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# A Bridge over Troubled Water? The Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) and the Security-Development Nexus in EU External Policy

*Julian Bergmann*

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Bonn, February 2018

Julian Bergmann

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## Abbreviations

AAP	Annual Action Plan
ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
AFET	Committee on Foreign Affairs, European Parliament
ALDE	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
APF	African Peace Facility
BMZ	German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CBSD	Capacity Building in Support of Security and Development
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy (EU)
COBERM	Confidence Building Early Response Mechanism
CSDN	Civil Society Dialogue Network
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy (EU)
CSO	civil society organisation
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument (EU)
DDR	disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration
DEVE	Committee on Development (European Parliament)
DG DEVCO	Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development (EU)
DG REFLEX	Directorate General for External Relations (EU)
DIE	German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik
EAM	Early Assistance Measures
EDF	European Development Fund
EEAS	European External Action Service
EFI	external financial instrument
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EU)
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument (EU)
EP	European Parliament
EPF	European Peace Facility
EPLO	European Peacebuilding Liaison Office
EPP	European People's Party
ERMES	European Resources for Mediation Support
ESS	European Security Strategy
EU	European Union
EUMM	European Union Monitoring Mission
EUTF	European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa
EUTM	European Union Training Mission
FAC	Foreign Affairs Council
FPI	Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (EU)
GID	Geneva International Discussions on Georgia's Territorial Conflicts
GUE/NGL	European United Left/Nordic Green Left (European Parliamentary Group)
HQ	headquarters



HR/VP	High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission
IcSP	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace
IfS	Instrument for Stability
IO	international organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (EU)
IRP	Interim Response Programme
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MFF	Multiannual Financial Framework
MIP	Multi-annual Indicative Programme
NGO	non-governmental organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PCD	Policy Coherence for Development
PSC	Political and Security Committee (EU)
RRM	Rapid Response Mechanism
S&D	Socialists & Democrats (European Parliament)
SATCEN	European Union Satellite Centre
SBT	Standby Team of Mediation Experts (UN)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMM	Special Monitoring Mission (OSCE)
SSR	security sector reform
TEU	Treaty on European Union
TFEU	Treaty on Functioning of the European Union
UAV	unmanned aerial vehicle
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN DPA	United Nations Department of Political Affairs

## Executive summary

The enduring civil war in Syria, the crisis in Mali, the armed conflict in Ukraine's Donbass region as well as numerous fragile situations worldwide demonstrate that the European Union (EU) is currently confronted with serious and complex security challenges. To provide an adequate response to these challenges, the EU seeks to implement a "joined-up" approach to its external action and strengthen its capacities at the interface of security and development policies. While there is a clear recognition within the EU of the various links between these two policy fields, there are different understandings of this interface. While some emphasise the *mutual interdependence* of security and development, others point to security as a *precondition* for development and thus prioritise security over development policy.

This paper analyses the EU's approach to the security-development nexus, focusing on the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP). The IcSP is the EU's main thematic instrument with which to fund assistance in the fields of crisis response, conflict prevention and peacebuilding. It establishes a bridge between EU security and development policy in three ways. First, it is a legislative bridge-builder in the sense that the IcSP Regulation translates the obligation for EU institutions to promote external policy coherence into secondary law. Second, it bridges the institutional divide between the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) in the external policy realm as both are involved in the decision-making and implementation procedures of IcSP-funded interventions. Third, the wide range of activities demonstrates that the IcSP incorporates both the short-term and long-term dimension of the EU's approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding as defined by the 2001 EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts.

In terms of impact, the analysis reveals that IcSP interventions make a valuable contribution to EU efforts to stabilise conflict and crisis situations and prevent the escalation of violence. IcSP actions also contribute significantly to boosting partners' capacities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding, both on a short-term and long-term basis. Having said that, the impact of IcSP interventions depends on a range of external factors such as the strength of the implementing organisation, the political will and assertiveness of political partners, and the degree of alignment with country-owned processes of institutional and political reform.

The IcSP makes a difference to EU external action as it provides the European Union with a significant first-response capacity that has the potential to pave the way for longer-term EU engagement. However, there are challenges to swift decision-making and implementation as well as to the coordination with other external financial instruments (EFIs). These challenges need to be overcome to maximise the IcSP's internal and external impact. Moreover, there is a need to link IcSP interventions more strongly to an overarching EU strategy for its engagement in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Given the development of profound expertise on crisis response and conflict prevention within the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), the EU should further invest in that expertise by increasing the staff within the unit FPI.2 (IcSP) and further strengthen the coordination with relevant divisions within the EEAS and the Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO).

Within the context of Capacity Building in Support of Security and Development (CBSD), EU institutions and Member States have controversially discussed a reform of the IcSP to allow for its use to fund the capacity-building of military actors. The EU institutions finally amended the Regulation on the IcSP in December 2017, adding an additional CBSD component of €100 million to the IcSP's budget. The heated debate about CBSD and the IcSP reform have revealed deep-seated, diverging views on the relationship between EU security and development policy both within and among EU institutions and Member States and within the wider (development) policy community. It has demonstrated that there is a tendency to use the notion of the security-development nexus to link security policy activities with development cooperation instruments without clearly defining the links between security-relevant measures and development objectives. As there are legitimate concerns about a creeping securitisation of EU development policy, the Commission and the EEAS should seek greater transparency on the planned activities to be funded under the CBSD umbrella.

The security-development nexus needs to be filled with further substance to avoid it becoming a buzzword that is used to instrumentalise development policy for security purposes. Clarifying the conceptual relationship and boundaries of EU security and development instruments is a key issue that the EU needs to address in implementing its "Integrated Approach" to conflicts and crises as spelt out in the EU Global Strategy.

The future of the IcSP is likely to be under debate during the negotiations on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021-2027. Proposals for a European Peace Facility (EPF) and a single external instrument could imply that there is some appetite for integrating the IcSP into a larger financial instrument. However, as the IcSP has proven its added value to EU external action and the importance of its contribution to EU efforts in the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, it should certainly be maintained in the next MFF period.

## 1 Introduction

An unprecedented deterioration of the security situation in the Sahel region along with violent conflicts in Europe's Southern and Eastern neighbourhood and beyond pose serious challenges to the European Union's foreign and security policy. The enduring civil war in Syria, the crisis in Mali, the armed conflict in Ukraine's Donbass region as well as numerous fragile situations worldwide demonstrate that the European Union is dealing with a complex set of security threats. Transnational terrorism, organised crime and unprecedented waves of irregular migration add to the complexity of the challenges that the EU is confronted with.

To respond to these challenges, the EU is seeking "to become more joined-up across [its] external policies, between Member States and EU institutions" (EU [European Union], 2016a, p. 11). To live up to this ambition, the EU has initiated a number of policy initiatives to increase its capacities in the field of security and defence and strengthen the link between security and development policies. In December 2017, the EU legislative organs (Council, European Parliament (EP)) voted for a reform of the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) that allows for its use to provide equipment and infrastructure to military actors in partner countries under the umbrella of Capacity Building in Support of Security and Development (CBSD). The financial resources for CBSD activities in countries such as Somalia and Mali will be generated through re-deployment of funds within the EU's budget.

The CBSD initiative is a prominent – and hotly debated – recent example of the EU's strive "to bridge gaps in [its] response between an end of violence and long-term recovery, and develop the dual – security and development – nature of [its] engagement" (EU, 2016a, p. 30). At the same time, the CBSD dossier is also an example of the tensions that are inherent to the EU's efforts to address challenges at the interface of security and development. In fact, the EU's approach to the so-called "security-development nexus" has long been characterised by diverging interpretations of the relationship between these two policy fields, also reflected by a fragmentation of institutional competencies at the security-development interface (Furness & Gänzle, 2017; Merket, 2016; Smith, 2013).

This paper analyses the EU's institutional and policy approach to the security-development nexus, focusing particularly on the IcSP. The latter has been specifically designed to establish the link between EU security and development policies and is the EU's main thematic instrument to fund assistance in the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Given the IcSP's importance to EU external action at the interface of security and development policy, this paper provides an in-depth analysis of the IcSP's impact along three dimensions.

First, it investigates to what extent IcSP interventions have contributed to conflict prevention and stabilisation in conflict and crisis situations. Second, it analyses the impact of IcSP actions on building partners' capacities for preventing and managing conflicts. Third, it investigates to what extent the IcSP makes a difference to the EU's capacities for external action. The role of the IcSP in conflict prevention and peacebuilding is also discussed in light of the recent Capacity Building in Support of Security and Development (CBSD) initiative.

The empirical analysis builds on a triangulation of primary sources such as documents produced by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council; reviews of the different components of the IfS and the mid-term review of the IcSP; and original data generated through 19 interviews with EU officials, EU Member State representatives, members and staff of the European Parliament, and civil society experts. Moreover, policy papers produced by think tanks and NGOs (non-governmental organisation) as well as scholarly literature on the topic complement the empirical database of this study.

The paper starts by placing the EU's approach to the security-development nexus in a broader context, before demonstrating its manifestation in EU external policy discourse. Moreover, the paper discusses in what ways the EU has overcome its institutional fragmentation in managing the security-development interface. After this, the paper introduces the reader to the IcSP and presents an overview of its scope of activities. The main part of the paper presents the empirical findings on the IcSP's impact before the following section discusses how the debate on CBSD and the IcSP reform has reflected, or even increased, the EU's internal tensions on the security-development nexus. Finally, the concluding section sketches out potential policy implications and provides an outlook on the possible future of the IcSP.

## **2 The security-development nexus and the European Union**

### **2.1 The security-development nexus in policy practice and research**

Over the last two decades, security and development have become increasingly interlinked in both academic and policy discourse. The recognition of these links has been captured by the notion of the “security-development nexus”. The latter describes the recognition that security and development mutually influence each other. Interpretations of the strength of these various linkages vary to a certain extent, however. While some emphasise the importance of security as a precondition of development, others point to development as a necessity to ensure long-term security.<sup>1</sup>

The emergence of the debate about the security-development nexus dates back to the end of the Cold War and the 1990s.<sup>2</sup> At that time, failed international interventions into civil wars such as Bosnia and Somalia and the rise of instability and state fragility accompanied by increasing socio-economic deterioration challenged the traditional understandings of (military) security and development (Merket, 2016, pp. 4-7). The concepts of human development and human security that emerged in the 1990s re-shifted the focus to the individual development/security needs of individuals and thus intensified the discussions about how security and development are interlinked. Related to this trend, the 1990s also witnessed the beginning of a debate on the role of humanitarian aid in preventing – or

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1 For an excellent overview of various different interpretations and readings of the security-development nexus, see Brown and Grävingholt (2016b).

