



EU Training for Civilian CSDP – Which Coherence?

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This brief aims to assess the coherence of the training initiatives taken at the EU level in the field of the civilian dimension of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The analysis focuses on the training for personnel involved in Civilian Crisis Management (CCM), at both strategic and operational levels.

Training for CCM constitutes a significant dimension of the strengthening of EU capabilities in the field of CSDP. It contributes to the development of a European security culture (Council of the European Union, 2004: 3) by promoting a common understanding of the civilian CSDP among personnel from the EU institutions and the Member States. Training also improves the quality of CSDP mission personnel, which in turn directly influences the effectiveness with which they fulfil their tasks (Khol, 2008: 6).

Considering the existence of different training initiatives in the field of civilian CSDP at the EU level, it seems relevant to try to assess their coherence. Since it determines the strength of the link between training needs and training activities, the analysis of the training needs assessment phase will constitute the first dimension of the assessment of the coherence

of these initiatives. The range of actions and their impact on the coherence of the overall training framework in civilian CSDP will constitute the second dimension.

In order to contextualize this analysis, it should be stated that, firstly, training is only one particular aspect of a broader recruitment issue. It should be put into perspective therefore with other aspects of this problem such as the development of rosters of personnel. Secondly, when focusing on EU initiatives, it should be kept in mind that this analysis will cover only a small aspect of the training activities conducted in civilian CSDP given the fact that Member States provide a significant majority of these training activities.

State of Play

Training by Member States

The EU has no “civilian standing forces” (Korski & Gowan, 2009: 43) it could deploy for civilian CSDP missions. On the contrary, it needs to rely essentially on seconded personnel from Member States. In addition, the training in CSDP remains essentially a Member States’ prerogative. A characteristic of national training systems in this field is their relative general structural weakness. While the training in the field of military crisis management can be addressed via Member States’ military academies, “only a handful of

EU Member States have at their disposal civilian institutions taking care of a complex training of all categories of civilian experts before their deployment in international crisis management operations” (Khol, 2008: 6) – with the exception of police personnel. As a result, all Member States either cannot afford to systematically train the personnel involved in civilian CSDP or they need to rely on other Member States’ training facilities. Furthermore, the content of the training provided by national institutes varies across the EU.

EU action in this field thus potentially has high added value. Currently, the EU has addressed this issue at two levels: firstly by providing a policy framework and secondly by launching training initiatives at the EU level.

EU Training Policy

The *EU training policy* and *EU training concept in CSDP* elaborated respectively in 2003 and 2004 provide the policy framework in which the EU initiatives in the field of training for civilian CSDP should be considered.

The *EU training policy*, which encompasses both the civilian and military dimension, can be defined as “a training regime, conducted in common, which contributes to a better understanding and sense of purpose of [CSDP] and provides knowledge and, if required, skills for its implementation”. Acknowledging a need to establish “a holistic and co-ordinated approach on training matters”, this policy aims to set up an overarching framework for training initiatives firstly by developing an EU training dimension – which would draw on and be complementary to trainings already delivered by national authorities – and secondly by “establishing links and strengthening synergies between the different training initiatives at EU level” (Council of the European Union, 2003: 4-8).

The *EU training concept in CSDP*, implementing the EU training policy, defines the different

phases of the EU training process. This process is framed by three core documents embodying its different stages, each reviewed on an annual basis. The first one consists in the analysis of EU training requirements in CSDP¹ which aims to help the training providers to match their training activities with identified training needs. It is followed by the EU training programme², listing, on a voluntary basis, training activities at EU and national levels. Finally, an evaluation of the process is carried out through the Comprehensive Annual Report on CSDP and CSDP-related Training³ (CART), “verifying whether and to what extent aims and objectives were achieved” (Council of the European Union, 2004: 5).

