded as the only feasible way to implement conflict transformation projects. In the case of Somalia, capacity-building initiatives by other ‘alternative’ donors have been highly visible and valued at the local level. For instance, Turkey has invested heavily in commercial and security infrastructure, including a major renovation of the Port of Mogadishu under the auspices of the Albayrak Group, as well as other projects such as road building. The UAE-based company DP World has been granted a 30-year concession to run and develop the Port of Berbera in Somaliland, reportedly on the basis of potential investment plans of USD 442 million, including plans to build a military base on a 25-year lease.



Left: Rescue operation

Credit: EC Photo/Laurent Chamuss

The UAE has also donated boats to the Somaliland coastguard and provided financial support to the Puntland Maritime Police Force (PMPF), with whom the EU does not officially work due to its controversial human rights record. However, the EU also should be aware of a potential lack of transparency surrounding such capacity-building initiatives; questions over how the benefits of such investments are shared point to further problems of popular legitimacy and ownership. When it comes to the security sector, the EU has been slow to realise the importance of such infrastructure and equipment projects, which in the past have always been delivered by the member states because of Treaty provisions regarding military expenditure. This has meant that the EU has not been able to benefit from the visibility and popularity these projects enjoy both at the elite and the local level. Yet the implementation of the new initiative on Capacity Building for Security and Development (CBSD) constitutes a key opportunity for the EU but is also a crucial test.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 6.1 and 6.3
- **Key sources:** *Host countries (local NGOs, policy-makers and officials), Kosovo, Somalia*

A. Osman, "Somaliland Approves Naval, Air Base Deal with UAE", VOA News, 12 February 2017.

M. Ozkan and S. Orakci, "Viewpoint: Turkey as a 'political' actor in Africa – an assessment of Turkish involvement in Somalia", *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 9(2)2015: 343–352.

Gulf News Shipping, "DP World wins concession to manage Red Sea port of Berbera", 5 September 2016.

Best practice 27: Long time frames and flexibility in local programming

Building in long time frames and flexibility in the programming is another best practice identified by WP6 researchers involving local ownership: donors who have funded and supported a thorough conflict analysis informed by local actors over a certain period of time also tend to have better informed programming for their security sector/CPP projects. For example, trust-building between the military and the central government on the one hand, and various communities and conflict parties on the other, is a central issue in Myanmar. Focusing activities on building the capacity to develop relationships with and between local actors also helps to foster trust in the long run, which can be very important once a CPP-related deployment ends. These relationships stand a higher chance of having an impact if they are adaptive to changes in the context. Long inception phases of projects (six months and beyond) can help to map entry points into a crisis or conflict, identify key actors who need to be involved, and allow for affinities to develop in terms of shared interests and responsibilities.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 6.3
- **Key sources:** *Host countries*

Best practice 28: Participatory methods for capacity building

A final best practice identified by WP6 involving capacity building for peacebuilding initiatives should include a participatory methodology and encourage critical thinking. Capacity building has a better chance of successful, sustainable peacebuilding if it is demand-led, locally driven and based on a participatory process involving a relevant diversity of local, regional and, if necessary, national stakeholders in a given context or area. In fact, the implementation process of capacity-building projects can often achieve more in terms of longer-term trust building than in terms of their shorter-term end goal (e.g. building organisational capacity, fundraising skills, mediation skills, etc.). Contributors to the research of WP6 also highlighted their finding that the capacity to think critically and to facilitate wider involvement among stakeholders tends to enable local members of civil society groups, communities, and authorities to design and/or engage in more participatory, and therefore hopefully less conflictual, processes.

- **Relevant DLs:** DL 6.3
- **Key sources:** *Host countries*

6. Conclusion

The stubborn persistence of numerous internal and regional conflicts since the end of the Cold War means that the EU is likely to remain in the business of conflict prevention and peacebuilding for the foreseeable future. This involvement is not just a reflection of the EU's self-stated ethical goals regarding peaceful dispute resolution, human rights, the rule of law, and so on; it also stems from the fact that some contemporary conflicts can have a major impact on European security, whether directly or indirectly.

This has been apparent with the violent collapse of Yugoslavia in the 1990s and, more recently, with the instability generated on the EU's southern flank following the Arab Spring revolutions. Russia's actions on the EU's eastern flank involving Georgia and Ukraine, in particular, also indicate the potential for external conflicts to spill over into the EU's own sphere of influence, and there is no indication that this kind of instability will evaporate on its own soon.

