Sustainability of Civilian Personnel Recruitment for Crisis Management Missions

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Abstract: Gradual transformation of peace operations from military to civilian-focused missions with the central role for the civilians, altogether with a number of enhanced civilian functions has significantly influenced contemporary peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations. Shifting civilian mandates from monitoring to supporting comprehensive implementation of peace agreements has tremendously impacted organizations undertaking peace operations, namely United nations, European Union, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and last but not least African Union. On one hand all of the aforementioned institutions have tried to address their contemporary civilian peacekeeping gap and deploy well experienced as well as qualified civilian personnel within a reasonable time and in the numbers required. On the other hand, despite the differences in the way UN, EU, OSCE and AU address international crises, mutual challenges these organizations face on a daily basis remain the same: recruitment, deployment and maintaining civilian experts for peace and stability operations. Following article addresses two key international organizations serving to provide for peace and stability: United Nations and European Union and their approaches towards civilian personnel. It aims to point out their specific recruitment procedures of direct hiring (UN) versus secondment (EU) of civilians as well as other related individual mechanisms of addressing civilian peacekeeping capacity gap in order to show which particular system elements of either UN or EU prove in a long run to be more effective and sustainable.


Introduction

Civilian personnel’s role in the international missions and operations of peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding has been steadily on the rise. Traditional view sees civilians primarily delivering within the humanitarian and development area and military personnel associated with the peace and security operations. The recent trend on the contrary emphasizes the shift from the state towards human security (human security concept originally introduce by United Nations, later borrowed and actively pursued by European Union), accompanied with the rise of integrated and multi-dimensional peacekeeping missions and most importantly focuses on the peacebuilding operations, where the role of civilians has been fundamentally changed and strengthened. Prestigious international security providers such as UN, EU, OSCE and NATO realize that civilian expertise is an inevitable prerequisite and support for the successful peace process implementation. On the other hand a common problem of both UN and EU rests in the inability to identify, recruit and deploy a sufficient number of adequately qualified civilian experts within a reasonable time into select civilian crisis management operations. Therefore a short overview of EU and UN, their particular challenges and achievements in this field should provide a reader.
with the guidelines on how to make the process of civilian crisis management more effective and permanently sustainable.

1 Civilian Crisis Management in EU

Fundamental changes in the Post-Cold War settings of conflicts have forced the European Union, until then an institution primarily focused on economic integration and raising standards of living to turn its attention towards securing peace not only within, but also outside of its borders. Involvement of the EU in the field of the crisis management is radically different from that of the other international actors and unique in its equal weight placed on the coherent military and civilian response to crisis: “Developing the civilian dimension is part of the EU’s overall approach in using civilian and military means to respond coherently to the whole spectrum of crisis management tasks such as conflict prevention, peacekeeping and tasks of combat forces in crisis management including peacemaking and post-conflict stabilization”. (1)

Civilian Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) missions have turned out to be the most frequently used tools of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), deploying more than 4,000 civilian experts, predominantly seconded by member states, or participating third states, marginally nationally and internationally contracted into 9 parallel civilian crisis management missions of EU run in 2010. (2) If the EU is to remain a trustworthy security actor actively engaging in the crises management activities, it has to address a number of the structural challenges. These range mainly from the:

- institutional wrangles between European Commission and the Council of the European Union;
- weakness of concepts governing Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) interventions;
- deployment gap of civilian capacity in almost all the European Union member states;
- financing of Common Foreign and Security Policy and civilian CSDP missions.

1.1 Institutional wrangles and their solutions

European Commission and the Council of the European Union mutually participate in the cross-cutting EU missions and their competencies are often contested. Thus short-term crisis de-escalation activities get conducted through CSDP procedures, while long-term reconstruction activities proceed through the European Community mechanisms. EU’s assistance in all the phases of pre-crisis, active-crisis and post-crisis situations has developed into a range of Community instruments in support of political and diplomatic diffusing of the crisis, fostering stability in the transition period, safeguarding human rights and last but not least strengthening democratization. (3)

Radical rationalizing of EC instruments in 2007, concentrated original 30 geographical and 50 thematic budget lines into 6 categories of external activities: with 3 of them being horizontal instruments responding to particular needs (humanitarian aid instrument, stability instrument and instrument for macro-financial assistance) and 3 instruments with a geographically defined coverage for particular policies (Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance; European Neighborhood and Partnership and Development Cooperation and Economic Cooperation Instrument). (4) As such it has undoubtedly helped to tackle the institutional wrangle, introduced a greater flexibility into short-term actions and long-term development Community instruments enabling their potential interlinking.