Regarding the responsibilities for the conduct of this policy, at the political level, while the Council ensures “the coherence between the different bodies involved in the implementation of the Training Policy and between all relevant EU policies and procedures”, the Political and Security Committee (PSC) provides the “overall guidance”. On the committee level, the Politico-Military Group (PMG), because of the civil-military nature of the policy, plays an overseeing role in the framework of the EU training process described above. The core documents of the EU training policy, i.e. the training needs and requirements assessment and the CART, are negotiated within and are formally issued by the PMG, while the preparatory work – including data collection – is dealt with essentially by the Crisis Management Planning Directorate (CMPD). As far as the EU training programme is concerned, the PMG regularly asks Member States to feed the Schoolmaster application with the training activities they provide.

As regards the civilian aspects of this policy, the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) is closely involved in the drafting process of the above-mentioned

documents and provides its advice to the PSC once they have been discussed within the PMG (Council of the European Union, 2004: 5-7).

EU Training Initiatives

Several initiatives have been launched at the EU level in the field of training in civilian CSDP.

The *European Security and Defence College* (ESDC): The ESDC has been established in 2005 as a ‘virtual’ college. It is organized as “a network between the institutes, colleges, academies, universities and institutions within the European Union (EU) dealing with security and defence policy issues and the European Union Institute for Security Studies”. Its objectives are to further enhance the European security culture, to promote a better understanding of the CSDP, and to provide EU instances and Member states with knowledgeable personnel in CSDP by organizing and conducting training activities in the field of CSDP at the strategic level (Council of the European Union, 2008a: 20-21).

The *European Group on Training* (EGT): In 2001, the European Commission launched a pilot project on ‘training for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management’ to provide training at the operational level which later became the European Group on Training (EGT). This project takes the shape of an informal network composed of governmental and non-governmental training bodies involved in training civilian personnel for crisis management activities. This project has proceeded in several phases. When entering in its last phase in 2010, it has been renamed *Europe’s New Training Initiative for Civilian Crisis Management* (ENTRi). It now focuses essentially on specialized courses and pre-deployment training as well as on harmonization and standardization of course curricula. It is currently composed of twelve training institutes under the coordination of the Zentrum für Internationale Friedenseinsätze (ZIF) in Berlin.

The *European Police Force training* (EUPFT): Since 2007, the European Commission has been funding EUPFT. This project provides training at the operational level for “police experts for participation in international policing missions” (European Commission, 2010a: 19).

The *European Police College* (CEPOL): Designed “to train the senior police officers of the Member States” (Council of the European Union, 2005a: 2), CEPOL provides training at the strategic level, such as strategic planning of EU police missions for senior police personnel.

The Coherence of EU-Level Initiatives *Training Needs Assessment*

The first angle used to analyse the coherence of these initiatives lies within the training needs assessment phase. The rationale is that in order to be coherent, these initiatives should be matching the training activities with the training needs. Moreover, the assessment of those training needs should ideally be made at a centralized level in order to effectively channel all different initiatives.

Currently, despite the fact that the EU training policy in CSDP provides a framework for training activities in civilian CSDP, there is no overall coordinating body able to make systematic and specific recommendations regarding the content of the courses given by those training providers. As stated previously, the PMG annually publishes a document on the analysis of training needs and requirements relevant to CSDP listing the knowledge and skills required for the civilian, diplomatic and military personnel involved. This document establishes “an *indicative list* of types of courses which are needed to meet these requirements” (Council of the European Union, 2009a: 17, emphasis added). But it does not recommend specific training activities to be undertaken by a given training provider. The decision to launch new training activities is actually formally independent from the given framework.

The poorest record in this respect probably goes to the EGT. Despite acknowledged achievements, some shortcomings are commonly identified (Meijer & Matveeva, 2006: 56-57; European Commission, 2009: 7): a lack of ongoing assessment, relatively supply-driven (rather than demand-driven) courses, and a weak link between training participation and deployment of personnel. Consequently, for a long time, training activities undertaken within this framework were based on what the specific training institutes could provide rather than on a sound training needs assessment process.

As regards CEPOL, the decision of its governing board to launch new training activities in the field of CSDP crisis management could have been taken in closer coordination with this policy framework (although dialogue with CIVCOM has improved).

