



# The Civilian CSDP Compact

## A success story for the EU's crisis management Cinderella?

by Nicoletta Pirozzi

The civilian dimension of the EU's CSDP has traditionally played a Cinderella-like role in the EU crisis management system. And like the original fairy tale, it seems that civilian CSDP will need three essential elements to succeed: (1) a renewed and credible strategic framework – the 'ball gown'; (2) adequate operational capabilities – the 'pumpkin carriage'; and (3) a solid commitment by relevant stakeholders – the 'Prince Charming'.

Born in Feira in 2000<sup>1</sup> as the little sister of the military dimension envisaged in Cologne the year before, civilian CSDP was initially intended to implement tasks related to police, rule of law, civilian administration and civil protection, and further extended to monitoring and support to the EU Special Representatives in 2004.<sup>2</sup> Despite the ambitious quantitative targets set at the time – a total of over 12,000 personnel<sup>3</sup> – it has always suffered from a form of second child syndrome, affected by a lack of professionalisation and visibility, and limited investments compared to its military counterpart.

Nevertheless, civilian CSDP has grown over time and indeed been the most common mission type

### Main findings

- > The civilian component of EU crisis management has often been neglected in terms of visibility and resources, but it is mainly through civilian Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions that the EU has been able to show its added value as a security provider.
- > After the adoption of the EU Global Strategy (EUGS), civilian CSDP is now looking for its place in the sun through the adoption of a Civilian CSDP Compact by the end of 2018.
- > Civilian CSDP will need three essential elements to succeed: (1) a renewed and credible strategic framework; (2) adequate operational capabilities; and (3) a solid commitment by relevant stakeholders.
- > A Concept Paper and a Civilian Capabilities Development Plan have identified new issue areas and capability requirements for civilian CSDP, but it is the Compact which shall clarify what will allow it to 'live happily ever after'.



since the launch of operational CSDP in 2003: 22 civilian missions have been deployed (out of 34) to areas ranging from the Western Balkans to sub-Saharan Africa, from the Middle East to southern Caucasus, and ten (out of 16) are still ongoing. They are certainly less controversial from a political and financial point of view at a national level: they do not imply the use of military force and can be financed through the common EU budget (the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) budget line and other financial instruments). In general, they helped the EU to reaffirm its identity as a ‘comprehensive security provider’<sup>4</sup> and partly balanced the embryonic development of its military capabilities.<sup>5</sup>

After the adoption of the EUGS in June 2016<sup>6</sup> and the Implementation Plan on Security and Defence in November 2016<sup>7</sup>, civilian CSDP is now looking for a new *raison d’être* within the framework of the renewed concept of an ‘integrated approach to conflicts and crises’. This is occurring in parallel with the relaunch of EU defence cooperation through PESCO, the setup of a coordinated annual review on defence (CARD) and the creation of an EU-funded European Defence Fund (EDF). These developments triggered the process at EU level for the agreement on a Civilian CSDP Compact by November 2018, with a view to reform civilian CSDP in line with the transformation of the strategic environment over the past years.

In the Implementation Plan on Security and Defence, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini asked EU member states to agree to review the structures and capabilities for the planning and conduct of CSDP missions in particular.<sup>8</sup> On this basis, the Council in November 2017<sup>9</sup> and the European Council in December 2017<sup>10</sup> invited her to present the next steps in the development of civilian capabilities and to produce, in consultation with the member states and the Commission, a Civilian CSDP Compact by the end of 2018. Drawing on a Concept Paper on Strengthening Civilian CSDP presented in April 2018<sup>11</sup> and the guidance provided by the Council in its May 2018 Conclusions<sup>12</sup> and by the European Council in June 2018<sup>13</sup>, a Civilian Capability Development Plan (CCDP) was adopted in September 2018<sup>14</sup>, and member states will be invited to commit resources based on the capability gaps identified.

The overall objective of the Compact is to provide a new EU framework for civilian crisis management and CSDP missions, with ambitious commitments at EU and national levels. Both the Concept Paper and the CCDP shed light on key challenges for civilian CSDP and clarify key objectives at the strategic and operational levels. Building on previous experience gained through the Civilian Capabilities Commitment Conferences and 2008 and 2010 Civilian Headline Goals<sup>15</sup>, they also identify what capabilities are needed to realise these ambitions and propose some concrete measures and actions to member states about how to implement them. However, the shape and content of the new Compact are still unclear. Most importantly, the commitment by member states, relevant line ministers in national capitals, and stakeholders in Brussels cannot (yet) be taken as a given.

