

## EU Missions and Operations

### Historical perspective

The European Union has been conducting peace support operations with the aim of peace-keeping, conflict resolution and crisis management for more than 20 years starting with the first interventions in 2003. Today, EU missions and operations are the crucial part of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) which works in the framework of the broader EU policy, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in line with the Treaty on European Union (TEU), and the United Nations Charter (XAVIER–REHRL 2016: 78–83). These multinational peace support operations are either of civilian nature (also including police forces) or military nature, allows the European Union to take common action against crisis and conflict with performing the so-called Petersberg tasks (Figure 1) (EUR-Lex 2022).

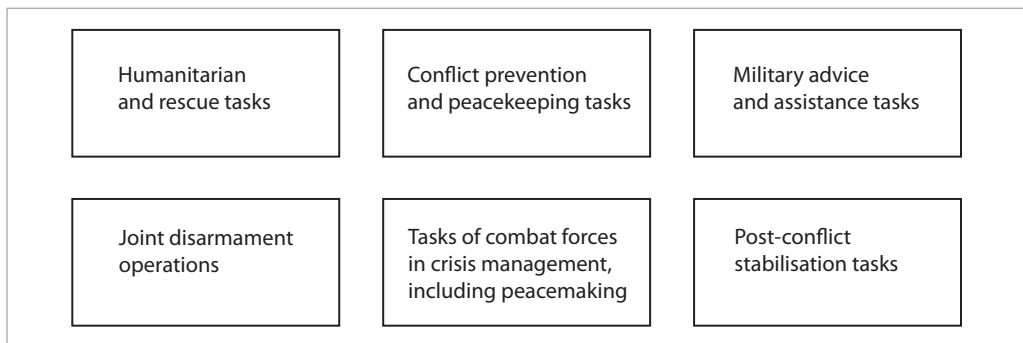


Figure 1: Petersberg tasks

Source: Compiled by the authors

The Petersberg tasks were integrated into the EU's external action inherited from the Western European Union. The list of tasks was agreed on by the Petersberg Declaration in 1992 which is still fundamental and present in EU CSDP today, however, substantially expanded. CFSP was introduced in the EU with the Maastricht Treaty coming into force in 1993. While in the following years, the intensification of conflicts, and later on war in the Balkans after the dissolution of Yugoslavia, directly influenced European regional security, and EU Member States started to focus more efforts and resources on cooperative measures on security and defence. Following the milestone of the Saint-Malo Declaration in 1998 by the bilateral endeavours of the United Kingdom and France, subsequent EU high level meetings led to the creation of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) becoming operational in 2003 (LINDSTROM 2021: 16–21). ESDP

made it possible for the European Union to establish its first civilian mission and military operations in the same year, in 2003. A policing mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (European Union Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina – EUPM BiH), and two military operations, European Union Military Operation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (EUFOR Concordia), also known as Operation Concordia, and European Union Military Operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (EUFOR Artemis/Operation Artemis) (LINDSTROM 2021: 16–21).

The EU conducting peace operations the first time in its history has challenged the assumptions of its *soft*, or in other contexts called, *civilian* power identity, starting discussions on the EU's role in the world internally and externally (see DUCHÊNE 1972: 32–47). It also established the basis of the common policy, which later on have become the European Common Security and Defence Policy. The EU's intention to develop further its external action and focus more attention and capacities on security and defence was also boosted. It was closely connected to the changes in the global and transatlantic security architecture shaped first by the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001 (VAN HAM 2022). Subsequently, the indirect effects of the Arab Spring in 2011, and the direct ones of the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014 gave further impetus to the EU to enhance cooperation on common security and defence.

*The post-Lisbon era: Decision-making and institutional background  
of EU missions and operations*

Institutional background and capabilities of the EU to conduct missions and operations was significantly strengthened with the Lisbon Treaty coming into force in 2009, as a consequence of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) becoming another area of common action of the European Union, from that time on functioning as Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). CSDP providing “the European Union with an operational capacity to deploy civilian and military missions and operations abroad” is managed by the European External Action Service (EEAS), another institution born with the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty (EEAS 2022). The EEAS, operational since 2011, is led by the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR/VP), who is also the Vice-President of the European Commission. The HR/VP is assisted by the Secretary General and his/her deputies in managing the external actions of the EU, including CSDP, through the EEAS. The Deputy Secretary General of the EEAS for CSDP and Crisis Response is responsible for the EU missions and operations.