For the ESDC, decisions to develop new training activities are taken by unanimity by its Steering Committee. In this case, the lack of overall coordination of training activities in civilian CSDP is compensated by the fact that the Steering Committee is composed of representatives who are also CIVCOM or PMG delegates. This situation helps ensuring the link between ESDC activities and the EU training policy in CSDP, since these bodies are involved in the management of this policy. Likewise, the fact that decisions to launch training activities are being taken by national representatives helps to ensure the link between training needs and training activities.

Similarly, a promising development of ENTRI is the creation of the Project Steering Group, which should constitute an opportunity to partly remedy the shortcomings identified above. The PSG, gathering the main stakeholders in civilian crisis management (European Commission, 2010b: 4), constitutes a mechanism aimed to ensure that the project is responsive to the training needs. It would probably include, at the EU level, representatives from the CPMD, the

Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC), CIVCOM, the European Commission, and the ESDC on an ad-hoc basis.

Nonetheless, the EU training policy framework is too weak to allow a sound and centralized training requirements assessment phase to be developed. As explored in the next section, this can be explained by the different scope of action of these initiatives.

Scope of Action of Training Initiatives

The second element of the analysis of the coherence of these initiatives is their scope of action.

Among all previously mentioned training providers, the ESDC is the only actor solely devoted to training in CSDP. The scope of the training provided by EGT-ENTRI and by the EUPFT is actually broader than EU CCM. ENTRI targets “professional experts requiring preparation for participation in civilian crisis management type missions, including those of the European Union (EU), United Nations (UN), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), African Union (AU), and others” (European Commission, 2010b: 2). Likewise, the objective of the EUPFT is to train police experts “for participation in EU, UN and/or AU civilian missions” (European Commission, 2010a: 30).

This situation has a negative impact on the coherence of the training needs assessment phase which constrains and impacts the design of training activities. For this EC-financed project in particular, the needs assessment phase is fed by inputs from other international organizations such as the UN and the OSCE – even though this project has been re-centred on EU CCM in its last phase. It also highlights a likely misperception of some CSDP actors regarding the role of ENTRI. They probably tend to perceive it as aiming to reinforce the civilian CSDP capacity, which is not the case.

The final beneficiaries of ENTRi are “the affected population of third countries experiencing a crisis, to which personnel trained under this action will be deployed” (European Commission, 2010b: 2) – it is worth mentioning that it is financed by the Instrument for Stability. The priorities of different CSDP actors and the European Commission who finances this project might therefore differ. Furthermore, the broader scope of action of ENTRi probably justifies, in the eyes of the Commission, the maintaining of some degree of independence vis-à-vis the Council in the conduct of the project.

The latter point leads us to the inter-institutional dimension of this issue. Despite the formal abolition of the pillar structure by the Lisbon Treaty, the institutional set-up of the CSDP remains strongly intergovernmental. On the other hand, the ENTRi network is financed by the Commission and has responded to a call for tender defining the objectives to be pursued and, consequently, binding ENTRi actions. This situation reduces the room for manoeuvre for CSDP actors to influence the conduct of the project in general and of the training needs assessment in particular.

The lack of Member States’ direct involvement in the EC-financed project could also partly explain the bad record of EGT regarding the percentage of trained personnel actually deployed on CSDP operations. Firstly, as mentioned above, CSDP actors had no possibility to translate their operational needs into training activities through EGT. And secondly, the lack of Member States involvement implies a poor link between selection for training and actual deployment on CSDP operations⁴. That EGT-ENTRi is mainly composed of non-governmental organizations can be considered as complicating the link between training and deployment. Moreover, the fact that “the EGT project was conceived and began to be implemented before the EU had fully developed its strategies for civilian deployments in crisis management missions”

(Meijer & Matveeva, 2006: 48) also accounts for some of the EGT’s shortcomings. As a corollary, this cross-pillar aspect hinders the ability for a Council committee to play an overall coordinating role in this field: the European Commission is the contracting authority for ENTRi and EUPFT, and CEPOL is an independent agency.