2 However, Merket (2016, pp. 2-3) traces the roots of the security-development link back to the post-World War II period, while Hettne (2010, pp. 35-41) even finds first rhetoric and practice-related links between development and security in the 18th century.

possibly prolonging – violent conflict, which reinforced the discussion on the links between development and security. As Sörensen and Söderbaum (2012, pp. 12-13) observe,

the new articulation of the ‘development-security nexus’ served to legitimise the more radical interventionist agenda. If development was a security issue and security was to be understood in terms of ‘human security’, then ‘failed’ or ‘fragile’ or even rogue states constituted a global security concern that legitimised intervention on purely humanitarian grounds.

As a consequence of this discourse, there has been a growing awareness that development policy and security policy have several connection points that have to be taken into account in policymaking and implementation:

Security issues have appeared on the development policy radar and security policy has been integrated into a broader range of concerns for developing and transition countries, so that there are an increasing number of situations where development and security meet in practice. (Gänzle, 2009, p. 22)

At the same time, there are also critics of the discourse on the security-development nexus who argue that “under the umbrella of the security-development nexus, risky and misguided concepts are currently promoted” (Brantner, 2017, p. 32). There seems to be a tendency in policy discourse – and the EU is no exception in this regard (see subsection 5.3) – to argue that everything that promotes security also serves the objective of development. As Sörensen and Söderbaum (2012, p. 12) put it: “[S]ecurity is everywhere. Development is security, a security strategy, or so we have [been] accustomed to believe”.

In academic research, the conceptualisation of the interlinkages between security and development as a *security-development nexus* has gained significant attention (Brown & Grävingholt, 2016a; Hettne, 2010; Klingebiel, 2006). Apart from a great many studies that analyse the effects of aid on security and vice versa, there are also some authors that critically deconstruct the security-development nexus and point to its political implications. Chandler (2007), for example, argues that the discussion about the security-development nexus resulted in a retreat from strategic thinking, ultimately leading to ad hoc and arbitrary policymaking. Tschirgi discusses the challenges in addressing the security-development nexus and argues that there is a “growing dissatisfaction with the policy mantra for integrated security and development strategies for conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict peacebuilding” (Tschirgi, 2006, p. 62). McNeish and Lie (2010, p. 2) critically raise the question of whether the discursive proliferation of the security-development nexus serves as a “Trojan horse to legitimize military intervention”. In an attempt to unpack the ontological foundations of the nexus concept, Stern and Öjendal (2010) demonstrate the multiple understandings of the nexus, depending on the combination of different understandings and narratives of security and development.

Finally, there seems to be a recent tendency in academic research to move beyond the security-development nexus and investigate the emerging concept of *resilience* which has somewhat replaced the discourse on the security-development nexus (Reid, 2012). While there are many different understandings of resilience, in a social-science context it is often understood as “the internal capacity of societies to cope with crises, with the emphasis on the development of self-organisation and internal capacities and capabilities rather than the external provision of aid, resources or policy solutions” (Chandler, 2015, p. 13).

Hence, the concept of resilience implies a much more pragmatic approach to international intervention, acknowledging that external coercion and conditionality may not be able to resolve complex domestic problems (Juncos, 2017, pp. 4-5). Consequently, arguments for sustainable development are increasingly connected to resilience rather than security, although “security itself is increasingly advocated in terms of “resilience”, whereas security in terms of protection and stability is rejected as illusory” (Sörensen & Söderbaum, 2012, p. 12).

The prominence of the notion of the *security-development nexus* in policy discourse and the recent shift towards the concept of *resilience* can also be observed in the European Union’s approach towards the interface of security and development policy. The next subsection analyses the EU’s discourse on the security-development nexus, also taking into account the insights of academic research on this issue.

## 2.2 The security-development nexus in the EU’s policy discourse

The EU’s policy discourse clearly recognises the links between security and development. While policy documents associated with EU development policy emphasise the mutual interdependence of security and development, the EU’s main foreign policy strategies – the European Security Strategy (2003) and the EU Global Strategy (2016) – understand security primarily as a precondition of development and thus prioritise security over development policy. While the EU’s discourse on conflict prevention and peacebuilding thus increasingly blurs the lines between policy fields that have been traditionally perceived as distinct, it also increases the demand for effective policy coherence.

The EU’s recognition of the interlinkages between security and development is closely related to its emerging profile as an actor in conflict prevention and peacebuilding since the late 1990s and early 2000s (Stewart, 2008, 2011). The EU’s approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding rests upon a distinction between short-term and long-term prevention that was first articulated in the Commission’s Communication on Conflict Prevention in April 2001: the Communication emphasised that “development policy and other co-operation programmes provide, without doubt, the most powerful instruments at the Community’s disposal for treating the root causes of conflict” (European Commission, 2001, pp. 6, 9).

The EU’s approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding originated within the field of development policy and was primarily shaped and pushed forward by the European Commission. The European Council in Gothenburg in July 2001 followed up on the Commission’s initiative and adopted the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts. The so-called Gothenburg Programme established conflict prevention “as one of the main objectives of the EU’s external relations” (Council of the European Union, 2001, p. 1). Affirming the two-dimensional conceptualisation of conflict prevention as including both short-term and long-term measures, it laid the foundation for placing the EU’s approach to conflict prevention at the interface of its security and development policy. This cross-policy nature of EU conflict prevention has been formative for the EU’s efforts to prevent (violent) conflicts ever since (Duke & Courtier, 2010, p. 32).

Although the EU’s policy discourse clearly reflects the understanding that security and development policy have to go together to prevent conflicts and build peace, there are

significant variations in the interpretation of the relationship between security and development. EU policy documents associated with development policy recognise the interdependence and reciprocity of development and security. The “European Consensus on Development” – the main policy framework for European development cooperation adopted in 2005 – noted that security and development are “complementary aspects of EU relations with third countries” (EU, 2006a, p. 23). Subsequent policy documents such as the “EU Report on Policy Coherence for Development” (PCD) (2007) and the “Agenda for Change” (2011) reiterated the close interdependence between security and development: “There cannot be sustainable development without peace and security, and development cooperation makes an essential contribution to promoting peace and stability by addressing root causes of insecurity and violent conflicts” (Council of the European Union, 2007, p. 1).

The renewed European Consensus on Development adopted in June 2017 follows the established understanding of security and development being intertwined, but remains rather vague when stating that “the EU and its Member States will promote shared solutions to security and development challenges” (EU, 2017, cl. 66).

In contrast, the EU’s main foreign policy strategies – the European Security Strategy (ESS) (2003) and the EU Global Strategy (2016) – interpret the security-development nexus primarily in terms of security being a *precondition* for development. While the ESS clearly establishes the mono-causal link between security and development, the EU Global Strategy refers to the primacy of security over development in a more implicit way. More specifically, it states that “development policy will become more flexible and aligned with our strategic priorities” (EU, 2016a, p. 48). Moreover, on the key concept of resilience it notes “a resilient state is a secure state, and security is key for prosperity and democracy” (EU, 2016a, p. 24), thus reiterating the mono-causality of the security-development relationship to a certain extent.

In terms of substance, the EU has avoided clearly defining in what ways its development and security-related activities relate to and reinforce each other and what implications this may have for EU external policymaking. As Merket puts it: “[T]he EU proved significantly better in conceptualisation than operationalisation” (Merket, 2016, pp. 99-100). The academic literature suggests that there is only a limited degree of securitisation of development policy at the discursive level. Rather, the EU’s policy discourse on the security-development nexus focuses primarily on the need for increasing the coherence between security and development, but also recognises that the two policies fields are distinct and operate under different logics (Furness & Gänzle, 2016, pp. 141-146; Keukeleire & Raube, 2013, p. 4; Merket, 2012, pp. 634-636).

The increasing interwovenness of EU security and development policies may push the EU towards spelling out “a precise vision for the balance and direction of causality between the two policies” (Carbone, 2015, p. 904). This is even more important given that development policy has come under increasing pressure to become more closely aligned with other EU external policies, such as security policy and external migration policy. The EU Global Strategy’s call for more flexibility in EU development policy thus raises concerns that development policy may become subordinated to the EU’s strategic priorities in the field of security and international migration (EU, 2016a, p. 48).



Underlying the various different understandings of the relationship between security and development is the institutional dimension of the security-development nexus. The next subsection focuses on the “politics” of the security-development nexus in the EU context and illustrates how institutional fragmentation has influenced the EU’s approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

### 2.3 The EU’s institutional approach to the security-development nexus

The academic literature has long recognised that coherence problems and fragmented institutional management have been key characteristics of the interface between EU development and security policies (Furness & Gänzle, 2017; Merket, 2016, pp. 143-225). In the pre-Lisbon Treaty period, there was a significant overlap between the first and second pillar of the EU with regard to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Consequently, the EU’s institutional management of activities crossing the boundaries of security and development policy was characterised by fragmentation and overlap of competences, particularly between DG External Relations (DG RELEX), DG Development, EuropeAid, the Council and the Council Secretariat (Duke & Courtier, 2010, pp. 37-48). While the Council has held the primary responsibility for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), EU development policy has been a shared competence between the Commission and the Member States.

In the pre-Lisbon period, there was a significant fragmentation of competences within the Commission between DG Development and DG RELEX. While DG Development’s competences remained restricted to development cooperation with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP), development programming for all other regions was undertaken by DG RELEX. Moreover, under the Barroso I commission, the EuropeAid cooperation office was entirely under the competence of the Commissioner for External Relations, leading to the criticism that DG Development had turned into an “empty shell” (van Reisen, 2007, p. 52, cited in Merket, 2016, p. 145). As Merket (2016, p. 144) writes, DG RELEX’ “more political mandate, compared to the aid sheltering role of DG Development, regularly caused tensions over the management of the security-development nexus”.

With the Lisbon Treaty’s abolishment of the pillar structure and the creation of a number new institutions and bodies, the expectation was that the institutional tensions at the interface of security and development policy would ease and EU external action in this sphere become more coherent and effective. However, scholars agree that the reforms introduced by the Lisbon Treaty with regard to EU external relations have not been sufficient to overcome the institutional fragmentation and shortcomings concerning the EU’s security-development interface. In particular, this claim is made with regard to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR) and the creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS) (Furness & Gänzle, 2017, p. 488; Merket, 2016, pp. 155-200; Smith, 2013, p. 1312).

The Lisbon Treaty merged the offices of the CFSP High Representative with the Commissioner for External Relations into the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission (HR/VP). While her competences in the field of CFSP are clearly defined – right of initiative, executive mandate,

ensuring compliance with CFSP principles, representation, consultation of the European Parliament on CFSP matters – the contrary applies to other areas of EU external action. Beyond the task of chairing the FAC, her responsibility within the Commission for coordinating the Union's external action (according to Article 18(4) TFEU) raises many questions regarding her competences and accountability (Merket, 2016, pp. 157-160).