1.2 Weakness of CSDP intervention concepts

Despite the fact that the EU’s Civilian Crisis Management (CCM) being an integral part of the Common Foreign and Security Policy focuses in accordance with the Lisbon Treaty of the European
Union on a wide array of objectives, namely: “to consolidate and support democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the principles of international law; and preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, with the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and with the aims of the Charter of Paris, including those relating to external borders” (5), the relevant, institutionally defined meaning of CCM is missing. (4) Moreover the breadth and vagueness of the term ‘civilian crisis management’ in the EU language is further underpinned by its denoting of any policy or instrument that is non-military. The exclusiveness of the term is supported by the fact, that there is no equivalent parallel to it in the established lexicons of either UN, OSCE, NATO or other relevant international organizations. (6) European Security Strategy fills this vacuum for the Union, recognizing essential role of the civilian capabilities, as being the only tool of addressing a broad range of 21st century threats in the form of their long-term management. It thus contributes to interlinking EU’s actions in the CCM in all the phases of the conflict cycle: conflict prevention, crisis management, peacemaking, post-conflict stabilization and last but not least development.

1.3 Deployment gap civilian capacity in the member states

Absence of necessary civilian capacities in almost all the EU states has been in a way attributable to the fact, that EU’s civilian capacities quantitative building has originated partly on a random basis, partly borrowing from the Union’s experience with the military capacities build up. Qualitative analysis of the actual readiness, deployability and sustainability of civilian capacities has proved them rather doubtful and primarily focused on the rule of law assistance and police reform resulting in the largest numbers of civilian staff recruited and deployed from the first two categories. (4) Last but not least the problem of sufficient staffing for EU’s civilian crisis management operations and missions is interconnected with the recruitment mechanism of secondment. This mechanism makes a clear distinction between a possibility of direct application for a position in the EU CCM mission and governmental nomination of an expert to a position required by the Union. Calls for Contribution should thus if in line with the member states commitments result in a deployment of relevant member states civilian experts in the field. This system allows for a tight governmental control as well as requires a member state financial coverage of the civilian expert expenses; on the other hand it contributes to the deployment gap and chronic understaffing of the EU missions. Potential solution of this problem rests in the proposed Goalkeeper project software environment, developed by the European Council, built for the purpose of planning and development of civilian aspects of CSDP. Its four interlinked applications include inter alia:

- Headhunter: generates job descriptions for the mission personnel;
- Registrar: keeping list of member states’ potentially available personnel;
- Schoolmaster: enabling training opportunities;
- Governor: over viewing concepts, doctrines and national strategies facilitating civilian personnel deployment.

Engagement of civilian experts in the area of crisis management missions and operations has until recently been conducted on retroactive, rather than proactive basis. This system has been seen as insufficient, resulting in the aforementioned missions’ understaffing and therefore development of rosters has become an issue of primary concern not only within EU and its Goalkeeper project, but also in the NATO (Compass project) and last but not least it has initiated efforts to establish a permanent rostering capacity within UN, or launch interlinked capacity in cooperation with other related international security actors (further discussed below).