Strategic versus Operational Level Training

The third dimension of the assessment of coherence is the distinction between operational and strategic level training. This distinction refers to the division of labour between EGT-ENTRi and the ESDC. While the latter’s prerogatives are limited to the strategic field, the former provides training activities at the operational level. It makes sense to assess whether this distinction is effective and whether overlaps can be identified.

Overall, the division of labour seems to work efficiently. Specialization courses constitute the only area where overlap could occur. The ESDC has neither the will nor the resources to develop pre-deployment training, and the distinction between the strategic and operational dimensions is sometimes blurred for this level of training. Moreover, if a training need is identified, this distinction should not be maintained too rigidly given the needs in the field. For example, the ESDC conducts training activities in the field of Security Sector Reform which do not entirely focus on the strategic dimension. It should be borne in mind that some civilian institutes are part of both the ESDC and EGT-ENTRi which helps avoiding overlap. Nonetheless, if the ESDC were to encroach too often on the operational training dimension, tensions with the EGT-ENTRi, the mandate of which is to provide operational-level training courses, could result.

If the division of labour between EGT-ENTRi and the ESDC is to be understood, one should mention *The Study on the Future Perspective of the*

ESDC, drafted by the General Secretariat of the Council, the recommendations of which have been adopted by the Council. Among these, the study has recommended that the ESDC should “provide management support for training activities in the field of civilian crisis management”. The aim is to improve the link between the operational needs of civilian CSDP missions and training activities and to increase coordination between CCM training activities (Council of the European Union, 2008b: 19). The proposed ESDC role would include coordination of the planning and programming of training activities, the development of curricula, and assistance in developing an accreditation system and ensuring a systematic evaluation of training activities.

The proposal to enhance the role of the ESDC beyond its training provider role can be considered as a source of ‘tensions’ with EGT-ENTRi (Lieb, 2010: 6) since it might have been perceived as an attempt by the ESDC to control the work of the latter and as overlapping with activities already undertaken by it (development of curricula and accreditation system). Even though the functions that the ESDC is willing to assume are necessary, given the weakness of the EU training policy in CSDP, it is worth questioning whether they cannot be assumed, in the context of the current political and institutional framework, by the CMPD. If the ESDC was to be given such a role, one could raise concerns about the smooth cooperation with ENTRi and the Commission – which could be reluctant to allow the ESDC to oversee the project it finances.

It seems reasonable to think that this initiative is induced by the significant funding difficulties of the ESDC. Contrary to ENTRi-EGT, which can rely on generous EC funding, the EDSC training activities rest on the ‘costs lie where they fall’ principle. The ESDC is considered as “a key training actor” at the strategic level (Council of the European Union, 2010: 5), but this paradoxical absence of funding severely impedes

its training activities and makes its position in the training framework less secure. The ESDC’s demands are actually quite modest since the funding it is asking for is essentially meant to allow its secretariat to operate properly. Given the importance of the ESDC secretariat in supporting ESDC training activities and in developing cooperation with other training actors (such as CEPOL), proper funding is essential for the ESDC. The reason why the ESDC is struggling for proper funding is the reluctance of some Member States to see the ESDC develop its activities. The ESDC might epitomize a certain idea of “European Defence” and might constitute competition for the well-established national training institutions of bigger Member States. Likewise, the exaggerated⁵ claim that the ESDC is essentially a ‘military’ organization seems also to constitute an attempt to hinder its quest for funding.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that this initiative is likely to have an impact on a possible reform of the EU training policy. The CIVCOM is asking for a strengthened role in guiding the civilian aspects of the EU training policy in CSDP, given the predominance of purely civilian training actors (ENTRi, EUPTF, and CEPOL) – the ESDC being the only EU initiative refuting this logic. On the other end, while welcoming the expertise of the CIVCOM, the PMG is underlining the importance of the ‘comprehensive approach’ that the training should reflect by linking both the civilian and military dimensions, and thus justifying its current overseeing functions. In this context, a weak ESDC or an EDSC granted with coordinating functions will certainly influence CIVCOM’s claims differently. Moreover, it may not be surprising, under those circumstances, for the CIVCOM to express its reserves on an increased ESDC role. Once again, this state of affairs illustrates the absence of an effective coordinating body that could channel the actions of these training initiatives. Furthermore, this absence creates a