Although the HR/VP's dual-hatted nature was intended to overcome the divide between CFSP and other fields of EU external policy fields, it did not actually resolve the dualism in managing the security-development nexus. While the CFSP remains intergovernmentally organised, the HR/VP faces the prerogatives of the European Commission in the area of integrated aspects of EU external policy (Helwig, 2013, p. 235). Depending on the hat the HR/VP is wearing she is bound by different rules and principles and accountable to different principals. In other words, the dual mandate of the HR/VP did not overcome the duality of EU external action that had been in existence before the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty (Merket, 2016).

Nevertheless, the upgraded position of the HR in the Commission as its Vice-President leading the team "A Stronger Global Actor" – composed of the HR and the Commissioners for Development, Neighbourhood and Enlargement, Humanitarian Aid, and Trade – enables a more unified leadership of the security-development nexus as the Commissioner for Development has been tasked with "contribut[ing] to the work of the HR" (European Commission, 2014, p. 3). However, as the HR has no means to enforce her leadership, the precondition for effective coordination between her and the Commissioner at the interface of EU security and development policy are good working relations and mutual trust (Merket, 2016, p. 165).

Similarly, the creation of the EEAS did not end the institutional fragmentation at the security-development interface. Rather, the institutional divide between CFSP/CSDP and development policy, at least partially, persists. As Smith (2013, p. 1308) argues, establishing the EEAS "institutionalized, rather than eliminated, a division between the EU's development co-operation agenda (dominated by civilian instruments and the Commission) and the security policy agenda (dominated by the EEAS/EU Member States with recourse to military/ policing instruments)".

The EEAS was specifically designed as an institution to bridge the divide between CFSP and other EU external policies and drew its personnel from three different institutions: the Commission, the Council Secretariat, and the Member States (Council of the European Union, 2010, Annex). The "Council Decision on establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service" of July 2010 assigns the EEAS both a role in development programming and the preparation and conduct of CFSP/CSDP activities (Council of the European Union, 2010). Interestingly, development policy is the only area where the Council Decision accords the EEAS a clear policymaking responsibility and clarifies the division of labour with the Commission. In contrast, the EEAS' mandate in CFSP/CSDP as spelled out in the Council Decision is limited to supporting and assisting the HR – whereas in reality, the EEAS is involved in all phases of policymaking in foreign, security and defence policy (Merket, 2016, pp. 181-190).

However, its role in coordinating the EU's activities at the interface of security and development policy is hampered by a vague mandate for promoting coherence in EU

external action and a persisting fragmentation of competencies between the EEAS and the Commission (particularly, DG DEVCO and FPI). Consequently, this set-up “submits the EEAS’ effectiveness to the mercy of cooperation by EU institutions and Member States, which have attached strong safeguards to the coherence mandate of the EEAS” (Merket, 2016, p. 191).

In sum, although the creation of the EEAS helped to reduce the compartmentalisation of development and CFSP responsibilities by bringing them together in one institution, the systematic incoherencies between the EEAS and DG DEVCO have only been partly resolved as the two institutions follow different priorities in their policymaking and implementation practices. DG DEVCO has primarily focused on development priorities, while the EEAS has sought to adopt a more political approach towards partner countries in the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding which has not always resonated with the Commission (Furness & Gänzle, 2017, p. 488).

Hence, the compartmentalisation of the EU’s approach to the security-development nexus persists. It is also inherent to the design of the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), the EU’s “flagship instrument” to address the security-development nexus (Gänzle, 2012, p. 117).

### **3 The Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)**

#### **3.1 The IcSP as a bridge-builder between EU development and security policy**

The IcSP is a thematic instrument under Heading IV of the EU’s Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2014-2020 that funds activities in the areas of crisis response, conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and response to global and transregional (emerging) threats (see Box 1). These three areas of activity reflect Articles 3 to 5 of the IcSP Regulation adopted in 2014. The legal basis of the IcSP are Articles 209 (development cooperation) and 212 (economic, financial and technical cooperation) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

As the EU’s main thematic instrument to address the security-development nexus, the IcSP is, by design, a bridge-builder in legal and institutional terms as well as with regard to its scope of activities. First, it is a jurisdictional bridge-builder between the development and security policy realms. The Regulation establishing its predecessor, the Instrument for Stability, translated for the first time in EU external relations the obligation for EU institutions to ensure external policy coherence from primary law (EU Treaty) into secondary law (Furness & Gänzle, 2016, p. 149; Gänzle, 2012, p. 125). Similarly, the IcSP Regulation states that measures funded by the IcSP should be complementary and consistent with activities adopted under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) (EU, 2014, cl. 12).

Second, the IcSP bridges the institutional divide between the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) in the external policy realm as both are involved in the decision-making and implementation procedures of IcSP-funded interventions (see subsection 3.2 for the institutional management of the IcSP). Third, the IcSP incorporates both the short-term and long-term dimension of the EU’s approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding as defined by the Gothenburg programme. While actions under Article 3

pursue the objective of short-term crisis response, interventions under Articles 4 and 5 are longer-term interventions that aim to build the capacities of partners in conflict prevention and in addressing global and transregional threats.

<p><b>Box 1: The three components of the IcSP</b></p> <p><b>Article 3: Response to situations of crisis or emerging crisis to prevent conflicts</b>            Actions include mediation, dialogue, confidence-building; support to democratic institutions and rule of law; transitional justice; SSR (security sector reform) and DDR (disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration) activities; infrastructure rehabilitation and reconstruction; employment generation; demining; counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism; migration; support to implementation of UN Women, Peace and Security Agenda, etc.</p> <p><b>Article 4: Conflict prevention, peacebuilding and crisis preparedness</b>            Actions cover early warning, conflict analysis, capacity-building for mediation, dialogue, civilian stabilisation missions, etc.</p> <p><b>Article 5: Addressing global and transregional threats and emerging threats</b>            Actions address threats such as terrorism; cybercrime; effects of climate change; organised crime; and also include risk mitigation and preparedness (e.g. management of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risks; border management; dual use exports control, etc.).</p> <p>Source: Author, based on EU, 2014, Art. 3-5; Landell Mills et al., 2017, p. 5</p>
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As mentioned above, the IcSP is not a new instrument among the EU's wider toolbox of External Financial Instruments (EFIs). With the adoption of the Regulation 230/2014 on establishing the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) on 11 March 2014, the IcSP succeeded the Instrument for Stability (IfS) that had been created under the previous MFF for 2007-2013.<sup>3</sup> Compared to the IfS, the IcSP Regulation introduced three main changes. First, by including "peace" in the title of the instrument, the EU sought to signal its specific thematic focus on conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities and increase the instrument's political visibility.

Second, the overall financial envelope was increased by 11 per cent from €2 billion to €2.3 billion. While the share of funds earmarked for crisis-response activities slightly decreased from 73 to 70 per cent, the overall budget for these activities increased by more than €130 million. Moreover, the share of commitments for crisis preparedness activities (Article 4) was almost doubled from 5 to 9 per cent (see Table 1).

Third, the IcSP Regulation introduced a clause that subjects measures addressing terrorism and organised crime/cybercrime (Article 5) to human rights standards and international law, a main demand put forward by the Greens (GUE/NGL) in the European Parliament (EU, 2014, Art. 5.3(b); Interview 17).

In financial terms, the IcSP is a relatively small instrument. Its financial envelope for the current MFF (2014-2020) amounts to €2.3 billion. Compared to other External Financial Instruments (EFIs) within Heading IV, this is certainly a very limited sum of funds available. For example, the funds of the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) amount to €19 billion and €15 billion

3 For a detailed overview of the EU's crisis response instruments, including the Rapid Reaction Mechanism (RRM) and the Instrument for Stability, see Gänzle, 2009, pp. 59-84 and Merket, 2016, pp. 104-140.

respectively, which is eight to six times higher than the IcSP's budget. Compared to the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), another thematic instrument within Heading IV, however, the IcSP' budget almost doubles the amount of funds available to the EIDHR.

<b>Table 1: Comparing the financial envelopes of IfS and IcSP</b>		
	<b>IfS (2007-2013)</b>	<b>IcSP (2014-2020)</b>
<b>Crisis response component</b> (IfS and IcSP: Article 3)	€ 1,505,260,000 (73%)	€ 1,637,103,300 (70%)
<b>Crisis preparedness component</b> (IfS: Article 4.3; IcSP: Article 4)	103,100,000 (5%)	210,484,710 (9%)
<b>Addressing global and transregional, emerging threats</b> (IfS: Articles 4.1 and 4.2; IcSP: Article 5)	€ 453,640,000 (22%)	€ 491,130,990 (21%)
<b>Overall budget</b>	<b>€ 2,062,000,000</b>	<b>€ 2,338,719,000</b>
Source: Author, based on EU, 2006b, 2014		

### 3.2 Institutional management of the IcSP

The institutional responsibilities and decision-making procedures for IcSP interventions mirror the compartmentalisation of competencies that are typical for the EU's approach towards the security-development nexus (see subsection 2.3). Despite institutional fragmentation, however, findings suggest that close coordination has evolved, particularly between the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI) and the EEAS, which is crucial for the instrument's performance in the field of crisis response.

In general, IcSP actions come under different budget lines and are thus managed differently. Actions relating to Articles 3 and 4 are funded under the budget line 1902 (foreign policy) and are managed by the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), unit FPI.2. Article 5 measures are funded under budget line 2105 (international cooperation and development) and are thus managed by DG DEVCO (European Parliament, 2017a, pp. 3-4).

Crisis response activities (Article 3) can either run as Exceptional Assistance Measures (EAMs) with a duration of up to 18 months and a possible extension of up to 12 months without comitology procedure, or as Interim Response Programmes (IRPs). IRPs build on EAMs, require comitology procedure and serve to (re-)establish the conditions for the use of other development cooperation instruments (EU, 2014, Art. 7). The decision-making process for Article 3 measures is designed to allow for adoption of financing decisions within a period of 3 months. An important feature of the decision-making process is that EAMs do not have to go through comitology procedure and are only presented to the Political and Security Committee (PSC) for information. Only EAMs exceeding the €20 million threshold and IRPs trigger comitology. In addition, inter-service consultations are a relatively quick procedure for Article 3 actions because an inter-service agreement to use short deadlines for this kind of projects (usually a few days) exists (Interviews 1, 3; Landell Mills et al., 2017, Annex 6).

The decision-making/consultation process for the long-term components of the IcSP (Articles 4 and 5) follows the standard procedures for the programming of EU development policy (Interview 5).<sup>4</sup> The Thematic Strategy Paper for the period 2014-2020 lays out the specific objectives and strategic priorities for action under Articles 4 and 5. The Thematic Strategy Paper is accompanied by a Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP) (2014-2017) that summarises the priority areas for EU financing, clarifies the expected results, and specifies the performance indicators and time frames of EU assistance. Based on the Thematic Strategy Paper and the MIP, and in close consultation with relevant EEAS services, European Commission DGs and civil society actors, FPI then drafts the Annual Action Plans (AAP) for the crisis preparedness and peacebuilding component (Article 4). For Article 5, the Annual Action Plans (AAP) are drafted by DG DEVCO. The AAPs specify the individual projects within the different programmes and provide the basis for contracting (Landell Mills et al., 2017, Annex 6).