As of May 2023, the EU has established 42 missions and operations, having 23 ongoing CSDP missions and operations simultaneously in Africa, the Middle East, the Balkans and in the Eastern neighbourhood (Figure 2) in 2023 late spring. Nine of them are military missions and operations, while 14 missions are of civilian nature with all together more than 4,000 EU personnel deployed (EEAS 2022). The changing security landscape in Europe and the adoption of the EU's first de facto defence strategy, the EU Strategic Compass, in 2022 both contributed to the enhanced focus on CFSP and CSDP issues in

the EU, which is also mirrored in the number of new EU missions and operations launched since then. Two of the four most recently launched missions are military in nature: the European Military Assistance Mission in Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine) and the European Military Partnership Mission Niger (EUMPM Niger). EUMAM Ukraine was set up upon the decision of the Council on deploying a military assistance mission to Ukraine in the last quarter of 2022 (Council of the European Union 2022a), while EUPMP Niger was launched early 2023 (EEAS 2023a). Similarly in early 2023, the European Union established two new civilian missions as well, EU Monitoring Capacity in Armenia (EUMCAP Armenia) and EU Partnership Mission in the Republic of Moldova (EUPM Moldova) (EEAS 2023b). It is also important to note that in some partner countries, such as the Central African Republic, Mali or Somalia, and most recently Niger, the European Union is present with both military and civilian missions. The parallel CSDP actions are further enhancing the comprehensive approach to conflict management in its external action, using the synergies of civilian and military tools at the same time for addressing crisis.

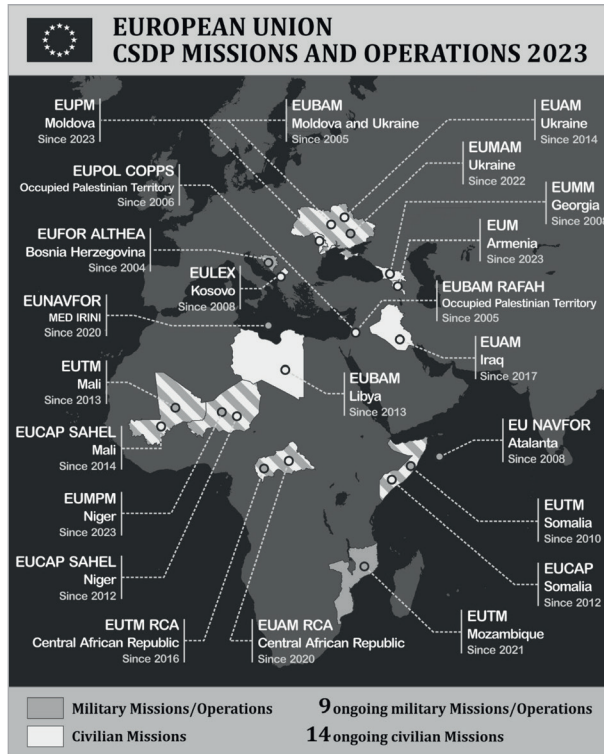


Figure 2: EU CSDP missions and operations

Source: Compiled by the authors based on EEAS 2022

Crucial elements and guiding principles of the decision-making process on CSDP missions and operations are legitimacy and unanimity. Strong legitimacy can be provided by the resolution of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), or by the direct request

of a partner country (the future host nation of the mission or operation) asking for support or intervention of the EU members states. The first means the authorisation of the UNSC adopting a resolution calling and/or allowing the international community to act and/or to use military force for conflict resolution or the protection of civilian population in accordance with the United Nations (UN) Charter. This was the case with today's largest ongoing EU CSDP civilian mission, EULEX Kosovo, which will be discussed later as a case study. The second option – deploying a CSDP mission based on the invitation of the partner country – is yet another practice, which also creates a legitimate framework for the establishment of the missions and operations. This was the case for example with the missions serving as a case study in the next chapter, the European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM Ukraine) in Ukraine, when Kyiv requested the assistance of the EU via deploying a civilian mission to the country.

Besides legitimacy and compliance with international law, for conducting EU CSDP missions and operations, the baseline of the decision-making process is that all EU Member States need to agree and unanimously decide on setting up a mission or operation. Upon the proposal of the HR/VP or an EU Member State, this decision is made by the Council of the European Union by unanimity (MORENO 2021: 80–86). Nevertheless, a new precedent must be noted regarding the decision-making process, relying on the so-called *constructive abstention* based on Article 31 of the TEU. This allows EU countries to abstain from voting in favour of the decision of the Council on CFSP issues – such as deploying missions – without blocking the decision to be made. “In that case, it shall not be obliged to apply the decision, but shall accept that the decision commits the Union” (EUR-Lex 2012). Constructive abstention has never been used with regards to CSDP missions and operations up until October 2022, when Hungary decided to abstain from voting in favour of deploying the newest EU mission, EU Military Assistance Mission, EUMAM Ukraine (TIDEY 2022).

CSDP-related decision-making in the Council of the EU practically means that out of the 10 different configurations, EU governmental representatives are convening in the framework of the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC). This structure is usually composed of foreign ministers of the EU, but other formations exist depending on the agenda (defence, development and trade ministers). The FAC is the body responsible for elaborating the EU's external action in line of the strategic guidelines provided by the European Council, and launching CSDP missions and operations (AMORIM–KLEIN 2021: 48–50). However, operational and day-to-day work on CSDP issues, including missions and operations are managed by the Political and Security Committee (PSC) composed of ambassadors of EU members states in Brussels, who meet on a weekly basis.

