CSDP capabilities

The world is changing and Europe faces an increasingly complex and uncertain security environment. There is a growing demand for the European Union to become more capable, more coherent and more strategic as a global actor. The EU disposes of a unique array of instruments to help promote peace and security where needed.

A comprehensive approach is a key asset to tackle the complex, multi-actor and multidimensional crises and growing security threats of today and tomorrow, as highlighted in the European Security Strategy.

The Council of the European Union agrees that in addition to continuing with civilian missions and military operations, the EU has to improve its ability to foster civilian-military cooperation and to use the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) as part of coherent EU action, which should also include political, diplomatic, legal, development, trade and economic instruments.

The Treaty of Lisbon offers an opportunity for reinforcing the comprehensive approach. As the European External Action Service becomes operational under the direction of the High Representative, who is also Vice President of the Commission, the Treaty's implementation will facilitate and maximize effectiveness of the use of the variety of policies and instruments at the EU’s disposal in a more coherent manner, in order to address the whole cycle, from preparedness and preventative action; through crisis response and management, including stabilisation, peace-making and peace-keeping; to peace-building, recovery, reconstruction and a return to longer-term development.

Civilian capabilities

Civilian capabilities are at the core of every EU CSDP mission. Adequate and sufficient capabilities are the prerequisite for successful implementation of the assigned tasks in the field.

Since 2003, the process of generating the needed capabilities for civilian CSDP missions remains a strategic priority for the EU. The European Council from December 2013 called for the "enhanced development of civilian capabilities" and stressed the importance of "fully implementing the Civilian Capability Development Plan". Subsequently, the June 2015 European Council reiterated that work should "continue on a more effective, visible and result-oriented CSDP and the further development of both civilian and military capabilities".
The EU Level of Ambition regarding civilian crisis management is expressed through two Civilian Headline Goals (CHG 2008 and CHG 2010). The time horizon of the latter was extended beyond 2010. During their implementation, encouraging results were achieved by providing political impetus to the processes of recruitment, training and deployment of civilian personnel to international missions. However, important capability gaps persist.

The Civilian Headline Goal is the basis and the framework for the implementation of the multiannual Civilian Capability Development Plan (CCDP) established in July 2012.

The overall aim of the CCDP is to help EU Member States to address the persistent civilian capability shortfalls through concrete actions within the domain of its drivers: namely EU Ambitions, Capability Trends (operational & long term), National Strategies and Lessons Learnt that have consequences in the realm of capabilities.

Some progress has already been achieved, for instance: increasing the number of Member States with a national strategy to foster national capacity building for CSDP missions; progress made in establishing national budget lines for civilian crisis management and sharing EU Member States' best practices. The CCDP also aims at maximizing efficient use of resources by allowing a more coherent and hence cost-effective development of civilian capabilities.

The CCDP constitutes a lasting framework for CSDP civilian capability development since it envisages periodic modifications deriving from changes in EU ambitions, political strategic context, operational feed-back and other variables.

The establishment of the list of generic civilian CSDP tasks in 2015 was one of the important steps towards the implementation of a CCDP aiming at building a common understanding of generic tasks occurring in civilian CSDP throughout the whole mission cycle.

This list supports CSDP structures and Member States in identifying capability requirements related to planning, conduct and overall support of civilian CSDP missions. As such, it is also part of the Goalkeeper project - the EU software-based platform to facilitate, i.a. training and recruitment of civilian personnel being sent to CSDP missions.

The principal body responsible for ensuring a sustainable process for development of civilian CSDP capabilities is the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM). In its activities in the capability domain, CIVCOM is supported by the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate of European External Action Service (EEAS).

**Goalkeeper**

Goalkeeper is a web-based information hub that serves Member States, Brussels and CSDP civilian missions by supporting training, recruitment, capability development and institutional memory in the area of civilian capabilities for CSDP. In that sense, it is a crucial mainstay of EU initiatives in the development of facilitators for civilian deployment.

See also:
Military capabilities

On 19 November 2007, the Council of the European Union (EU) approved the Progress Catalogue 2007, the culmination of the process launched in the wake of the approval of the Headline Goal 2010. The Catalogue identifies quantitative and qualitative military capability shortfalls on the basis of the requirements set out in the Requirements Catalogue 2005 and the contributions compiled in the Force Catalogue 2007. It analyses their potential implications for military tasks to be carried out in crisis management operations.

The overall conclusion of the Progress Catalogue 2007 is that the EU, with a view to 2010, has the capability to conduct the full spectrum of military CSDP operations within the parameters of the Strategic Planning Assumptions, with different levels of operational risk arising from the identified shortfalls.

Some of the shortfalls identified are regarded as critical; they relate to the capability to transport forces to theatre, to deploy them in theatre, to protect them and to acquire information superiority.

On that basis, a Capability Development Plan (CDP) was submitted on 8 July 2008 to the Steering Board of the European Defence Agency (EDA) composed of Member States' "Capabilities" chiefs. The Board endorsed the CDP conclusions and started work on an initial list of priority capability areas. The EDA, the Member States, the EU Military Committee (EUMC) the EU Military Staff (EUMS) and the General Secretariat of the Council will all cooperate in this task.

At the Cologne European Council in June 1999, EU leaders agreed that "the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and the readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises without prejudice to actions by NATO".

At the European Council in Helsinki in December 1999, the so-called Helsinki Headline Goal was established, setting amongst others the following targets:

- co-operating voluntarily in EU-led operations, Member States must be able, by 2003, to deploy within 60 days and sustain for at least 1 year military forces of, the Union will be able to carry out the full range of the tasks gi up to 50,000-60,000 persons capable of the full range of tasks stated in Article 17 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU).
- new political and military bodies and structures will be established within the Council to enable the Union to ensure the necessary political guidance and strategic direction to such operations, while respecting the single institutional framework.

In May 2003, the Council confirmed that the EU now has operational capability across the full range of Petersberg tasks, limited and constrained by recognised shortfalls. These limitations and/or constraints are on deployment time and high risk may arise at the upper end of the spectrum of scale and intensity, in particular when conducting concurrent operations. These limitations and constraints on full achievement of the Headline and Capability Goals could be alleviated if the recommendations on meeting the shortfalls are followed-up.

See also

Financing security and defence military operations - Athena
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