Further afield, the EU has important interests around the shipping lanes off the Horn of Africa, and this region, along with the Balkans, has become an important testing ground for many of the EU's most innovative and complex efforts regarding conflict prevention, resolution, and peacebuilding.

Yet the EU is not alone in attempting to cope with these various conflicts as an international security actor; it almost always works with other partners, whether states or international organisations or other aid donors, once it decides to intervene in a host country to help prevent or resolve a conflict.

As EU-CIVCAP research has shown, mechanisms for coordination, resource-sharing, and local capacity-building among various actors involved in these situations can help, but there is always room for improvement within and among these states, international organisations, and other aid providers. Toward this end, the EU and other actors have devised the learning processes and best practices summarised in this report and in other EU-CIVCAP deliverables.

The central goal here is to create a common body of knowledge-based practices that could help improve the effectiveness and efficiency of these efforts, while possibly reducing some of the political disputes that result from disagreements, even among those acting in good faith, about the right or best way to achieve an agreed outcome.

Our approach to best practices has closely followed the conflict cycle framework outlined in the EU-CIVCAP project, involving conflict prevention/early warning, crisis response, conflict management/mitigation, and conflict resolution/peacebuilding. We have shown that, in all these phases, the EU and its main partners have begun to develop a common body of knowledge-based best practices that could help guide future responses to these types of conflicts.

As noted above, some of these have already been identified as best practices by the actors responsible for developing them, while others have been suggested as best practices by EU-CIVCAP researchers drawing on their fieldwork. In addition, it should be clear that this report represents a floor, not a ceiling, in terms of summarising the findings of this three-year project.

As our various outputs are disseminated among other researchers and practitioners we hope that a new dialogue about knowledge-driven conflict prevention/peacebuilding can continue to generate new lessons. Potential best practices can help reduce uncertainty and increase the prospects for success in what is inherently a very risky and often costly endeavour for everyone involved.

Despite this promise, we must also sound a few words of caution about the role of learning and best practices in this realm, or in foreign/security policy cooperation more generally. One is that lessons and best practices do not enforce themselves; it takes some degree of political will and top-down guidance to ensure that actors in host countries, in Brussels, and elsewhere actually follow the advice summarised in this document and others.

In other words, dissemination is not enough; the EU also must turn lessons and best practices into formal rules and procedures whenever feasible. It must also find ways to monitor and enforce these rules and move from weak or ad hoc 'coordination' towards some form of management or even governance of conflict prevention/peace-building as a distinct EU policy domain.

If the EU is really serious about learning and best practices, it should create a formal authority for knowledge/learning in the management structure of the EEAS (and possibly the Commission), as well as appoint knowledge/learning officers in all operational units that deal with external action and in all external missions, including EU Delegations.

Right: EU member states flags
Credit: EC Photo/Georges Boulougouris

These problems of managing, monitoring, and compliance in turn expose a more general challenge regarding a knowledge-based approach to EU foreign/security policy cooperation: the continued presence of structural or institutional barriers that might undermine performance in this realm. One of these involves a major cross-cutting issue already noted: the civilian-military gap in planning and conducting various types of conflict prevention/peacebuilding tasks. As long as the EU uses distinct chains of command for these two sets of capabilities, its integrated approach will not reach its full potential in situations that require a combination of these instruments.

A second and related problem is the persistent divide between the development/humanitarian aid agenda (dominated by the Commission) and the

security agenda (dominated by the EEAS). As most conflict-related interventions take place in developing countries, it would seem that the EU's development and humanitarian aid policies could be leveraged more for the purposes of security and stability. Yet, as long as development and security are controlled by distinct EU institutions with their own bureaucratic cultures and procedures (such as planning, budgeting, and contracts), the EU will not be as proactive and responsive as it could be when facing a potential crisis/conflict situation.

Finally, at the most general level, these problems are compounded by the larger and persistent divide between EU institutions/actors in Brussels and the inputs of various EU member states (i.e., intergovernmentalism). This problem affects not just decision-making and resourcing but also the creation

and dissemination of policy-relevant knowledge throughout the EU when certain conflict prevention/peace-building activities are deployed on a case-by-case, short-term basis, with a high degree of staff turnover and widely varying involvement by different EU member states. As lessons and best practices alone will not be able to overcome these structural impediments to EU foreign and security policy in all its forms, the EU will still need to consider more extensive institutional reforms if it really hopes to make its integrated approach a reality, live up to the ambitious claims outlined in the EU Global Strategy and other policy statements,¹¹ and effectively address the many security-related problems it currently faces.