### The ‘ball gown’: sewing a renewed and credible strategic framework

By failing to offer a consolidated definition of civilian crisis management in the Concept Paper released in April 2018, the Civilian CSDP Compact process missed a perfect opportunity to fill a conceptual gap that has affected civilian CSDP since its inception. In the past, EU actors have preferred to take shortcuts and chose a bottom-up approach, starting from the issue areas to be addressed, which necessarily change over time due to the shifting security context and internal EU

dynamics. In particular, they take stock of the evolution of crisis management priorities such as police, the rule of law and civilian administration, the strengthening of the links between the military and the civilian dimensions, and the intensification of challenges at the internal-external nexus. Both

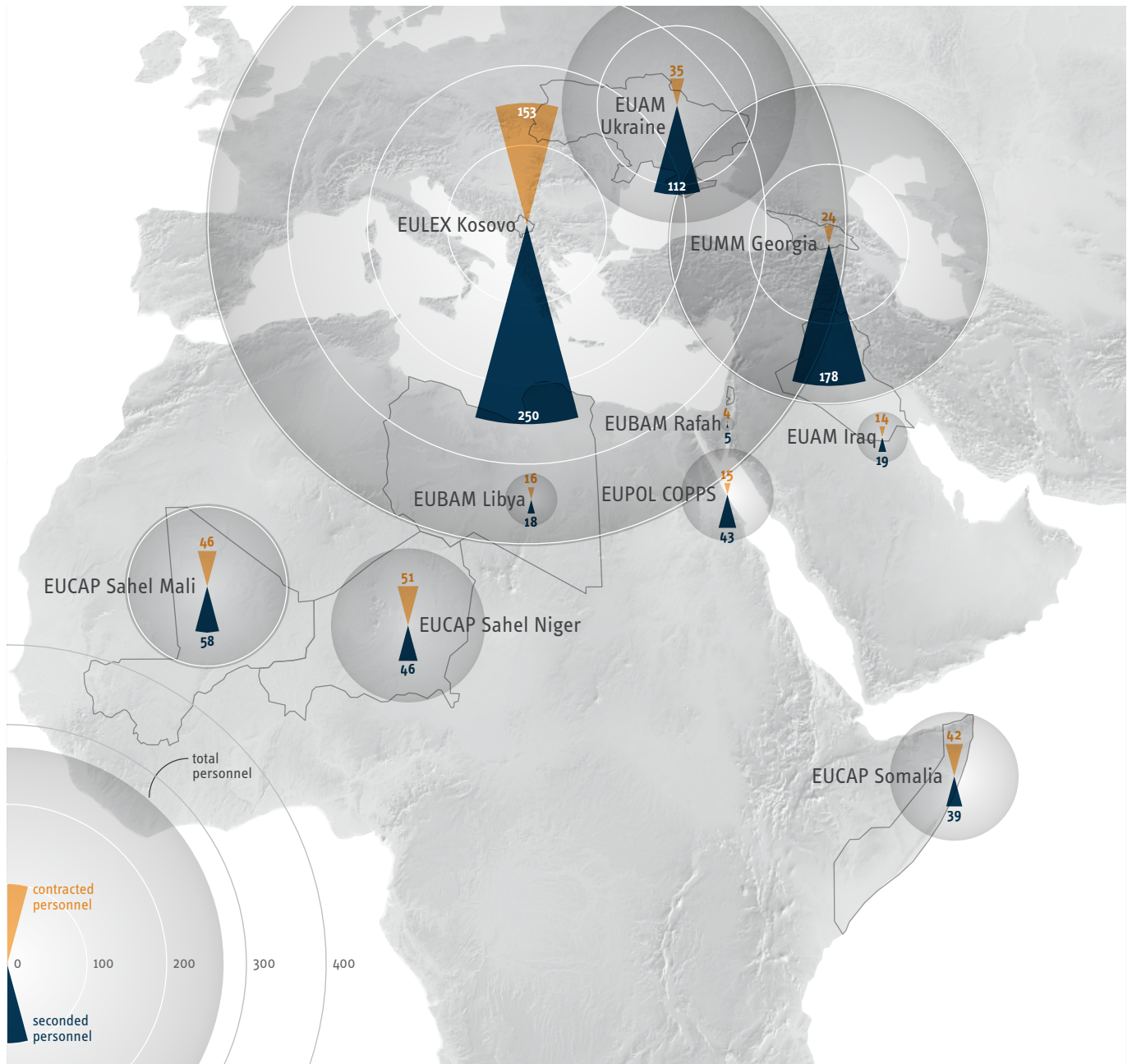
the Concept Paper and the CCDP affirmed that the priorities defined at Feira are still valid and relevant (except for civil protection, which is no longer applicable to CSDP), but they need to be updated in light of today’s security threats and challenges, including those linked to irregular migration, hybrid threats, cyber security, terrorism and radicalisation, organised crime, border management and maritime security, violent extremism, and the protection of cultural heritage.