The detailed procedure supporting decision-making as well as the further operationalisation of the political and strategic commitments is called the Crisis Management Procedures (CMP), which has been systemising the planning of CSDP missions and operations since 2013. The CMP integrates several different procedures describing not only how different actors engage and take responsibility in the decision-making process, but also identify crucial strategic and operational documents to be prepared and adopted (TIDEY 2022). As part of the CMP process, one of the most vital document to be pre-

sented is the Crisis Management Concept (CMC), which – in case of both civilian and military missions – provides a detailed description of how CSDP instruments, included missions and operations, should be used to prevent or handle rising or existing conflicts and crises. Accordingly, the CMP and the CMC play crucial role in missions and operations regardless of their military or civilian nature, but subsequent phases of operational planning are different based on the separate command and control (C2) structures. The latter as well as other differences and similarities are discussed in the following chapter.

### Typology of CSDP missions and operations

CSDP missions and operations led by the European Union can be categorised as civilian and military. While operations are only of military nature, we can find both civilian and military missions functioning within the CSDP framework. Civilian missions are commanded by the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) inside the structure of the EEAS. Most commonly we identify the two main type of CSDP missions and operations: *civilian missions* – such as EULEX Kosovo or EUAM Ukraine which will be studied further on –, and *military missions and operations*. While missions of civilian nature work with civilian experts and/or police personnel and are financed by the CSFP budget, military missions and operations always include the deployment of armed forces personnel to perform the respective mandate and are partially funded by the off-budget instrument, the European Peace Facility (EPF). Military missions and operations can be further divided into two different subgroups based on their executive or non-executive nature laid down in their mandate.

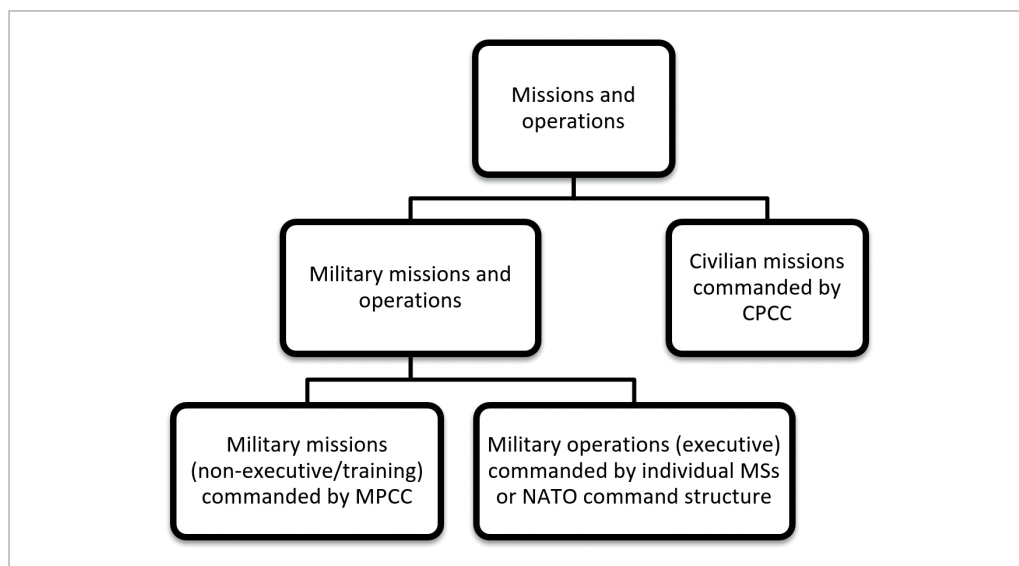


Figure 3: Types of missions and operations in the framework of EU CSDP

Source: Compiled by the authors

Additional difference between executive and non-executive military missions and operations in CSDP can be found in the command and control (C2) structure of these peace support operations led by the EU. While both types are under the “political control and strategic directions” of the PSC, operations with executive mandate are either commanded by a Member State in a national framework, or by using existing NATO command structure – based on the ‘Berlin Plus’ arrangements – on the operational level. Under the ‘Berlin Plus’ arrangements, concluded in 2003, the two international organisations agreed that the EU would have access to NATO assets and capabilities to be able to lead military operations (NATO 2004). Currently, the only EU CSDP military operation functioning in the framework of the Berlin Plus arrangements – which is the fundamental and most operational pillar of the strategic cooperation between the EU and NATO – is EUFOR Althea operation in Bosnia Herzegovina (RITTMAN 2021).