Interview partners working on IcSP activities under Article 3 and 4 both within relevant EEAS units and FPI mentioned the close coordination between the two institutions (Interviews 3, 4, 9). There are various coordination mechanisms in place to promote synergies within the institutional bodies responsible for the management and steering of IcSP activities at the HQ (headquarters) level, such as crisis platforms, inter-service consultations and joint assessment missions (Landell Mills et al., 2017, pp. 31-32; Particip & ECDPM [European Centre for Development Policy Management], 2016, p. 33). Pointing to the co-location of FPI and the EEAS in the Triangle building, one interviewee noted that

the fact that we sit together in one building should never be underestimated. We try to do joint missions as often as possible. We have weekly meetings on geographical clusters. And these joint activities could even be increased. The better we integrate the EEAS' and the Commission's work on conflict prevention and crisis response, the better it is. (Interview 4)

### 3.3 Taking stock of IcSP-funded activities

A closer look at the geographic and thematic distribution of IcSP activities and the main implementing partners shows that the IcSP is indeed an instrument of global and wide-ranging thematic scope. Analysing data based on the "IcSP Map" retrieved in June 2017 shows that there are 268 projects in 68 countries funded by the IcSP and currently running or having ended less than 12 months ago.<sup>5</sup>

In terms of geographical distribution, the analysis reveals that the greatest share of funds (33 and 31 per cent) is spent on the Middle East and North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. European countries and Central Asia have received 21 per cent of the funding, while countries in Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean were allocated 8 and 7 per cent of funds respectively (see Figure 1). Comparing IcSP projects in individual countries, one finds that the largest share of IcSP funds is allocated to projects connected with the Syrian civil

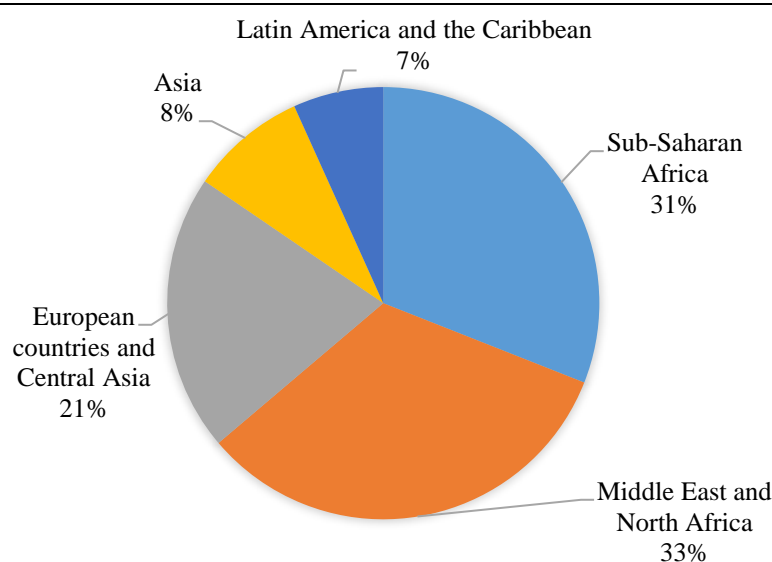
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4 For an overview of the EU programming procedures, see Furness, 2012, pp. 77-78.

5 Data on IcSP projects, financial envelopes and implementing partners was retrieved from the "IcSP Map" provided by the NGO "Peace Direct" on the website <https://icsp.insightonconflict.org/> in June 2017. The project itself is funded by the IcSP and up to now represents the only database publicly available on IcSP-funded projects.

war implemented both in Syria and its neighbouring countries (see Table 2). Ukraine and Turkey are among the top three recipients of IcSP funds. In the case of Ukraine, IcSP activities include several projects on security sector reform and support to the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Special Monitoring Mission and the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission. In the case of Turkey, €20 million – that is, almost half of the money allocated to IcSP projects in the country – is dedicated to a project strengthening the operational capacities of the Turkish Coast Guard (2016-2018) implemented by the International Organisation of Migration (IOM). Overall, the geographic distribution of allocated funds to countries and regions reflects the main political priorities that the European Union has set for its foreign and security policy over the last few years. Six out of the top ten receivers of funds are countries located in the Eastern or Southern neighbourhood of the EU, two regions that have been identified as key areas of EU external policy engagement (EU, 2016a, pp. 23-27).

**Figure 1: Distribution of IcSP funds per region**



Source: Author, based on data retrieved from PeaceDirect, 2017 in June 2017.

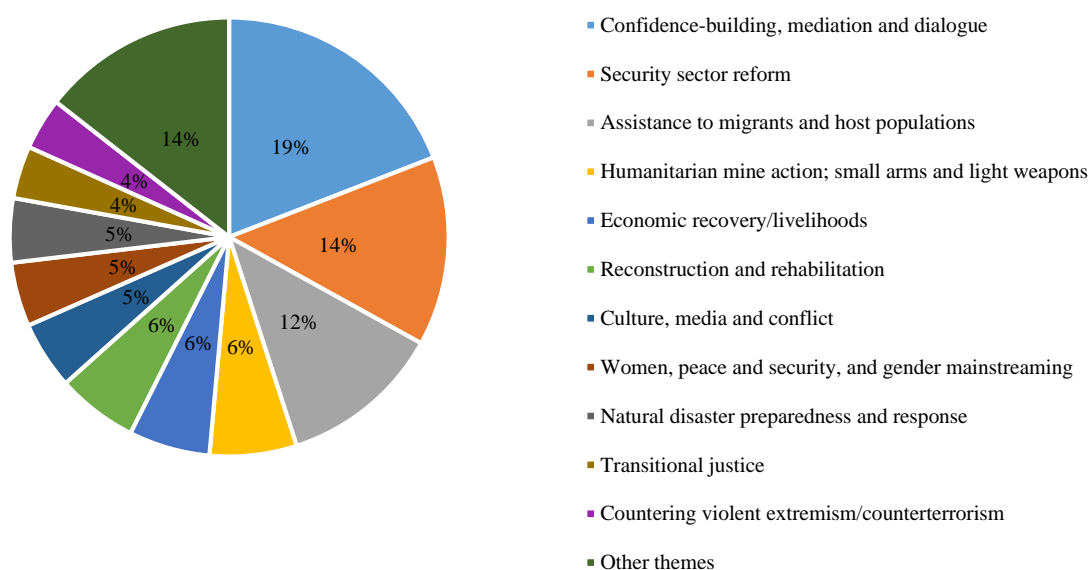
**Table 2: Top 10 recipients of IcSP funds (2012-2017)**

No.	Country	Amount of funds in euros
1	Syria	44,898,402
2	Turkey	43,795,126
3	Ukraine	43,185,597
4	Lebanon	31,223,997
5	Palestine	29,849,723
6	Libya	29,549,691
7	Iraq	22,405,758
8	Central African Republic	22,143,453
9	Colombia	21,092,107
10	Pakistan	18,476,748

Source: Author, based on data retrieved from PeaceDirect, 2017 in June 2017

Concerning the IcSP's thematic focus, projects focusing on confidence-building, mediation and dialogue represent the largest thematic cluster in terms of number of projects (23 per cent), followed by projects on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and Gender Mainstreaming (10 per cent) and security sector reform (9 per cent). The largest share of funds is also allocated to projects covering confidence-building, mediation and dialogue, followed by projects on security sector reform activities and on assistance to migrants and host populations (see Figure 2). Apart from these three top thematic priorities which make up 45 per cent of the funding for the 268 projects, there is a wide variety of themes covered by an almost equal share of IcSP funding.

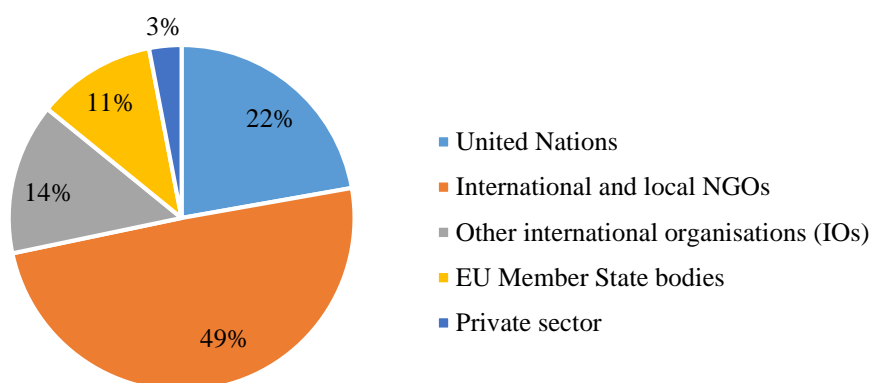
**Figure 2: Distribution of IcSP funds per theme**



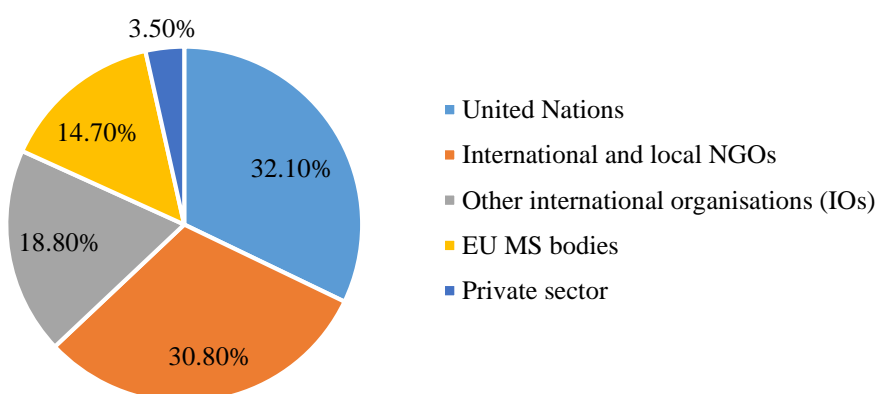
Source: Author, based on data retrieved from PeaceDirect, 2017 in June 2017

Among the 268 IcSP projects under scrutiny, almost half have been implemented by international and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (49 per cent), followed by UN organisations (22 per cent), other international organisations (IOs) (14 per cent), EU Member State bodies and agencies (11 per cent) and the private sector (3 per cent) (see Figure 3). Analysing which partners implemented the largest share of IcSP funding, UN organisations come out top (32 per cent), closely followed by international and local NGOs (30 per cent), other international organisations (18 per cent), EU Member State bodies and agencies (14 per cent) and the private sector (3 per cent) (see Figure 4). Overall, the findings suggest that the EU largely builds on external partners to implement IcSP-funded projects. The fact that almost half of the projects analysed were implemented by international and local NGOs is a clear sign that the IcSP should also be understood as an important instrument for providing funding to civil society actors and non-profit organisations. Moreover, the findings also suggest that the IcSP is an important tool of EU-UN cooperation, as UN-implemented projects make up the largest share of the IcSP's budget.