7. Endnotes

- 1 For a discussion of the concepts of resource and capability, see Juncos, A.E. and G. Algar-Faria (2017) EU “Capabilities for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: A Capabilities-Based Assessment”, EU-CIVCAP DL 6.1, Bristol, available at https://eucivcap.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/eu-civcap_deliverable_6-1.pdf.
- 2 ‘Military capabilities’ could be defined as those falling under a direct military chain of command. ‘Civilian capabilities’ for CPP could make use of military resources (such as personnel) and/or deploy lightly armed police/gendarmerie forces with executive authority.
- 3 The term ‘host country’ rather than (for example) ‘target’ or ‘conflict zone’ assumes that the EU will act in the realm of CPP only if invited by the parties; it does not intend to be an intervention or invasion force.
- 4 European Parliament (2012), “CSDP Missions and Operations: Lessons Learned Processes. Report of the Directorate-General for External Policies”. EXPO/B/SEDE/FWC/2009-01/Lot6/16 (April); Smith, M.E. (2017) Europe’s Common Security and Defence Policy: Capacity building, Experiential Learning, and Institutional Change. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 5 See Smith, M.E. (2017) “Institutional Learning and Lessons Identified in EU Civilian Conflict Prevention: A Framework for Analysis”, EU-CIVCAP, DL 7.4, available at https://eucivcap.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/eu-civcap_deliverable_7-4.pdf.
- 6 See UN and EU (2003), “Joint Declaration on EU-UN Cooperation in Crisis Management”, 12510/03 (Presse 266), 24 September; Council of the EU (2008), “Progress Report on Recommendations for the Implementation of the Joint Statement on UN-EU Cooperation in Crisis Management”, 15 December.
- 7 The so-called ‘Berlin Plus’ agreement, or the EU-NATO ‘Agreed Framework.’ For a detailed discussion, see Smith, S. (2013). The European Union and NATO Beyond Berlin Plus: The Institutionalisation of Informal Cooperation. PhD Thesis: Loughborough University.
- 8 Haas, E.B. (1990). When Knowledge Is Power: Three Models of Change in International Organizations. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- 9 A **Lesson Learnt** refers to a ‘lesson that has been fully staffed and the associated improvement and implementation action(s) identified and taken.’ A lesson can only be declared ‘learnt’ once the full remedial action has been successfully implemented. EU terminology also distinguishes between **Lesson Observation (LO)** and **Lesson Identified (LI)**. LO refers to ‘any occurrence(s) or finding(s) that could have an impact on EU operational output and has the potential to become a Lesson Learnt. It might require an improvement or it can constitute a Best Practice. A LI is ‘a statement (based on a verified Lesson Observation) defining the detailed nature of the problem for which remedial action has to be developed – it is the outcome of the analysis phase.’ See EEAS (2015), “EU Military Lessons Learnt at the Political Strategic Level Concept”, 10692/15, 8 July.
- 10 For example, see UN Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit (2004), “Operation Artemis: The Lessons of the Interim Emergency Multinational Force”. New York: UN.
- 11 For example, the EU Global Strategy calls for a ‘multi-dimensional, multi-phased, multi-level, and multi-lateral approach’ towards conflicts and crises, the need for which is a direct result of not just problems on the ground in host countries but also of the fragmented and decentralised nature of this policy domain within the EU itself.

SUMMARY

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Abstract	This document summarises a list of prospective best practices in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding that have been identified in various EU-CIVCAP research outputs.

Our Partners

All participants have demonstrated excellence in the field and have participated in many other projects at national, European and international levels.



For further information see
eu-civcap.net



The goals of preventing the outbreak of conflict and promoting sustainable peace remain a fundamental challenge to policymakers and analysts alike. The European Union (EU) and its member states require an adequate set of capabilities if they are to address this challenge in a timely and effective manner.

EU-CIVCAP provides a comprehensive, comparative and multidisciplinary analysis of EU civilian capabilities for external conflict prevention and peacebuilding in order to identify 'the best civilian means to enhance these capabilities' and address existing shortfalls.

EU-CIVCAP is led out of the University of Bristol's Global Insecurities Centre (GIC), which is housed within the School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies. The University of Bristol leads a consortium of twelve institutions across eight different countries in Europe.

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