Non-executive military missions, which are also called military training missions, or military missions, however – primarily focusing on training and advising components – are commanded by the first permanent military structure of the EU established in 2017, the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) (EEAS 2019). Similarly to the command structure of the civilian missions led by the CPCC, the MPCC is integrated in the structure of the EEAS in Brussels. MPCC serves as the military-strategic level headquarters of EU-led military missions, while operational headquarters (OHQs) are led by an operational commander in the host country of the mission deployed by the EU. Civilian and military operational commanders leading the OHQs are responsible for the two most important operational documents of the missions and/or operations, the Concept of Operations (CONOPS) and the Operation Plan (OPLAN). These two documents also need to be approved by Member States through the PSC (MORENO 2021).

### **Civilian missions and case study of EULEX Kosovo and EUAM Ukraine**

As of May 2023, there were *14 ongoing civilian CSDP missions* led by the European Union. These missions are commanded – as previously discussed – by the CPCC, the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability, and often work with an executive mandate, meaning that in several cases civilian CSDP missions have functions to carry out tasks, prosecute cases or act as security providers in the given theatre. The mandates of these missions – currently located in Armenia, the Central African Republic, Georgia, Iraq, Kosovo, Libya, Mali, Moldova, Niger, the Palestinian territory, Somalia and Ukraine – are highly heterogeneous. Nevertheless, thematically all of them are built around security sector reform (SSR) processes with the aim of supporting government institutions of the host countries, such as law enforcement, judiciary, and other principal pillars contributing to maintain law, order and peace, and to strengthen democratic values, such as the rule of law or the protection of human rights.

As the TEU (EUR-Lex 2012) only prohibits the expenditure of the EU budget explicitly on military and defence-related purposes, civilian missions based on the agreement of Member States can be and are financed from the EU budget for CFSP directly (CîRLIG 2016).



Civilian CSDP missions work with a diverse international staff arriving to the missions from different institutions or agencies of the EU or its Member States. Personnel can be divided to *international staff*, who are either seconded by their national governments or contracted directly as international experts, and *local staff*, who are contracted experts, workforce as nationals/citizens of the host country of the mission. Furthermore, it is important to highlight again that civilian experts deployed in the case of EU CSDP civilian missions can be uniformed personnel, such as police officers, or other professionals from law enforcement, border management agencies and institutions other than the members of armed forces or active duty military personnel.

In the following, two case studies, EULEX Kosovo and EUAM Ukraine is presented to further enhance the understanding on the EU's work on the ground with civilian missions deployed.

### *EULEX Kosovo*

European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) is the largest ongoing EU CSDP civilian mission which was set up in 2008. EULEX's legitimacy is based on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of 1999 (UNSCR 1999). This resolution authorised "Member States and relevant international organizations to establish the international security presence in Kosovo [...] for organizing and overseeing the development of provisional institutions for democratic and autonomous self-government and [...] supporting the consolidation of Kosovo's local provisional institutions and other peacebuilding activities" (UNSCR 1999). Accordingly, the mandate of EULEX Kosovo is in line with the provisions of UNSCR 1244 (1999) explicitly focusing on supporting the establishment and strengthening of the rule of law and democratic institutions in Kosovo with special attention to judicial authorities and law enforcement (EUR-Lex 2008). EU engagement in the region derives both from geographical proximity as well as experience and criticism voiced with respect to the EU; caused by the lack of decisiveness and intervention during the violent war(s) in the Balkans after the dissolution of Yugoslavia.

While the principal aim of the ongoing EU civilian CSDP mission in Kosovo is to support the rule of law, the mandate further specifies what the main tasks and focal points of the work of EULEX Kosovo are. The mission was set up as the continuation of the UN peacekeeping mission in Kosovo, Reconstruction and Economic Development of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) – coexisting with EULEX for an interim period – which shaped the mandate as well as the interpretation of the rule of law in case of EULEX "encouraging civilian state-building through political reforms" (ZUPANČIČ et al. 2018: 599–614). The mandate of the EU's longest running mission has been changed, transformed and renewed several times, extended until 2023, at the time of the writing, with the relevant Council Decision, yet the focus on supporting judicial and law enforcement institutions stayed with the main goal of EULEX (Council of the EU 2021c). Under the current mandate in 2023, the 420 personnel of the mission led by Lars-Gunnar Wigemark, a Swedish diplomat as head of mission, works in two major areas and

components: monitoring and operations (EULEX Kosovo 2022a). The monitoring pillar of the mission supports transparency and accountability via monitoring selected trials and cases dealt with by the Kosovo judicial system, while contributing to the successful functioning of the Kosovo Correctional Services (EULEX Kosovo 2022b). As the Yugoslav wars were especially violent in terms of sexual and gender-based violence, using rape and other forms of sexual violence as a tactics of war, the EULEX Kosovo monitoring pillar involves the direct implementation of gender sensitive judicial processes, victim protection and forensic services. Under this area of activity, the mission focuses on sensitisation, tackling impunity of perpetrators, as well as producing crucial documents and reports on the topic for awareness raising and training purposes, such as the *Assessment of the Handling of Rape Cases by the Justice System in Kosovo* (EULEX Kosovo 2022c).