**Figure 3: Distribution of IcSP projects per implementing partner**

Source: Author, based on data retrieved from PeaceDirect, 2017 in June 2017

**Figure 4: Distribution of IcSP funds per implementing partner**

Source: Author, based on data retrieved from PeaceDirect, 2017 in June 2017

In sum, this stocktaking exercise demonstrates the broad range of IcSP-funded activities across the globe and in all possible thematic areas related to crisis response, conflict prevention and peacebuilding. International and local NGOs as well as international organisations, particularly the UN, are key partners for the EU in the implementation of these activities. Based on these findings, the next section analyses to what extent IcSP interventions make a difference in terms of impact.

## 4 Analysing the IcSP's impact

To what extent does the IcSP contribute to conflict prevention and peacebuilding and make a difference to its implementing partners and the EU? In the context of this paper and its analysis of the IcSP, impact is understood as the extent to which progress is made towards the overall objectives as defined in the Regulation (Particip & ECDPM, 2016, p. 12). Impact is assessed in terms of (i) impact of IcSP interventions on conflicts and crises; (ii) impact of IcSP funding on capacity-building of partners, and (iii) the IcSP's impact on EU external action capacities.

### 4.1 Impact of IcSP interventions on conflicts and crises

According to the IcSP intervention logic, the main expected outcome of IcSP crisis-response actions is a swift *contribution* to stability in situations of crisis or emerging crisis (European Commission, 2015, p. 3).<sup>6</sup> Hence, it is important to understand that IcSP interventions are usually only *one* element of a wider EU approach to crises and conflicts. Thus, while they can make a positive contribution to EU efforts to stabilise conflict and crisis situations, (positive/negative) changes in stability in the conflict zone should not be attributed solely to IcSP interventions.

The contribution of IcSP interventions to stability depends on a range of external factors and is certainly a matter of degree. At a macro level, both the evaluation of crisis response actions under the IfS (2007-2013) and the IcSP mid-term review find that project results have made a positive contribution to stabilisation and transformation in conflict situations (Landell Mills et al., 2017, p. 20; Particip & ECDPM, 2016, p. 15). For example, IcSP actions to promote confidence-building and dialogue in conflict zones

report that 90 per cent of the support had an impact and contributed to peacebuilding and conflict prevention in with their stated objectives [...] Results are reported with regard to better policy decision-making; confidence building; changing of public perceptions on a situation and how to deal with it; awareness raised; a common understanding promoted in a particular situation; and conflicts prevented at community level. (Particip & ECDPM, 2016, p. 15)

The example of activities in the area of confidence-building and dialogue illustrates that the impact of IcSP actions may sometimes be less tangible and visible compared to the effects of other EU interventions into conflicts such as civilian/military crisis management missions (see Box 2 for an example).

EU officials also acknowledge that there is a certain limit to the impact IcSP interventions can achieve (Interviews 1, 3, 4). The complementarity of IcSP actions with longer-term EU interventions into conflicts, linkages with country-owned processes of institutional and political reform, the political will and assertiveness of the political partners, and the strength of the implementing organisation seem to be key scope conditions for the positive impact of IcSP interventions (Interviews 1, 3, 14; Particip & ECDPM, 2016, p. 15). In particular,

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6 Moreover, IcSP interventions aim to strengthen the global capacities for conflict prevention, peacebuilding and crisis preparedness, which is separately assessed in subsection 4.2

the support of political partners on the ground and the alignment with other interventions by the EU and third parties seem to be an important condition for IcSP actions to serve as a catalyst for further stabilisation efforts. Citing the example of IcSP activities in South Sudan, one official described this dilemma as follows:

There are some examples where IcSP interventions are only a drop in the ocean. For example, in South Sudan we did a bit of peacebuilding and conflict prevention. It is very difficult to say that it has changed anything. Certainly, it has not done harm. Certainly, it has prevented further conflict. Certainly, it has helped some communities. But it has not triggered anything; it has not changed the difficult situation there which requires even more substantial involvement. (Interview 1)

**Box 2: EU involvement in resolving Georgia's territorial conflicts and the impact of IcSP actions**

Since the early 1990s, the European Union has been engaged in managing and resolving the conflicts over South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Georgia's two separatist regions. After the 2008 Georgian-Russian war, the EU stepped up its conflict management efforts significantly (Whitman & Wolff, 2012, pp. 94-98). It deployed the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) Georgia to monitor the administrative boundary lines between Georgia and South Ossetia/Abkhazia and, together with the UN and OSCE, co-chairs the Geneva International Discussions on Georgia's Territorial Conflicts (GID).

Apart from these two conflict management efforts, the EU has also sought to facilitate dialogue within and between the divided communities and to foster a peaceful transformation of the conflicts. Through the COBERM mechanism (Confidence Building Early Response Mechanism) which is funded by the IcSP and implemented by UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), the EU spent around \$5 million to fund more than 553 confidence-building initiatives in the region between 2012 and 2015. These projects "have enabled direct and indirect contact between stakeholders to the conflict, particularly at the grass-roots and meso levels" (Particip, 2015, p. 45).

One example is the "Archives Without Borders" project initiated in 2011. In the context of this project, the Georgian authorities handover copies of Abkhazian archive documents restored in the Georgian State Archives to the Abkhaz authorities, thus helping them to rebuild the Abkhazian archives in Sukhumi that were burnt during the 1992 war (Mikhelidze, 2012, p. 12).

In meetings of the GID, the Georgian delegation handed over samples of copies to the Abkhaz negotiators. As there has been no progress in the political resolution of the conflict since 2008, these confidence-building initiatives were in fact one of the few tangible examples of EU impact on the conflict situation (Bergmann, 2017a). However, they have not yet triggered more substantial rapprochement between the conflict parties at the political level. At the present time it is too early to tell whether cooperation on low-level issues such as the return of archival documents really signal social learning and trust-building on the side of the conflict parties towards more cooperative negotiation behaviour in the GID.

On the part of the EU, a key condition of impact seems to be the clear alignment of IcSP interventions with strategic objectives for its engagement in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. This study's findings point to the need for developing an overarching strategic framework that sets certain priorities and directions for IcSP actions in order to strengthen both their contribution to EU interventions in particular conflicts and their overall contribution to the global and regional peace and security architecture (Interviews 1, 3, 4, 17; see also Landell Mills et al., 2017, p. 4). As one interviewee stated:

[T]here is yet a lack of an IcSP implementation strategy. Clearly, we have the annual action plans and the individual actions are well-designed. But how do we select the individual projects? What are our key priorities? Where do we set our geographic and thematic priorities? (Interview 17)

Although some interview partners insisted that the need for an overarching strategy should not result in reducing the non-programmable component of the IcSP, there seems to be a consensus among EEAS and Commission officials that IcSP actions have to be better aligned to strategic priorities (Interviews 1, 2, 4).

#### 4.2 Impact on partners' capacities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding

Strengthening the capacities of partners in conflict prevention, early warning and peacebuilding is a primary goal of many IcSP interventions. In particular, but not exclusively, programmes under Article 4 (crisis preparedness) and Article 5 (addressing global transregional and emerging threats) have a strong capacity-building focus (Landell Mills et al., 2017, pp. 21-22). To what extent have IcSP interventions made a positive contribution to partners' capacities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding? Although it is difficult to quantify the impact of IcSP funding on building partners' capacities, there are some examples that illustrate that the IcSP makes a difference and provides support that could not be provided through any other instrument.

One example is the EU's support to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) in Ukraine in the area of satellite imagery. Funded through the IcSP and implemented by the European Union Satellite Centre (SATCEN), the EU supports the SMM's monitoring capacities. More specifically, it provides satellite imagery of the conflict zone in the Donbass region via SATCEN, but also material support in terms of "static cameras and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) [that] enable the Mission to monitor remote areas" (European Commission, 2016d). As an interview partner stated, the IcSP project on satellite imagery has proved a very useful tool to strengthen the SMM's capacities for monitoring in an area where it is very difficult to gather sufficient information about conflict activities (Interview 13).

Another example of the IcSP's impact on partners' capacities for conflict prevention and management is the support to the UN Standby Team of Mediation Experts (SBT). Created in 2007, the SBT is a specialised resource for mediation support steered by the UN Department of Political Affairs (UN DPA). The SBT usually consists of 7-8 individuals who are key experts in different aspects of peace mediation and conflict prevention. They can be rapidly deployed to the field to provide support to UN officials and others engaged in mediation and conflict prevention efforts (Wils & Herrberg, 2011). Together with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Commission has been the main funder of the SBT through an IcSP project and has thus significantly contributed to sustaining this unique crisis-response and conflict-prevention mechanism. Through its support of the SBT, "the European Union has also demonstrated a firm commitment for EU-UN cooperation" (Herrberg, Packer, & Varela, 2015, p. 11). As an interview partner explained, the "IcSP is one of the few instruments through which you can do HQ support to the UN which comes close to core funding. So here the IcSP has huge impact as it is the only tool that enables us to support the SBT" (Interview 4).

A third example in this regard is IcSP co-funding of the Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) that serves as a platform for dialogue and exchange between civil society and EU

policymakers on peace and conflict.<sup>7</sup> The main goal of CSDN is to strengthen EU and civil society capacity in conflict analysis, prevention and resolution. Between 2014 and 2017, 47 meetings had been organised to promote exchanges both in Brussels and in in-country settings. The CSDN is valued by NGOs/CSOs (civil society organisations) *and* the EU institutions as a mechanism of regular communication that improves each other side's understanding of the respective counterpart (Interviews 5, 11).

These examples illustrate that IcSP interventions can boost partners' capacities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding both on a short-term (as in the case of the OSCE mission in Ukraine) and a longer-term basis (as in the case of the UN Standby Team of Mediation Experts). Although there is great potential for synergies between capacity-building activities and crisis-response actions, however, it appears that the EU has not fully exploited the potential yet. In other words, the capacities that the EU builds up in the context of the IcSP's long-term components are not systematically used for its short-term crisis response interventions, a fact that interviewees acknowledged (Interviews 2, 3). For example, Article 4 activities on mediation, early warning and conflict sensitivity are "highly complementary to crisis response interventions, but a clear articulation of links to Article 3 actions has not been formally established through mechanisms to facilitate such links within FPI" (Landell Mills et al., 2017, Annex I, I5.1.2).