The evolution of the approach to civilian CSDP reflects the change of paradigm since the release



## Civilian CSDP missions

number of contracted and seconded personnel. April 2018



Data: European External Action Service, 30/04/2018

of the EUGS, particularly with reference to the growing importance of the nexus between internal and external security. Consequently, efforts have aimed at increasing the role of actors traditionally working in the field of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) in external security/CSDP matters. At the institutional level, this means improving coordination in Brussels through the existing joint meetings between the Political and Security Committee (PSC) and the Standing Committee on Internal Security (COSI). It also means establishing joint meetings between COSI and the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) to address key

operational issues and considering a reform of the composition of CIVCOM to include representatives of relevant ministries (beyond ministries of foreign affairs) in national delegations. On the ground, it means the pooling and sharing of personnel, expertise and information among all relevant actors: CSDP missions, EU Delegations, and JHA agencies. The current arrangements in Libya between the EUBAM mission, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) and Europol are a case in point. One of the most interesting proposals included in the Civilian Capability Development Plan is the creation of a country situational awareness platform (CSAP),

to be set-up in all theatres where civilian CSDP missions are active. This platform, coordinated by the local Head of the EU Delegation, would bring together member states, EU actors and JHA agencies on the ground. Situational awareness, information sharing and joint programming could be part of its set-up, thus facilitating early warning and early action.

Nevertheless, this renewed bottom-up approach implies the continuation of the conceptual gap caused by the lack of a consolidated definition of civilian crisis management, which in turn continues to present risks and shortfalls. One of the challenges included among the new priorities for CSDP is the prominent focus on migration, thus emulating the same emerging tendency to securitise the migration issue that some national governments have demonstrated in their domestic migration policies and in their relationships with third countries of origin and transit. The preponderant influence of internal security priorities on the foreign policy agenda also has another negative impact: the progressive narrowing down of stabilisation efforts and capacity-building carried out by CSDP missions to migration management. This could be witnessed in the strategic review of missions such as EUCAP Sahel Niger, for instance, and has the potential to jeopardise the sustainability and effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions. The implementation of the Compact provides an opportunity to rebalance this by ensuring that foreign policy actors and priorities have a stronger role on internal security issues through appropriate mechanisms at the decision-making and planning levels. The goal would be to improve the awareness of internal security actors on the repercussions of their policy choices on the peace and stability of neighbourhood and partner countries, as well as their long-term impacts.

Conceptual deficiencies aside, a second issue weakening the Compact is that the realisation of a truly integrated approach through civilian-military cooperation seems to have been neglected. The process in the civilian field mirrors the evolution that led to the launch of PESCO on the military side in the framework of the EUGS implementation, but the opportunities offered by closer civilian-military cooperation are not being exploited. For example, in recent years the EU has significantly invested in the development of

dual-use technologies, which can serve both civilian and military purposes since they can have benefits in both security and economic terms. Among these dual-use technologies, satellites and Remotely Piloted Air Systems (RPAS) can contribute to conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities by performing various tasks such as intelligence, surveillance, the monitoring of borders, force protection, and support to police and law enforcement agencies.<sup>16</sup> All these activities are included within the mandates of several ongoing civilian CSDP missions and can be supported using RPAS and satellites. The fact that these aspects do not feature prominently in the discussion about the Compact so far represents a missed opportunity.