The operations pillar of EULEX Kosovo has another, yet very different function compared to the tasks carried out under the monitoring pillar. The mission's police force, EULEX's Formed Police Unit is the secondary security responder in Kosovo with a smaller residual capability, which is the integrative and crucial part of a "three-layer security responder mechanism". Based on the latter, the first security responder in Kosovo is the national Kosovar police force, the second responder is the EULEX's Formed Police Unit, while the third is the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR). Maintaining this residual police force capability provides the executive part of the mandate of EULEX Kosovo, which, however, is limited to certain crimes and functions, mostly focusing on crowd and riot control (EULEX Kosovo 2020).

It is important to note regarding the EULEX mission that five members of the EU – namely Spain, Cyprus, Greece, Romania and Slovakia – do not recognise Kosovo as an independent state, which affects the overall work of the mission on the ground especially the coordination of peace talks between Pristina and Belgrade. Nevertheless, the trust in the largest and longest standing EU civilian CSDP mission seems to be continuous. There are neither specific provisions nor concrete steps on the possible termination of the mission.

### *EUAM Ukraine*

The EU has established EU Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform in Ukraine in December 2014 following the Maidan revolution. The mass demonstrations also known as the Revolution of Dignity were fuelled by the decision of the Ukrainian President, Viktor Yanukovych who refused at the end of 2013 to sign the Association Agreement, aiming at further deepening of EU–Ukraine relations (LITRA et al. 2017). After violent clashes between law enforcement authorities and protesters, while European governments, Germany, Poland and France were leading negotiations between the Ukrainian leadership and the opposition, president Yanukovych fled the country in the first quarter of 2014 and the Russian Federation annexed Crimea. Upon the request of the new Ukrainian Government, the EU established EUAM Ukraine with the aim of assisting "relevant Ukrainian authorities towards a sustainable reform of the civilian



security sector through strategic advice and practical support for specific reform measures based on EU standards and international principles of good governance and human rights” (EUAM Ukraine 2022a).

Since the Revolution of Dignity and the annexation of Crimea, the ties between the EU and Ukraine have been significantly strengthened moving beyond the Eastern Partnership and the EU Neighbourhood Policy instruments. This shift was further strengthened by the establishment of EUAM Ukraine. With the set-up of an EU CSDP mission in Ukraine, the bilateral relations between Ukraine and the EU have turned to an explicitly security-oriented cooperation for the first time in their modern history (LITRA et al. 2017). The EU has already been present with its only ‘hybrid’ mission in Ukraine since 2005, but the European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine, EUBAM, has had only very limited and local mandate focusing on cooperation between border management institutions, and facilitating the harmonisation of border control and customs structures (EUBAM 2022). Originally, the mandate of the EU Advisory Mission in Ukraine was to provide strategic advice and support Ukrainian authorities with civilian security sector reform (EUAM Ukraine 2022a). Nevertheless, after the first year, based on the strategic review process, the EU extended the mandate to include training in the mission’s main activities (LITRA et al. 2017). In 2015 the mission mandate consisted of three main areas of operation:

EUAM Ukraine areas of operation		
Strategic advice to develop strategic documents and legislation	Support the implementation of reforms with practical advice, training and equipment	Cooperation and coordination to ensure coherence and reform efforts between Ukraine and international actors

Figure 4: Areas of operation of EUAM Ukraine

Source: Compiled by the authors based on EUAM Ukraine 2023

The importance of EUAM Ukraine is based on the fact that the mission’s capacity building mandate includes advising and cooperating with all Ukrainian security sector institutions excluding the armed forces (HANSEN 2016). Nevertheless, the main focus of EUAM Ukraine between all national core security providers was law enforcement, its mechanisms and personnel. Additionally, the EUAM Ukraine mission has a system of key principles alongside which the missions intended to implement its mandate successfully. While five key principles focused on issues such as community safety and police management, or strengthening the effectiveness of the criminal justice system, additional three cross-cutting principles guided the work of the mission: gender equality, good governance and anti-corruption efforts (EUAM Ukraine 2023). Carrying out its mandate until the outbreak of the war, EUAM Ukraine trained up to 32,000 personnel, and contributed with the preparation of 72 draft laws in cooperation with the Ukrainian legislation (EUAM Ukraine 2022a).

The EUAM Ukraine mission’s structure consists of two main components: the mission headquarters in Kyiv and an operational department. Headquarters includes the office of the head of mission – at the time of the writing, Finnish civilian expert and diplomat,

Antti Juhani Hartikainen – the mission’s analytical capability and other policy and human resource-focused components. The operations department consists of three thematic components – governance, rule of law and law enforcement agencies – four field offices and a mobile unit (EUAM Ukraine 2022c).