#### 4.3 Impact on the EU's external action capacities

There are two interrelated claims about how the IcSP makes a difference to EU external action: (i) It provides the EU with a first-response capacity to crises and violent conflicts; (ii) It paves the way for longer-term EU development policy interventions that build upon IcSP interventions.

##### *Providing the EU with a first-response capacity*

The IcSP provides the EU with a significant first-response capacity to crises and conflicts. Findings suggest that IcSP funds can indeed be mobilised in a swift and timely manner and IcSP crisis-response projects (Article 3) are launched more quickly than interventions by other EFIs. According to data provided by FPI, in 2014, 68 per cent of Article 3 actions were adopted within a period of three months of a crisis (from the presentation of the Concept Note to the Political and Security Committee (PSC)), while 64 per cent of projects matched this criterion in 2015 and 61 per cent of projects in 2016 (European Commission, 2016b, p. 409, 2017, p. 551). As Article 3 actions are not adopted through the standard programming procedures, they can be launched much faster than projects funded through other EFIs. For example, for actions funded through the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), the average length of time between a project decision being taken and the first payment is roughly 1.2 years (Particip, 2017, p. 18).

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7 90 per cent of the funding of the CSDN is provided by the EU through the IcSP, and 10 per cent by the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO). The EPLO is an umbrella organisation of 35 organisations working on peace and conflict-related issues in 14 countries.

There are also projects funded under Articles 4 and 5 that allow for quick responses to urgent or emerging crises and conflicts. Under the Article 4 component, the European Resources for Mediation Support (ERMES) project facilitates EU support to third parties engaged in mediation and dialogue processes.<sup>8</sup> ERMES is based on a framework contract with a consortium of five organisations (Crisis Management, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, ACORD, International Alert, Search for Common Ground) that established a pool of mediation experts who can be deployed to conflict situations on very short notice. Through ERMES, the EU is able to deliver support to peace processes even before regular crisis-response actions under Article 3 can be initiated, sometimes even 48 hours after the emergence of a crisis (European Commission, 2016d). Interview partners emphasised the importance of this mechanism to enable the EU to react to unforeseen circumstances within a few days and thus even quicker than within the framework of Article 3 actions (Interviews 2, 4).

At the same time, EU officials also report considerable delays in decision-making processes and implementation in some cases (Interviews 1, 3, 9, 14). Compared to the average rate of 69 per cent of IfS projects for the period between 2011 and 2013, there has been a slight, but continuous, decrease of the share of project decisions being adopted in a swift manner. This finding implies that FPI is currently moving further away from its target of a 75 per cent share of IcSP projects being launched within three months up to 2020 (European Commission, 2017, p. 551).

There are several reasons for delays both in the decision-making phase and the implementation phase (once the financing decision has been made and the contract signed). Delays can be caused by prolonged negotiations with the implementing partners about the design of the project to ensure that the project is tailor-made to the specific conflict context (Interview 1). In other cases, changes on the ground and conflict dynamics may cause delays because the draft project decision has to be adapted to unforeseen circumstances (Interviews 1, 3). Moreover, interview partners also report that delays were sometimes due to the work overload of the responsible IcSP officers at EU delegations who often dealt with a variety of other portfolios apart from the IcSP (Interviews 1, 3).<sup>9</sup>

Overall, the IcSP indeed increases the EU's capacity to react swiftly to external crises and conflicts by financing short-term response actions that can be launched within relatively short timeframes. Nevertheless, there are also challenges to swift decision-making and implementation of IcSP actions that the EU has not been able to overcome, partly because they emanate from changes in the conflict and security situation on the ground and partly because in some instances coordination with implementing partners proves difficult and time-consuming.

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8 ERMES was already foreseen in the 2013 Annual Action Programme of the IfS and became operational in January 2014 (European Commission, 2013, pp. 17-20).

9 To make the management of IcSP projects at the delegation level more efficient, FPI has established Regional Teams (RTs) that are composed of FPI-trained staff members who work full-time on the IcSP. The RTs bring together individual project managers who had previously worked in different delegations into regional teams that are based in one EU delegation responsible for IcSP projects in a larger region (for example, the Horn of Africa and Southern Africa) (Interviews 1, 3).

*Paving the way for long-term interventions*

A key idea behind creating the IcSP's first-response capacity has been that IcSP interventions pave the way for long-term, development cooperation projects implemented by other EFIs (Merket, 2016, p. 120). Although the IcSP seems to fulfil this gap-filling function, there are also challenges in the coordination and alignment with other instruments such as EIDHR, DCI, ENI, IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance) II, EDF and EU Trust Funds.

To allow for complementarity with other EFIs, possible follow-up activities to IcSP interventions are already taken into account during the design phase of IcSP projects. This is particularly relevant for crisis-response measures that have a maximum duration of 30 months (Interviews 2, 3). The IcSP Mid-Term Review finds that 84 per cent of Article 3 actions of the IcSP have been followed up by interventions financed through other EU EFIs (Landell Mills et al., 2017, p. 32).

However, there is also evidence of difficulties in coordination and failed complementarities (Interviews 2, 3, 9, 14; Landell Mills et al., 2017, Annex I, I5.2.2). Interview partners emphasised that in some instances Article 3 actions have not been followed up by other EFIs because of difficulties in identifying adequate follow-up actions and/or difficulties in timing the follow-up interventions in a way that they ensure the continuity of the projects. As an interview partner stated, much depends on where the other instruments are in terms of their programming cycle: "If everything is already fixed for the next few years, it is much more difficult to agree on adequate follow-up actions [...] it is also because their whole mobilisation process for funding is so different" (Interview 3).

Difficulties in ensuring the continuity of projects also arise because of the concentration of development aid in a maximum of three to four focal sectors as introduced by the Agenda for Change. This may cause problems in designing adequate follow-up actions (Interviews 3, 14; Landell Mills et al., 2017, Annex I, I5.2.1). EU officials emphasised that the main risk of delays in "handing over" IcSP projects to other EFIs was that gaps between the end of the IcSP project and the start of a follow-up action funded by other instruments may reduce or fully diminish the political momentum for EU action (Interview 3, 9).

The establishment of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) has posed specific coordination challenges. In general, there are several connection points, but also potential overlaps between IcSP actions and activities funded by the EUTF. Before the establishment of the EUTF, the IcSP had also been used to fund actions to address the "root causes" of migration/flight, migration/refugee flow management, and the integration of migrants/refugees into host countries (Landell Mills et al., 2017, Annex 5). When the EUTF was created, there was strong political pressure on the Commission to show the EUTF's added value and to demonstrate that the EU was able to provide a visible response to the migration crisis (Castillejo, 2016, p. 5). Interview partners mentioned that the creation of the EUTF created overlaps and coordination challenges with IcSP interventions in a number of cases (Interviews 9, 14; Landell Mills et al., 2017, Annex I, I5.2.2). As an interview partner confirms:

Coordination has become more difficult with the emergence of the Trust Fund. Do not get me wrong, this is not a critique of the Trust Fund, because we need the Trust Fund, but it is to stress that there is a real challenge in coordination. The division of tasks

between IcSP and other instruments is reasonable, but maybe the lines between the Trust Fund and the IcSP could be drawn better. (Interview 9)

While coordination difficulties with other EFIs are certainly not unique to the EUTF, the findings nevertheless suggest that there is scope for a better coordination of the EU's instruments addressing the interface of security, development and migration, a conclusion that is also underlined by findings at the country level – as the example of Niger demonstrates (see Box 3). It appears that the problems in coordination and alignment between the IcSP and the EUTF are primarily related to the EUTF's vaguely defined mandate and the strong political pressure to demonstrate both the EUTF's operationability and added value.

**Box 3: Niger as test case for the EU's integrated approach to conflicts and crises**

The security-development nexus and migration have become the dominant issues in EU-Niger relations (UNECA [United Nations Economic Commission for Africa], 2017). Through the IcSP and the EUTF, the EU funds various projects focusing on border management, addressing the root causes of irregular migration and displacement, and supporting dialogue and local mechanisms to prevent and manage tensions arising from migration flows.

Since 2014, the EU has funded 9 projects through the IcSP with a geographical focus on the Diffa region in Southeast Niger bordering Nigeria and Chad, and the Agadez region in central Niger, which is a key transit hub for migrants. The IcSP priorities have been assistance to peacebuilding and stability support (4 projects); technical assistance to the High Authority for Consolidation and Peace (Haute Autorité à la Consolidation et la Paix, HACP) (1 project); civic education and strengthening the rights of the youth (2 projects); and assistance to migrants and host populations (2 projects) (Interviews 9, 14; Landell Mills et al., 2017). According to its 2016 Annual Report, the EUTF currently funds 9 projects in Niger, focusing on improving migration management (3 projects); improving governance (3 projects); greater economic and employment opportunities (2 projects); and strengthening resilience (1 project) (European Commission, 2016a, pp. 58-61).

The EU's representation in Niger includes the EU Delegation, the CSDP mission EUCAP SAHEL NIGER tasked to support capacity-building of the Nigerien security actors to fight terrorism and organised crime, and a FRONTEX liaison office. Due to this complex institutional set-up, Niger somewhat represents a test case for the implementation of the EU's integrated approach to conflicts and crises. Concerning the coordination between IcSP and EUTF projects within the Migration Partnership Framework, the evidence suggests that the EU has used the IcSP primarily as a gap-filler until the EUTF became operational and could follow-up on IcSP projects (Landell Mills et al., 2017, Annex 5).

When the European Agenda on Migration was published on 13 May 2015 and called for the setting up of a "pilot multi-purpose centre in Niger (...) by the end of the year" (European Commission, 2015, p. 5) to provide information, local protection and resettlement opportunities for migrants, there was strong political pressure on the EU delegation in Niger to launch an IcSP project that could then be taken over by the EUTF at a later stage (Interviews 9, 14). This project, entitled AGAMI, was launched in Agadez in November 2015. As the IcSP Mid-Term Review concludes, the AGAMI project was

a quick response to EU political objectives under the European Agenda on Migration. However, it was put together in haste, under political pressure to deliver within the timeframe set by the Council of the EU and, to some extent, at the expense of a more thoughtful approach and better communication with local authorities in the Agadez region. (Landell Mills et al., 2017, Annex 5)

In addition, the project was seemingly over-loaden in terms of tasks in response to the needs of the implementing partner IOM and HQ pressures (Interviews 9, 14). While the IcSP proved its ability to respond to political priorities, the AGAMI project also illustrates that quickly shifting political priorities may risk to divert IcSP funds from areas where it has some sort of "niche capability" and thus decrease its value added in terms of funding actions that are not covered by other instruments.