### The ‘pumpkin carriage’: developing adequate operational capabilities

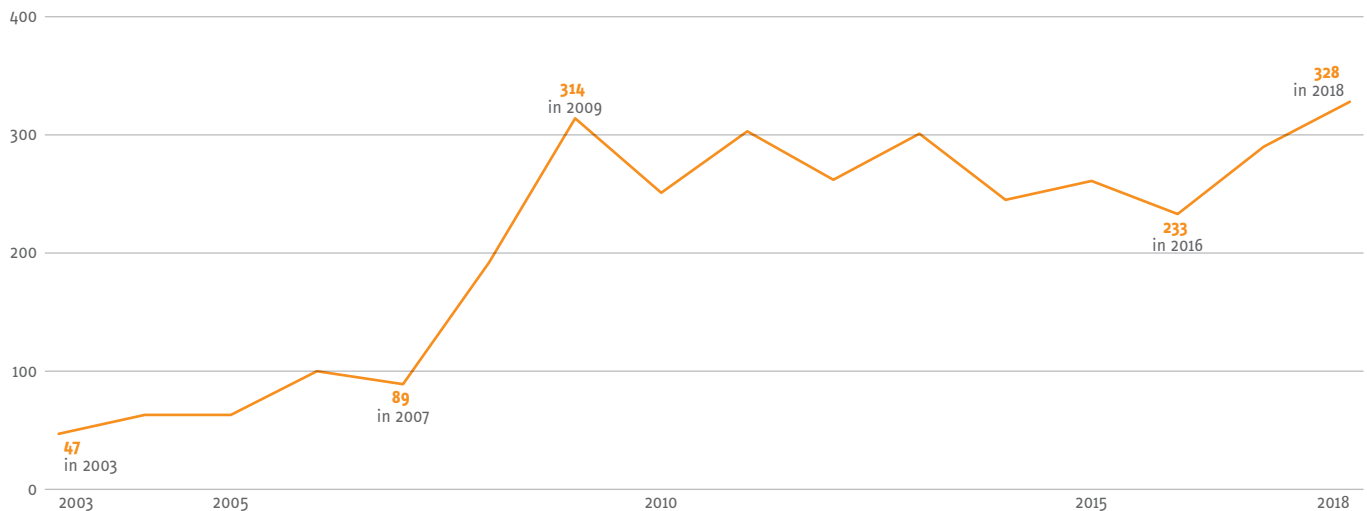
The Civilian CSDP Compact is aimed at making civilian CSDP faster, more flexible and effective. The CSDP practices of the past years have revealed the persistence of major obstacles to the full accomplishment of EU goals in the civilian field: a still embryonic standardisation of training standards and curricula provided at a national level by various training institutions and recruitment procedures used by national governments for civilian personnel is accompanied by the lack of appropriate legislation and resources.<sup>17</sup> In addition, past attempts of pooling and sharing personnel and logistics at an EU level did not produce the expected results, as demonstrated by the experiences of the Civilian Response Teams (CRTs) and the permanent pool of experts in the field of Security Sector Reform (SSR). This has often resulted in slow force generation processes and inadequate capabilities to fulfil the missions’ mandates, from Afghanistan to Kosovo.

To address these shortcomings, the Civilian Capability Development Plan has foreseen a number of targets, correctly coupling the quantitative approach that characterised the previous capability development exercises with a stronger attention to qualitative targets. As the key capabilities for civilian CSDP are mainly about staff which have the right competencies and skills, the civilian capability development process should be mainly focused on improving the professionalisation of

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## CFSP payments

2003-2018, € million



Data: European Commission Final Financial Reports, 2003-2017.

civilian personnel through training and ensuring that those trained are effectively employed on the ground. This is an element of capability planning in the civilian field that should be better acknowledged and implemented.