Following table provides an illustration on the objectives and actual member states commitments while staffing civilian crisis management operations:
Table 1. - EU Civilian Capabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Police</th>
<th>The objective: to carry out any police operation, from advisory, assistance and training tasks to substituting local police forces. Member states commitments: to provide more than 5000 police officers (5761), of whom up to 1400 can be deployed in less than 30 days.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rule of Law</td>
<td>The objective: to establish a properly functioning judicial and penitentiary system backing up the police forces. Member States commitments: to provide 631 officers in charge of crisis management operations in that area (prosecutors, judges, prison officers).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civilian Administration</td>
<td>The objective: to create a pool of experts capable of accepting civilian administration missions in the context of crisis-management operations, deployed at very short notice. Member states commitments: to provide a total of 565 staff.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil Protection</td>
<td>The objective: to establish 2 or 3 assessment and/or coordination teams, capable of being mobilized around the clock; intervention teams of up to 2000 persons for deployment at short notice; additional or more specialized means which could be dispatched within 2 to 7 days depending on the particular needs of each crisis. Member States have commitments: 579 civil protection experts and 4445 staff for intervention teams.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>The objective: to monitor capability, identified by the December 2004 European Council, to become a generic tool for conflict prevention/resolution and/or crisis management and/or peace building. Member States commitments: 505 personnel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening of EUSR Offices</td>
<td>The objective: to strengthen the offices of EU Special Representatives.</td>
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1.3 Financing of CFSP and CSDP civilian missions

European Union finances its CFSP and specifically CSDP missions for the most part from the ad hoc contributions of its member states. This system on one hand doesn’t excessively burden the EU budget, on the other hand however seriously undermines Union’s ability to plan its medium and long-term activities. As Antonio Missiroli, Chief policy analyst of the European Policy Center hinted this ad-hoc budget creation even further contributes to the inter-institutional wrangling and hampers EU’s ability to scale up missions rapidly. (8) Moreover member states contributing to missions refuse to submit their contributions to a greater oversight by the EU Parliament and argue in favor of retaining control of both the finance as well as the missions themselves. Deployment of EU CCM missions into more distant and geographically diverse areas such as former Soviet Union, South Caucasus, the Middle East, Africa and Central and Southeast Asia thus remains burdensome, despite the fact that spending on CSDP operations has within years 2002 and 2005 more than doubled to reach € 62.6 million. (9)

1.4 Comparative Advantages of the European Union in the Civilian Crisis Management
More than a decade of active Union’s efforts in the field of the civilian crisis management has despite a number of the persistent challenges described above led to a number of specific strengths and comparative advantages tested in the battlefield. All in all these comparative advantages outweigh the potential of other regional security providers, namely African Union, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe as well as NATO. Fortunately for the Union, unfortunately for the remaining security actors their specific nature automatically eliminates potential usage in the different security settings. They cover mainly the following:

- **Local Presence**: European Union with its 40,000 officials serving in over 1,500 diplomatic missions worldwide altogether with 120 delegations of EU Commission contribute greatly to the Union’s local presence in a number of troubled hotspots with the related accurate identification of the pertinent problems.
- **Joined-up Policy Potential**: when sincerely compared with the United Nations policy potential, EU remains so far rather away from a joined-up CSDP strategy, however this potential remains feasible through the combination of diplomatic, developmental, commercial and military instruments intertwined with the relevant size economy, attractiveness of its consumer market and its role of a pre-eminent foreign aid provider disposing of considerable military capabilities.
- **Global Legitimacy**: apart from the world’s largest security provider – United Nations, European Union earns its legitimacy based on the aforementioned unique tools employed to deescalate crises, as well as on its theoretically defined and practically developed effective multilateralism. (10)

### 1.5 Secondment of civilian experts: principles and problems introduced

Principle of seconding civilian expert to international peacemaking, peacekeeping or peacebuilding missions is used not only by the Union, but also by OSCE, NATO and under exceptional circumstances, especially when specialists are needed that can’t be recruited individually also by UN. Seconded experts typically come from the area of member states civil service, therefore majority of them are national, regional, or local civil servants. Their job requires working under the EU instructions, following a detailed job description, preventing thus a potential conflict of interest. Interesting fact rests in the level of compensation, that is beneficial for the EU in terms of the regular payment provided by the member state employer, with the extra costs of living and working abroad covered by the relevant EU body. Those would usually include a daily subsistence allowance. Social security provisions remain to be covered by the original employer, however accident insurance scheme is simultaneously provided by the EU. (11) Seconded personnel are chosen by their home state, usually in line with that particular state’s political commitment, in the area of Civilian Crisis Management – Civilian Headline Goal 2010. The principle looks fine on the paper, on the other hand its shortfalls are obvious:

- **No surplus staff available**: whenever calls for contributions are made, related civil services should be able to contribute their staff for the missions. This automatically reduces staff required to perform everyday tasks back at home, overburdening remaining servants, usually disabling the related institution from hiring supplementary officer;
- **Reluctance to release best staff**: another quite natural shortcoming when it comes to staff deployment shows quite a natural tendency common to all the member states alike – reluctance to release their best employees to serve abroad;
Shortage of the experts: last but not least is the fact that highly specialized categories of civilian staff are in short supply and usually prefer to remain in the financially more attractive private sector.