At the time of the writing,<sup>1</sup> since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine in early 2022, EUAM Ukraine implements different tasks with a more limited mandate (EUAM Ukraine 2023). While the civilian mission of the EU still supports civilian security sector initiatives and works with institutions on issues such as the rule of law and law enforcement capability building, most recently EUAM Ukraine mission personnel has had a crucial role in coordinating humanitarian aid. Moreover, the mission also assists and coordinates the safe route of refugees and internally displaced Ukrainians who were forced to leave their homes due to the war (LITRA et al. 2017). Additionally, in order to stop impunity, the EUAM Ukraine directly supports Ukrainian authorities investigating and prosecuting war crime cases, which was made possible by the amendment of the mandate of the mission in 2022. To carry out this new role, the mission participates in the work of the Atrocity Crimes Advisory Group and supports the Mobile Justice Teams in Ukraine, in parallel with setting up a team of specialised experts for working on war crimes cases (EUAM Ukraine 2022b).

### **Military missions and operations**

Besides the above described civilian CSDP missions, the EU in a lesser extent is engaged in military missions and operations as well. Out of the total 23 EU CSDP deployments which are ongoing in 2023, only nine were military related. Since 2005, the number of civilian missions has always exceeded the military ones, whereas in the early stages of CSDP missions, in 2003 and 2004, the figures were equal (EEAS 2021b). With previous years’ trends, the EU moves closer to these early rates, especially with launching its latest military missions: EUMAM Ukraine in 2022 (Council of the EU 2022a) and EUMPM Niger in 2023 (Council of the EU 2023). The Council of the European Union stated in 2006 that distinction between military and civilian missions is artificial, since civilian missions can be supported by the military. Nevertheless, within the four types of EU missions they specified, military missions form their own distinct group from the beginning (Council of the EU 2022b). In 2007, the TEU did not specify the terminology related to missions and operations. Article 42 of Section 2 uses the term ‘mission’ uniformly to all the out-of-area deployments under CSDP (EUR-Lex 2012). Out-of-area deployments are those engagements, which are conducted outside the EU’s territory. Despite the EU’s terminological reticence on the subject in EU Treaties, a general differentiation emerged over time, based on the nature of the mission (military or civilian – as described previously above), and the mandate of the missions. Regarding military missions, the differentiation is more obvious, those with a non-executive mandate are called

<sup>1</sup> May 2023.

military missions, while the ones with executive mandates are called military operations (MEYER 2022).

The distinction between non-executive and executive mandates is related to the tasks the different military missions and operations carry out. The difference between the two groups follows the distribution introduced in the context of civilian CSDP missions as well. In this sense, non-executive mandates are focused more on advisory and training tasks operating from the background. While executive military operations are taking over the tasks or acting instead of local security forces (TSITSIKOSTAS 2021: 87).

Along these lines, the current nine military deployments can be further divided. In 2023, the EU had six military missions and three military operations deployed. The six non-executive military missions were mostly training focused: EUTM Mali, EUTM Mozambique, EUTM RCA and EUTM Somalia, EUMAM Ukraine, and an advisory mission, EUMPM Niger. Among the three executive military operations, further sub-groups can be identified, since there were two naval operations, EUNAVFOR Atalanta and EUNAVFOR Med Operation Irini. EUFOR Althea was the only land CSDP military operation of the EU at the examined period.

The two groups differ in the command structure, as well. As mentioned earlier, the MPCC provides the OHQs in Brussels, to EUTM type missions, while the Mission Force Headquarters (MFHQ) are located in the area of operation [Council of the EU 2021a: Annex IV. Part A, s. 1(1)(d)]. Executive military operations have a different command structure, which leans on the Member States or the 'Berlin Plus' agreement, which makes possible the use of existing NATO infrastructure for operational purposes (NATO 2004). The two naval operations have their OHQs in EU Member States, EUNAVFOR Med Operation Irini in Rome Italy, EUNAVFOR Atalanta in Rota, Spain. EUFOR Althea is unique in this aspect, too since its OHQ is located in Mons, Belgium, with the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) of NATO. Thus, this latter falls under the 'Berlin Plus' agreement. Executive military operations have their Force Headquarters (FHQ) deployed in their area of operation, as well [Council of the EU 2021a: Annex IV. Part A, s. 1(1)(c)].

CSDP military missions and operations are financed by the EPF. This is a relatively new tool in the EU's CSDP toolbox. The EPF replaced the Athena Mechanism in 2021. The establishment of the new instrument did not change a lot on the financing aspects of the missions and operations. Among the first statements establishing this new tool, the Council Decision firmly stated that EPF will continue to cover only the common costs, just like Athena Mechanism before (Council of the EU 2021a: Article 11). However, there were still significant changes in the amount. While the Athena Mechanism financed only up to 10% of the costs, the EPF, which remains outside the EU budget, can provide 30% of the common costs or even higher, up to 45%, based on a case-by-case decision (FIOTT 2018: 311–315).

For the better understanding how non-executive missions and executive operations work, a case study was selected from each of the deployment types. The two cases were chosen based on their educational value. Thus, EUTM RCA represents military missions and EUNAVFOR Med Operation Irini military operations. Both of these EU

deployments have gone through significant transformations, which makes them practical for showing the possible evolution of CSDP missions, besides representing two entirely different types of missions.