## 5 Capacity Building in Support of Security and Development (CBSD) – reforming the IcSP

The IcSP's bridge-building nature at the interface of EU security and development policy implies that it is easily exposed to concerns about a securitisation of EU development policy (Furness & Gänzle, 2016, pp. 149-150). As there is no requirement for IcSP interventions to be reported as Official Development Assistance (ODA) according to the criteria of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC), there is a general risk that IcSP actions may be increasingly driven and motivated by security interests. Overall, about 90 per cent of IcSP activities have been reported as ODA (Interview 18), which shows that this risk is not too high. However, the IcSP Mid-Term Review acknowledges that there are challenges to the potential securitisation of IcSP interventions:

Within the IcSP portfolio, counterterrorism and countering violent extremism, organized crime, cyber security, and stabilisation (and sometimes migration) activities are part of a securitised portfolio. We do consider such actions and programmes as often necessary, but note that when not designed using a conflict sensitive and 'do no harm' approach, they may generate unforeseen challenges. (Landell Mills et al., 2017, p. 1)

The risk of securitisation of IcSP interventions has become a prominent and hotly debated topic within the EU policy community within the context of the discussions about Capacity Building in Support of Security and Development (CBSD). Under the umbrella of CBSD, the EU seeks to assist military actors in partner countries in terms of training, equipment, and infrastructure. To implement CBSD, the EU amended the Regulation on the IcSP in December 2017, adding an additional CBSD component of €100 million to the IcSP's budget.

### 5.1 CBSD as the “missing link”?

The discussions on a European initiative for the capacity-building of military actors first emerged within the Council and were then taken up by the European Commission and the EEAS under the formula of “Train and Equip” (Tardy, 2015, p. 2). The argument for strengthening the EU's efforts to support partner countries' militaries in preventing and managing violent crisis was based on the experiences of the CSDP military training missions in Mali (EUTM (European Union Training Mission) Mali) and Somalia (EUTM Somalia). In both countries, the EU's training efforts have been undermined by a lack of communications equipment, adequate training facilities and other kinds of infrastructure as well as a lack of available funding sources thereof (EU, 2015, pp. 5-7). As an interviewee who is familiar with both cases reported:

What is important to understand is that there are potential counter-productive effects if we train but cannot equip. Because if we do not provide the necessary equipment for the tasks we trained the soldiers for, we can damage the overall strategic goals of the missions. And there are reputational costs as well. (Interview 10)

The EU sought to close this gap as the existing instruments for implementing security sector reform (SSR) projects did not allow the use of budgetary resources to provide equipment and infrastructure to military actors in partner countries (see Table 3). While the provision

of equipment and infrastructure is not possible in the context of CSDP missions, IcSP interventions have been limited to civilian beneficiaries. The African Peace Facility (APF), funded by the European Development Fund (EDF) and thus outside the EU's budgetary framework, can only provide assistance measures in support of regional operations in Africa. Direct support to military actors in partner countries cannot be provided through the APF. Moreover, the APF is a regional mechanism which does not allow for the support of partners beyond the African continent.

<b>Table 3: The European Union's instruments to promote the capacity-building of partner countries' security forces</b>			
	<b>EU missions/operations under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)</b>	<b>Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)</b>	<b>African Peace Facility (APF)</b>
<b>Range of activities</b>	Training/advice	Training/advice and equipment	Training/advice, equipment and staff salaries
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Civilian and military security forces	Civilian security forces	Civilian and military security forces
<b>Scope</b>	Global	Global	Regional (Africa)
<b>Limitations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of <b>equipment and infrastructure</b> to partner countries is not possible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assistance to partner countries' <b>armed forces</b> is not possible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assistance can only be provided in support of <b>regional operations</b></li> <li><b>Exclusive geographical focus</b> on Africa</li> </ul>
Source: Bergmann, 2017b, p. 2, based on EU public sources and Furness, 2011			

To address this gap, the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy issued a Joint Communication on "Capacity Building in Support of Security and Development" in April 2015. Renaming "Train and Equip" into "Capacity Building in Support of Security and Development", the Communication signalled that the provision of training and equipment to military actors was understood as a core component of the EU's efforts to address the security-development nexus (EU, 2015, p. 2). Due to the limitations of the existing mechanisms, CBSD has been described as the "missing link" between EU security and development policy in the EU's institutional framework (European Parliament, 2017e; European Union, 2016b, p. 8).

To implement CBSD, the Commission in June 2016 proposed a Regulation on amending the IcSP, adding a new type of assistance measures for the capacity-building of military actors in partner countries. The Commission proposed to generate the additional €100 million for financing CBSD activities by re-deploying funds from the DCI, ENI, CSFP budget and the reserve of Heading IV with a share of 25 per cent each. The proposal states that European Union assistance under the CBSD component will continue to exclude the financing of (i) recurrent military expenditure, (ii) the procurement of arms and ammunition, and (iii) training which is solely designed to contribute to the fighting capacity of the armed forces, thus adhering to TEU Art. 41(2) that excludes use of EU budgetary sources for operations having security and defence implications (European Commission, 2016c). While the final text of the Regulation amending the original IcSP Regulation in December 2017 was largely congruent with the Commission's proposal tabled in 2016, the one and a half

year-long discussions about the proposal reveal how divided different EU institutions and EU Member States are on the EU's approach towards the security-development nexus.

## 5.2 Negotiating CBSD and IcSP reform – diverging views on the links between security and development

The discussions about CBSD and the IcSP reform demonstrated that both EU institutions and Member States hold different views about the links between CBSD and development policy. The final agreement that was reached in December 2017 mirrors these diverging interpretations of how and through what means the EU should address the security-development nexus.

The Commission and the HR/VP Mogherini have strongly emphasised the links between development policy and CBSD. The Commission's legislative proposal links CBSD to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 16: "The improvement of the functioning of military actors and the strengthening of their governance, particularly in fragile contexts and countries emerging from conflict, contributes to peace, human security, and stability, and thereby to the achievement of the SDGs" (European Commission, 2016c, p. 3).

Along this line of argument, HR/VP Mogherini intervened into the plenary debate on the legislative proposal within the European Parliament on 14 September 2017, right before the votes were taken, and stressed:

This is not about moving the objective from development to security. On the contrary, it is to fulfil the SDG number 16 that links development and security and asks all international players to dedicate also resources to guarantee that the security conditions are there for the development work to have effectiveness. (Mogherini, 2017)

Linked to this emphasis on CBSD's relevance for development policy, the Commission and the HR/VP showed a strong preference for the IcSP as the main implementing vehicle. As interview partners mentioned, this was due to three main reasons. First, amending the IcSP was seen as the quickest solution to the problem compared to other options such as creating a new separate instrument for CBSD activities (Interviews 1, 3, 11). Second, it was also due to institutional interests as DG DEVCO, FPI and the EEAS have a strong role in the decision-making and implementation procedures of IcSP actions. Adding another category of activities to the IcSP's portfolio that have strong links to CSDP missions in fact strengthens these actors' profile within EU security policy (Interviews 16, 17, 19).

Third, there were strong legal concerns within the Commission on funding the capacity-building of military actors through budgetary resources. It was argued that this could only be legally justified if there were a strong link to development policy which would serve as the legal basis. Given that the IcSP's legal basis consisted of TFEU Articles 209 (development cooperation) and 212 (economic, financial and technical cooperation), voices within the Commission argued that choosing the IcSP was the only way to finance activities through the budget. In fact, in March 2015, the Commission's Legal Service came to the conclusion that cooperation with military actors could not be conducted under the legal framework of development cooperation. In a second opinion in February 2017 – and allegedly due to political pressure from within the Commission – the Legal Service argued

that financing CBSD through the IcSP was possible when it served development objectives (Interviews 17, 19; Hautala, 2017b, p. 2)

Within the Council, there were considerable discussions on the substance of the Commission's proposal. One point of debate was whether CBSD infringed on the Member States' competences within the framework of CSFP/CSDP. Another point concerned the question of whether the proposed measures confined to security for development would be sufficient to address the demands for capacity-building on the ground (Interviews 3, 6, 19). While some Member States advocated for having a wide-ranging scope of capacity-building activities funded within the framework of CBSD, others were rather opposed to the initiative and argued that CBSD activities could only be financed if there were a strong link to development objectives. Some Member States even argued for introducing the OECD-DAC requirements on ODA for all IcSP-funded actions, which did not find majority support (Interviews 2, 6, 13, 19). As the Commission had signalled to the Council that it could legally oppose an initiative on military capacity-building within the CFSP/CSDP framework, Member States agreed on the compromise to follow the Commission's proposal on amending the IcSP to implement CBSD (Interviews 2, 6, 19). An interview partner explained that there was initially huge scepticism towards the Commission's proposal:

Because there is a close link between CBSD and CFSP, in particular CSDP missions [...] on this basis, the Council took the position that if Art. 209 is the legal basis, the proposal should only cover measures for the delivery of development or security for development. (Interview 6)

Finally, the Council's mandate for negotiations on the legislative proposal largely endorsed the Commission's proposal, but inserted that EU assistance to build the capacity of military actors in partner countries should not be used for *any purposes other than for the delivery of development or security for development* (Interviews 6, 13, 17; European Parliament, 2017b, p. 15).

In the European Parliament, co-legislator in the field of development policy together with the Council, there were controversial discussions about the IcSP reform. These discussions were held both within the Committee on Development (DEVE) and the Committee for Foreign Affairs (AFET), the latter having the responsibility for the file and appointing Arnaud Danjean (European People's Party (EPP), France) as rapporteur. Rapporteur Danjean's first draft report on the Commission's proposal stirred a lot of controversy and criticism, particularly in DEVE. First, it had replaced "exceptional circumstances" with "if necessary" when referring to the conditions under which capacity-building to military actors could be provided. This wording significantly broadened the scope of the proposed actions and blurred the criteria for deciding when to support military actors with equipment and training through the IcSP (European Parliament, 2017c, p. 6; Interviews 7, 8, 17). Moreover, the report proposed that CBSD actions "shall be based on Union expertise and shall take account of the Union's strategic and industrial interests" (European Parliament, 2017c, p. 10). The latter spurred heavy criticism as it suggested that a measure proposed on the legal basis of EU development policy should be primarily guided by strategic and economic interests.

The proposed amendments were met with huge criticism within DEVE (Interviews 7, 8, 17). Reacting to this criticism and having underestimated the sensitivity of the issue, Rapporteur Danjean withdrew his first draft report and returned to the formulations proposed by the Commission in his subsequent report (Interview 17). In DEVE, a majority

of MEPs (Members of the European Parliament) agreed on supporting the Commission's proposal, but reiterated that poverty reduction and eradication was the main goal of EU development policy. For this reason, DEVE's opinion to AFET presented by Rapporteur Linda McAvan clearly stated the broad consensus in DEVE that "the DCI (Development Cooperation Instrument) or EDF (European Development Fund) funding should not contribute to the CBSD activities" (European Parliament 2017d, p. 25). Despite substantive criticism by members of the Greens and GUE/NGL and despite considerable scepticism among some members of the Social Democrats (S&D), in the end there was a majority of MEPs of EPP, S&D (Socialists & Democrats) and ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe) that endorsed Rapporteur Danjean's Report in AFET on 17 July 2017.