vacuum to be filled, which might be a source of tensions in the civilian training landscape.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The absence of an overall coordinating body able to channel the training activities in CCM results from a weak policy framework and seriously impedes the coherence of EU training initiatives. This lack of coherence is further explained by an inter-institutional dynamic which complicates the link between CSDP training needs and the training provided at the EU level. Furthermore, it can be observed that institutional or organizational rationales might at some occasions be harmful to the coherence of the training framework in civilian CSDP. This dynamic can also be explained by a loose policy framework.

In order to strengthen the coherence of EU training initiatives in CCM, the following recommendations can be made:

(1) The reform of the ESDC should be made a priority. Firstly, it is time to give this organisation, the work of which is essential in civilian CSDP training, the means it requires for an efficient implementation of its assigned tasks. Secondly, as mentioned above, a clarification of the ESDC's position in the EU training landscape is a prerequisite to allow reform of the EU training policy in CSDP. In order to allow for the ESDC to perform effectively, a strengthening of its secretariat is crucial. Currently, it seeks to implement the 2008 recommendations – which include a reinforcement of its secretariat and would require the adoption of a new Council decision to replace the current Joint Action – either under the CFSP or EEAS budget. The creation of the EEAS has constituted a window of opportunity for the ESDC (since its secretariat is currently part of the CMPD which is integrated in the EEAS structures). Unfortunately, its reform is not high on the EEAS agenda given the more pressing challenges the latter is facing.

(2) As stressed repeatedly, the weakness of the current policy framework accounts for much of the lack of coherence of the assessed training initiatives. It is crucial to clarify the responsibilities of the different bodies involved in the EU training policy in CSDP in general and in its civilian dimension in particular – it is all the more necessary, given the institutional development that this policy field has known since 2003-2004. More specifically, allowing a Council committee to make more specific recommendations regarding the training activities to be undertaken by both EU and national training providers would be a good start. As mentioned above, the relative weight of the CIVCOM and the PMG in this revised policy probably very much depends on the role the ESDC will be playing in the CSDP training landscape. Nonetheless, it is important to be aware of the limitations of the scope of such reform. It does not seem possible to implement far-reaching changes in the short run, essentially for two reasons. First, training remains a Member States' prerogative. Secondly, the intergovernmental nature of the CSDP is very likely to impede the full integration of the EC-financed project in a sound training requirements assessment process for civilian CSDP operations (despite the promising set up of the PSC).

(3) On a more optimistic note, in the long run, the creation of a 'European Diplomatic Academy' within the EEAS structures would certainly constitute the most stable and efficient option. In the future, the training needs of the EEAS, in order to build a common organizational culture, will probably be quite high. The needs of civilian CSDP training would be different but structurally, economies of scale could be achieved by regrouping all CSDP-related training activities under a 'European Security and Diplomatic Academy'. Therefore, if the political will exists, the future EEAS training

needs could provide a window of opportunity to rationalize and increase the coherence of the current CSDP-related training initiatives organized at the EU level, including the training activities in civilian CSDP.

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Endnotes

¹ See e.g. Council of the European Union (2009a).

² Since 2007 it takes the shape of the Schoolmaster application.

³ See e.g. Council of the European Union (2010).

⁴ Even though the CIVCOM is acting as an interface between personnel selected by Member States for deployment and participation in EGT.

⁵ Since its creation, the ESDC has significantly opened itself to civilian institutes such as the Austrian Study Centre for Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution and the Folke Bernadotte Academy. Moreover, ‘civilians’ constitute the majority of the ESDC’s training audience.

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