### *EUTM RCA*

At first glance, European Union Training Mission Central African Republic (EUTM RCA<sup>2</sup>) seems like the other training missions launched under CSDP. However, this training mission is the result of a complex chain of EU and UN missions in the country.

The Central African Republic became independent in 1960. Since then, the country experienced multiple coups and inter-ethnic violence, even at the intensity of a war. The leadership changed multiple times, not necessarily via elections. The country had to declare itself bankrupt twice since its independence. This volatile history led to the renewal of violence in 2012. This time religious groups were formed and fought at first against the autocratic government, then against each other. In 2013, the Muslim majority Seleka grabbed power in the country. After a couple of months, due to international pressure, an interim government took over, led by Catherine Samba-Panza (VECSEY 2016: 139–141). The interim president's invitation letter, together with UN Security Council Resolution 2134 provided legal basis for the EU military operation, which lay the foundations of the current training mission. To form a mission with such objective, first safe and secure environment was needed. This was achieved with the deployment of a military operation EUFOR RCA in 2014, together with UN mission MINUSCA (Council of the EU 2014). As the mandate of the EUFOR expired in 2015, the government's renewed invitation created a niche to continuous EU action in the Central African Republic. The security situation allowed the deployment of a strategic military advisory mission, EUMAM RCA. This mission prepared the country for the SSR, and a consecutive EU mission (Council of the EU 2015a).

EUTM RCA thus, is the result of consecutive EU actions, which were necessary to re-establish government authority first in Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic. Then, with the de-escalation of the conflict, room opened up first for strategic advisory activity, and SSR, followed by a military training mission. These latter two operated alongside each other in 2022.

EUTM RCA was established in 2016 and plays an important role in the defence sector reform in the country, which is part of the wider SSR managed by the MINUSCA (Council of the EU 2016). The mission has four main tasks: it provides strategic advice, education, training and support for the strategic communication efforts (Council of the EU 2022c). To fulfil these tasks, the mission has an authorised 365 personnel of which only 225 positions were filled in 2020. Despite the shortfalls in the personnel, EUTM RCA trained and educated around 7,000 members of the Central African Armed Forces (FACA) between 2016 and 2020 (HICKENDORFF–ACKO 2021: 2–7). The tasks of the mis-

<sup>2</sup> Acronym of the country's name in its official language, French: République Centrafricaine.

sion are claimed to have evolved naturally throughout the mandates. EUTM provided strategic advice to multiple bodies over time, from the President's cabinet through the General Staff of the FACA and delivered education in the topics of "human rights, international humanitarian law, gender issues, the protection of civilians, the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and the Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC) agenda" (Council of the EU 2016). Along with the changes in the tasks, the area of operation was also enlarged, and EUTM RCA operated not just in Bangui and Bouar as during the first two mandates, but in N'Dele and Bangassou, too by 2022 (EEAS 2021a).

The chain of missions in the Central African Republic shows how CSDP action can change over time according to the needs of the host country. Success can also be assessed by the nature and area of operation of the mission, since EU activity started as an executive military operation in the country, concentrating on the creation of safe and secure environment in Bangui. By 2022, the situation de-escalated to allow the EU to gradually shift to military non-executive and civilian missions, and to enlarge the area of operation as well. However, the presence of other external actors, like the Russian Federation affiliated Wagner Group, and its activities also influenced EU action in the country (RETTMAN 2023).

### *EUNAVFOR Med Operation Irini*

The predecessor of EUNAVFOR Med Operation Irini, Operation Sophia was launched in 2015 with one of the fastest processes, to collect information and stop migrant smuggling networks in the Mediterranean region. The main goal of the military operation was to disrupt the operation of these organised crime networks and contribute to the training of the Libyan Navy and Coast Guard (Council of the EU 2015b). The dramatic increase of migratory figures in the Central Mediterranean migration route and the lack of burden sharing however resulted in the withdrawal of the naval assets of the operation. This, in the end, led to the discontinuation of the operation in 2020 (VECSEY 2022: 138–149).

Consequently, the EU rebranded the operation, and EUNAVFOR Med Operation Irini was launched (ALAGNA 2020). The new operation was equipped with a different objective, focusing on the implementation of the UN arms embargo on Libya. Two supplementary tasks derived from Operation Sophia: "Assisting with the development of capacities and the training of the Libyan Coast Guard and Navy and contributing to the disruption of the business model of human smuggling and trafficking networks." The prevention of illicit export of petroleum from Libya was also added to the mandate (Council of the EU 2020). Besides the renewed list of tasks, the new EUNAVFOR operates in a reduced area of responsibility, which is restricted to the eastern shores of Libya, to fulfil its main objective (RIZZI 2020). This means that the naval assets of the operation are patrolling outside the traditional migration routes. For the surveillance of the smuggling networks only aerial assets can be engaged, which eliminates the problem of disembarkation (VECSEY 2022: 139).