2. United Nations and Civilian Crisis Management

United Nations as a founder of international operations providing for peace and stability has gradually proceeded from the First, Second towards Third generation of extended large scale multilateral, multidimensional and multinational peacekeeping operations. Current UN operations thus involve specialized military and civilian personnel and interlink a huge number of different international actors ranging from UN member states, towards regional governmental and non-governmental, regional and local organizations. (12)

Criticism of Brahimi’s report issued in 2000 advising for a new managerial and financial system and reformulating essential types of peace operations into: conflict prevention, peacebuilding, temporary management and peacekeeping has in 2008 inspired the Capstone Doctrine better reflecting structural changes of the present-day security environment reformulating peace operations into: conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peace enforcement and last but not least peace building. (13)

Altogether with a changed UN perspective on the roles and functions of civilians in the UN missions from their traditional presence in the humanitarian and development work, UN shifted its emphasis in the civilian crisis management from the humanitarian missions and monitoring to a more robust and comprehensive intervention bordering on the “state building”. (14) The question that awaits an effective answer is the one of the core task of civilian crisis management and the UN attempt to respond to it involves intermediate and long-term response to a post-conflict situation.

2.1 UN Key Challenges in the Civilian Crisis Management

Various UN peace missions and operations currently reflect a shift from a state towards human security. Rising importance of multi-dimensional and integrated missions has fundamentally changed an outlook at the role and participation of the civilian personnel. UN itself deploys more civilians than all the other regional organizations together amounting to a total of 22,000 civilian experts in October 2009, out of which 8,000 were the members of international staff. Second most important contextual shift has resulted in the deepened and enlarged civilian appointments to include: legal advising, planning, public information, humanitarian affairs, human rights area, gender equality building, child protect, rule of law, elections monitoring, demobilization, civil affairs and a number of others. (15)

Despite a number of achievements, key challenges remain:

- Absence of a comprehensive peacebuilding strategy: there is an urgent need for a decentralized UN strategy, based on an organizational theory. Such a strategy would definitely call for the hands-on involvement and in-depth knowledge on the ground, assessed from the flexible local presence as it is the case of the World Bank field engagement.

- Functional decentralization of UN: UN wouldn’t have originated absent its reliance on the equal sovereignty and respect for its individual member states. This particular feature however undermines UN ability to become an effective security provider.

- Financing: coming from a number of special actors, agencies and projects with the simultaneous donors’ tendency to earmark funding just for specific projects and agencies further undermines UN CCM capacity.
2.2 UN and Direct Hiring of Personnel: Principles and Problems Introduced

In comparison with other international organizations actively working in the field of the Civilian Crisis Management, recruitment of personnel for UN directed by the Department of Field Support (DFS) is conducted on the basis of individuals filing direct applications for CCM operations through the UN website. Annually thus the system comprises approximately 150,000 applications, filled out on the basis of individual contracting with the organization. Contrary to EU relying up to large extent on the seconded personnel, thus UN problems with civilian experts doesn’t attach to a low number of actual applicants, but rather on:

- **Duplicity of applications**;
- **Inability of applicants to fulfill minimal appointment prerequisites**,
- **Mission’s inability to absorb initially more experts**;
- **Lengthy time period needed for identification, hiring and deployment of suitable civilian experts to peace missions and inability to permanently keep a number of suitable candidates**.

UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations therefore in relation to a rising number and scale of its peace operations faces an increased request for civilian experts, qualitative increase of civilian capabilities needed interconnected with the need to create a civilian-technical expert database and enhanced demand for the fast deployment of civilian experts to the ground. (16)

3 Roster System: Solution to Deployment Gaps both in EU and UN

In order to address the pending problems related to high vacancy rates of civilian experts for specific international missions in EU and UN, a series of steps have been already undertaken on both organizational and national level resulting in the creation of general and specialized rosters filled up with the potential candidates available and qualified to serve in the Civilian Crisis Management Missions. The Center of International Cooperation’s report, Rapid Deployment of Civilians for Peace Operations distinguishes between 3 specialized types of rosters, whose pros and cons include namely:

A, **standing capacity**; allows through the full time employment particular needed staff available whenever the need arises. An example involves Department of Peacekeeping Operations’ Standing Police Capacity of the UN’s Secretariat. Major advantage of the system rests in the rapid deployability of the personnel to new missions or to fill specific surge gaps as well as in the UN’s ability to dispose with a core professional standing staff capacity. Disadvantages in the contrary include short-term contracts as opposed to other UN longer-term contracts as well as an excessive financial burden contributing to the member states’ reluctance to support it.

B, **standby capacity**; pre-identification of experts potentially deployable when the need arises within a specific time-frame. An example involves an already defunct Rapid Deployment Roster of DPKO, working within 2003-2004 consisting of DPKO HQ staff that could be deployed to the field for a maximum 90-day period. Advantage of the system while compared with the standing capacity would definitely include costs saved, since the personnel would be regularly employed by their relevant civilian
service. The disadvantages on the other hand calculate with a slower deployment of the available personnel, close and continuous contact with the personnel on the roster, frequent testing of the roster robustness and last but not least inflexibility of the staff superiors to release them for a specific time period due to workload concerns.

C, rostered capacity: serving as a database of potential civilian expert. National rosters in this respect would involve hundreds of pre-screened candidates, recruited to the rosters on the basis of specific criteria to match deployment needs. On the other hand bigger organizational roster rely on the “just-in-time” process selecting potential candidates from a roster based on the sophisticated search criteria. This system is on one hand rather costs-saving, on the other hand its heavy maintenance is rather costly and moreover prevents using them as a uniform strategy to address deployment gaps both on a short-scale and large scale level. (16)

All of the aforementioned roster options definitely stand for a qualitative improvement and functional shift in the area of Civilian Crisis Management from a retroactive response to crisis situations to a pro-active preparedness for crises. In relation to the specific nature, institutions, decision-making, membership, size and scope of deployment EU and UN would have to adopt a specific system of rostering available civilian personnel, the one that would take into consideration also the principle of secondment and direct hiring of experts.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations to EU and UN

Quantitative and qualitative shift in the area of security from the state towards human security has impacted also the scope of United Nations and European Union agenda and led to establishment of civilian crisis management. Today civilian experts are an indispensable part of either purely civilian or civilian-military peace missions and operations. Hand in hand with the civilian deployment to the field goes also a high vacancy rate and civilian understaffing. Reasons for these deployment gaps are specific and attributable to a unique deployment mechanism of EU’s secondment and UN’s direct hiring of personnel. A series of challenges attached to applicability and sustainability of civilian solutions to crises have to be therefore addressed with the following proposed solutions for EU:

Promote cross-cutting civilian-military civilian-military training through the newly set up European Security Academy or European Institute for Peace, synergies in the training through the process of complementary training offered by the EU to add to the Member states training of the civilian personnel and common standards overviewed by the EU Council Secretariat established training inspectorate;
Exchange views at key steps of the processes such as generic scenarios definition, requirements settings, overlapping requirements identification, member states’ contributions gathering as well as assessment and gathering of shortfalls towards development of common methodologies and tools to address these problems;
adjust civilian capabilities to better address current security threats: intelligence and expertise to tackle organized crime, civil protection and disaster response, civilian administration resources to help reconstructing failed states;
and last but not least through a regularly updated rosters of civilian and police officers, create cross-governmental funding pools for civilian deployment, create systematic process of training of planners in the foreign affairs ministries and debrief staff deployed. (3,6,10)
Moreover, solution addressing the UN calls for functional centralization with all the related UN actors working together in the theatre, on the other hand geographical decentralization enabling due to changing circumstances, flexible decision-making on the ground.

References


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