Finally, the draft European Parliament Legislative Resolution adopted in September 2017 included two amendments to the original proposal. First, it inserted a provision that the use of the instrument should be closely monitored and that regular updates on its activities should be given to the European Parliament. Second, it referred to the funding sources of the proposed CBSD activities and stated that the re-deployment of funds within Heading IV "shall exclude the use of appropriations allocated to measures under Regulation (EU) No. 233/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council" (European Parliament, 2017d, p. 6). In other words, the amendment excluded the use of funds from the DCI for funding CBSD actions under the IcSP Regulation, a key demand raised by DEVE and the MEPs belonging to the S&D group in AFET (Lietz, 2017; Interview 17).

The legislative proposal has also been met by severe criticism from civil society. For example, the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), a civil society platform of 35 NGOs and think tanks, criticised the insufficient justification of the initiative in an open letter:

Our understanding is that a number of the activities which CBSD is intended to support are already being supported through CSDP missions and the IcSP. In this context, we do not feel that simplistic references to the "Security-Development Nexus" and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 are adequate to justify such a major change to the EU's approach to external assistance. (EPLO [European Peacebuilding Liaison Office], 2017, p. 1)

In a similar vein, it has been argued that, without making a substantive argument on how the provision of training and equipment to military actors in partner countries contributes to the achievement of development objectives, there is a strong risk that the initiative represents another step towards the instrumentalisation of EU development policy for security purposes (Fischer, 2016; Hautala, 2017a). As an interviewee noted: "There is kind of a flawed logic here, because the Commission argues that everything that contributes to security contributes to development. But that is too simple an argument" (Interview 11). Indeed, one part of the problem is that the Commission has not invested a lot of effort in clarifying how the capacity-building of military actors is linked to and reinforces development initiatives in fragile states. Interview evidence suggests that the debates in DEVE and AFET to which Commission officials were invited have not led to further clarity (Interviews 7, 8, 17).

In the end, the European Parliament succeeded in pushing through its demands in the trilogue negotiations with the Commission and the Council (European Parliament, 2017e). The final text of the amended IcSP Regulation is thus in line with the Commission's original

proposal, but includes a clause that asks the Commission to assess the impact and effectiveness of the EU external assistance fund by June 2020. Moreover, the Annex includes a joint declaration by the EP, the Council, and the Commission that rules out the use of funds re-deployed from the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI). The additional €100 million for CBSD activities will thus be generated by re-deployments from ENI and CFSP funds and the marginal reserve of Heading IV. As a result, MEPs have sold this agreement as a victory for the European Parliament because no “development money” will be used for CBSD (European Parliament, 2017e).

However, this interpretation stands on a shaky ground for two reasons. First, it builds on a narrow definition of what instruments count as “development cooperation instruments”. According to this view, only funds spent through the DCI are considered as “development money”. However, the legal basis both of the IcSP and ENI Regulation is TFEU Article 209, namely development cooperation. In other words, both instruments are development instruments by legal terms which implies that the money re-deployed from ENI and spent through the IcSP could also be interpreted as “development money”. Second, about 90 per cent of funds spent through these instruments are reported by the EU as ODA. Although there is no requirement for ODA reporting both in the IcSP and ENI, most of the activities financed through these instruments are thus considered by the EU as development cooperation. Paradoxically, by giving its consent to the legislative proposal on amending the IcSP, the EP has confirmed that development policy is the correct legal basis for CBSD, but has demanded that no development money should be used for these activities. This contradiction demonstrates that the amendment of the IcSP within the context of CBSD has not resolved the tensions between security and development that are inherent to the EU’s approach towards this nexus.

### 5.3 Implications for the EU’s approach towards the security-development nexus

The concerns about CBSD contributing to the securitisation of EU development policy are likely to reverberate beyond the CBSD dossier and reflect the considerable degree of uncertainty concerning the EU’s policy and legal framework for activities addressing the security-development nexus. This is the first time that capacity-building of *military actors* will be financed *through the EU’s budget*. Although various actors, particularly the HR and the Commission, have linked CBSD activities to EU development objectives, this link needs further substantiation to alleviate the concern that the predominant rationale of the reform of the IcSP is to address EU security policy objectives. Given the weak justification of the link between CBSD activities and EU development objectives, the use of EU budget resources to train and equip military actors could be interpreted as a further step towards the “creeping securitisation” of EU development policy (Furness & Gänzle, 2016 p. 138).

Moreover, the EU risks sending a false signal concerning its commitment to civilian efforts in the field of conflict prevention. As the main rationale for creating the IfS/IcSP was to strengthen the civilian character of EU external involvement in crises and conflicts, many perceive the adaptation of the IcSP as running contrary to its *raison d’être* (Fischer, 2016; Interviews 11, 18). In other words, there is the concern that the CBSD initiative risks jeopardising the future of the IcSP as the “flagship-instrument” of the EU’s civilian efforts to preserve peace and prevent conflict (EPLO, 2017, p. 2).

Finally, the debate about CBSD and the IcSP reform has brought to the fore the legal uncertainty concerning the EU's efforts at the interface of security and development. At the core of the problem is the fact that the security-development nexus is not yet legally reflected in the Treaty on the European Union, which leaves large room for interpretation about the correct legal basis of measures addressing this interface. Different assessments by the EU institutions' legal services on the appropriateness of development policy as the legal basis for the proposal underline that there has been a significant degree of uncertainty concerning the compatibility of development policy objectives with the CBSD initiative (Hautala, 2017a, 2017b). The debate about the appropriate legal basis of the Commission's proposal is thus another indicator of the political and legal grey area in which measures addressing the security-development nexus operate. Unfortunately, the legislative debate about the IcSP reform has added to this uncertainty rather than clarifying under what specific conditions cooperation with military actors serves development objectives.

## **6 Conclusions: policy implications and outlook**

The notion of the security-development nexus has gained considerable prominence in the EU's external policy discourse. While there is a clear recognition of the various links between security and development, understandings of the security-development interface differ with regard to the nature of these links. While some emphasise the mutual interdependence of security and development, others point to security as a precondition of development and thus prioritise security over development policy.

These discursive tensions also translate into the institutional dimension of the security-development interface in EU external policy. Although the creation of the EEAS helped to reduce the compartmentalisation of development and CFSP responsibilities, the institutional fragmentation of the EU's approach to the security-development nexus persists. Nevertheless, the IcSP is an important bridge-builder in this regard as its management both involves the Commission and the EEAS.

In terms of impact, the empirical findings suggest that IcSP interventions make a valuable contribution to EU efforts to stabilise conflict and crisis situations. Their impact depends on a range of external factors such as the strength of the implementing organisation, the political will and assertiveness of political partners, and the degree of alignment with country-owned processes of institutional and political reform. On the part of the EU, there is a need to link IcSP interventions more strongly to an overarching EU strategy for its engagement in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

The IcSP makes a difference to EU external action as it provides the Union with a significant first-response capacity and has the potential to pave the way for longer-term EU engagement. However, there are challenges to swift decision-making and implementation as well as to the coordination with other EFIs that need to be overcome to maximise the IcSP's internal and external impact.

Finally, the debate about CBSD and the IcSP reform have revealed diverging views on the relationship between EU security and development policy both within and among EU institutions and Member States and within the wider policy community. It has demonstrated that there is a tendency to use the notion of the security-development nexus to justify the

increasing securitisation of EU development policy without clearly defining the links between security-relevant measures and development objectives.

The following six policy implications follow from these findings:

- The security-development nexus has become a key mantra in the EU's external policy discourse. However, it needs to be filled with further substance in order to prevent it from becoming a mere buzzword used to justify measures in the field of EU security policy without taking into account their implications for sustainable development. Clarifying the conceptual relationship and boundaries of EU security and development policies is a key issue that the EU needs to address in implementing its "Integrated Approach" to conflicts and crises (EU, 2016a). Proponents of a strong European development policy should therefore ensure that the Integrated Approach does not serve to subordinate development policy to security interests but rather that it reflects the decisive role of development cooperation in long-term stabilisation and peacebuilding.
- The IcSP is the EU's main thematic instrument specifically designed to fund activities in the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. As the instrument has proven its added value compared to other EU external financing instruments, both in terms of its scope and its ability to mobilise funds very quickly, it should be maintained in the next MFF period from 2021 to 2027.
- The IcSP should not only be framed as a "gap-filler" for other EFIs until those become operational and can take over IcSP projects. Given the development of profound expertise on crisis response and conflict prevention within FPI, the EU should further invest in that expertise by increasing the staff within FPI.2 (IcSP) and by further strengthening the coordination with relevant divisions within the EEAS (PRISM, SECPOL) and DG DEVCO.
- The EU needs to develop an overarching strategic framework for determining the priorities of IcSP funding. While this is not meant to make the IcSP less flexible, developing priorities, for example, for the type of actors that the EU wants to support particularly in the field of conflict prevention, or for specific thematic focuses would allow for a more strategic and thus more effective use of the instrument.
- The emergence of the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa has demonstrated the need for greater coordination between EUTF and IcSP projects to avoid an overlap of activities within the field of migration management. In this context, the IcSP should primarily be drawn upon to design tailor-made projects that address the specific characteristics of crisis and conflict contexts rather than being used for migration-related tasks falling within the sphere of the EUTF.
- Where the CBSD dossier is concerned, the Commission should seek greater transparency on the planned activities to be funded under the IcSP. As there are legitimate concerns about a creeping securitisation of EU development policy, increasing transparency about the interventions that are financed would be an important first step to alleviate these concerns.

Most of these implications rest upon on the assumption that the IcSP will continue to exist in the next MFF period. However, the future of the instrument is likely to be under debate



during the negotiations on the next MFF. Given the temporary nature of the IcSP reform which lasts until the end of the current MFF in 2020, the debate about how the EU will address the demands for the capacity-building of the armed forces of its partners is likely to come up again within the next few years.

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## Annex I: List of interviews

<b>Cited as</b>	<b>Institutional affiliation of interviewee</b>	<b>Date of interview</b>
1	EU official	June 2017
2	EU official	June 2017
3	EU official	June 2017
4	EU official	June 2017
5	EU official	June 2017
6	EU Member State official	June 2017
7	Member of the European Parliament	June 2017
8	Member of the European Parliament	June 2017
9	EU official	June 2017
10	EU official	June 2017
11	NGO representative	June 2017
12	EU official	July 2017
13	EU Member State official	July 2017
14	EU official	July 2017
15	EU Member State official	July 2017
16	EU Member State official	August 2017
17	EU official	August 2017
18	EU official	August 2017
19	EU Member State official	December 2017

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