It is clear from the objectives that the operation is still expected to contribute to the disruption of the human smuggling business model, but it is only allowed to use its air component to do so, while the naval component enforces and fulfils the remaining tasks of the mandate connected to the enforcement of the arms embargo on Libya. In 2022, the operation consisted of two surface naval vessels and eight air assets (EUNAVFOR Med s. a.), clearly showing that the primary focus of the operation has shifted towards surveillance and drifted further away from contributing to maritime security.

### **Future perspectives**

The history of EU CSDP missions is nearing its 20<sup>th</sup>-year mark, with 42 missions launched, and 23 running in the first half of 2023, the EU showed its willingness to take action as a security provider. The distribution of military and civilian missions shows that in parallel with the deterioration of the security situation on the international stage, the EU engages increasingly with military missions. The growing number of military interventions triggered changes in the financing as well, replacing the less favourable Athena Mechanism with the European Peace Facility. This latter covers up to 45% of the common costs of military missions, thus is believed to be able to boost previously ailing Member State participation.

The challenges of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century called mostly for civilian CSDP engagement, both in the form of executive and non-executive civilian missions, like EULEX Kosovo and EUAM Ukraine. However, the 2020s brought a slightly different era to our World considering security. Since 2020, the EU launched four new military missions and three civilian missions. This also manifests the negative trend in the security environment. The civilian missions were launched in Armenia, the Central African Republic and Moldova. One of the old-new military operations launched was EUNAVFOR Med Operation Irini, which replaced Operation Sophia in the Mediterranean in 2020, while another training mission was set up in 2021, EUTM Mozambique. This mission was the first one which experienced the generosity of the European Peace Facility. The instrument was already in effect when the Council Decision was made on the new training mission in Africa. The EPF ended up providing 45% of the common costs of the mission (Council of the EU 2021b). The youngest two military missions were launched in late 2022, early 2023. The Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine) is pledged to provide training to Ukraine's Armed Forces on European soil. The mission is initially planned to last for two years (Council of the EU 2022a), while EU Military Partnership Mission Niger (EUMPM Niger) was launched on 20 February 2023 to advise Niger Armed Forces on training and development (Council of the EU 2022d).

As another answer to the Russian aggression in Ukraine, some changes happened regarding wider Common Security and Defence related issues as well. On 1 June 2022, Denmark removed its opt-out from the CSDP structure. This means the deepening of the cooperation among the EU Members in theory, which is the general aim of the organisation (GRONHOLT-PEDERSEN–SKYDSGAARD 2022). It is however not just a more unified voice and



approach to CSDP what the war in Eastern Europe brought to the EU. In Mali, where the EU was present since 2013, the EU had to downsize its training mission, EUTM Mali. The decision was made after the Russian influence on decision makers became embarrassingly clear. During the course of 2022, Russian officials, like Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and even President Vladimir Putin admitted the presence of the private military company in the country (U.S. Embassy in Mali 2022). In Mali, however, this was not the only reason for downsizing. The country experienced two military coups within 12 months, the first on 18 August 2020, and the second on 24 May 2021 (JEZEQUEL 2021). The military junta, still in power at the time of the writing, cannot give sufficient guarantees to the EU that the also present, notorious, Russian state affiliated Wagner Group will not interfere with the training. Thus, HR/VP Josep Borrell announced the suspension of the training activities of the EUTM Mali in April 2022 (BINNIE 2022).

This recent adjustment in the EUTM shows that EU missions and operations are prone to changes in the political and security environment. Another example for this is the case study on EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia/Irini. The transition between the two operations were forced by the Italian Government, following the line of national interest on migration. This means that CSDP missions and operations are exposed to security threats and political disputes, which is reflected in their tasks, objectives, or in the end in their existence.

The ever-changing mandates of the missions give room for improvement. The UN's Women Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda of 2000 based on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and 9 subsequent resolutions on WPS, is still under implementation inclusively in every mission and operation focusing on the inclusion of women in peace-building, but also protecting women and girls from the disproportionate effects of war and armed conflict. Moreover, the EU also acknowledged the relevance of climate change in security and defence. As more and more cross-cutting and intersectional policy areas are appearing in security and defence, it will be immensely important to pursue the promoted comprehensive and integrated approach on addressing crises and conflicts.

This latter needs a better harmonisation of EU projects in third countries, such as CSDP missions and operations and other initiatives in the same area of operation. Besides this, interagency cooperation is needed to represent the EU as a whole, capable international actor, who in several theatres acts as a coordinating agent with other international organisations as well as different EU agencies on the ground. With the appearance and proliferation of transnational security threats, such as migration, organised crime and terrorism, the border between the internal and external nexus became blurred. Agencies, which previously worked on the EU's immediate borders, like the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) are expanding their area of operation. Frontex deploys forces, and opens offices in distant third countries, while CSDP missions and operations move closer to EU borders (PARKES 2016).

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