Training activities in the EU are currently disperse and uncoordinated and involve a variety of actors, and training standards vary considerably among different member states and training institutions. An enhanced training policy for EU civilian personnel should be based on three main pillars: (1) the standardisation of training concepts and curricula at European level; (2) the coordination of existing training activities for civilian personnel, i.e. through the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) with a more prominent dimension of specialised training for civilian missions; (3) a stronger linkage between training and recruitment, with a view to ensure that the personnel trained are also deployed in CSDP missions. The Civilian Capability Development Plan entrusts the EU Civilian Training Group, which is still to be operationalised, with the coordination of a review process of training requirements, as well as a mapping of the existing training offers, with a view to improving information exchange, and promoting quality standards and harmonisation.

As for the linkage between training and recruitment, some steps forward have been made with the reform of recruitment procedures, even if there is still scope for improvement, especially in streamlining and accelerating timelines for submitting applications and issuing dates for deployment. The creation of the Goalkeeper system, especially its Headhunter module, facilitates this

by standardising and expediting the production of job descriptions for positions in civilian CSDP missions.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, force generation remains a challenge for civilian crisis management. A further move in the right direction might be the creation of a unified roster at an EU level, which is particularly relevant today as the number of personnel seconded by member states is constantly decreasing in favour of personnel contracted by EU institutions (from 11% to 41% of the total number of international staff in missions from December 2005 to April 2018). However, the main challenge remains the mobilisation of key categories of personnel such as policemen and policewomen, judges and prosecutors, who are usually employed at a national level and often lack the required knowledge to serve in international missions. Since there is tension between national and European priorities for the employment of these categories of personnel, especially in connection with illegal migration and the terrorist threat, there are clear political obstacles. But there are also administrative impediments such as inadequate legislation or a lack of incentives in terms of career path for deployment which could be addressed and overcome.

Beyond training and recruitment, the pooling of experts to be employed in EU missions – as well as of the necessary logistics to equip them and ensure the rapid deployment to the mission area – are key factors in the development of a responsive, flexible and timely civilian CSDP. The European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Commission are in the process of implementing crucial measures such as the Core Responsiveness

Capacity (CRC), which is composed of a reinforced Mission Support Platform plus resources placed in existing missions, to be complemented through rapidly deployable assets and planning elements from member states. In addition, as of June 2018, a dedicated warehouse (Warehouse II) will improve logistical support to the ten existing civilian CSDP missions, another operational action as foreseen by Article 28 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and the EU Special Representatives.

Where agreed, the CRC should be accompanied by specialised teams and multinational formations. The idea to set up specialised teams for CSDP missions, composed of pre-identified and trained civilian experts, is not new. The creation of Civilian Response Teams (CRTs) was included in the 2008 Civilian Headline Goal, but their employment has been limited. In the new Civilian CSDP Compact, they could be focussed on tasks related to the internal-external security nexus and be employed in modular and scalable missions. Nevertheless, the challenges that impeded the full operationalisation of CRTs are likely to remain the same. These challenges need to be addressed in the Compact, namely the difficulty in making multinational, ready-made packages compatible with the force generation and implementation process of civilian CSDP and to ensure adequate financial resources. Moreover, the new priorities identified for the future civilian CSDP further complicate civilian-civilian interoperability, as they will make the close cooperation between police, judicial, customs and intelligence personnel even more relevant.

### The ‘Prince Charming’: ensuring commitment by relevant stakeholders

If the concept and a plan for capability development have been put in place at an EU level, even with the aforementioned problems, the biggest question mark remains political will, which is the essential element to turn the Compact into a success story for civilian CSDP and ultimately for the EU. Two months ahead of the release of the Compact, it is still not clear what level of engagement will be ensured by member states and EU institutions, which tendency will prevail between inclusiveness and ambition, and which incentives will be offered to realise the objectives identified.

Member states, the ‘Prince Charming’, are now called to turn the Compact into reality, either through collective engagement that should more effectively involve line ministries and institutions in all national capitals or advanced projects carried out by restricted groups of countries in the form of a ‘civilian PESCO’.

Similarly to PESCO, it should be decided whether the Civilian CSDP Compact will favour collective engagement by member states in the civilian capability development process or whether it will opt for more ambitious commitments by groups of member states to develop specific capabilities on a modular basis. If the two goals are in principle not mutually exclusive, the experience with PESCO so far has shown that it might be difficult to reach both. A collective engagement would probably mean more inclusive but less advanced capability development projects. It could be achieved through the proposed Coordinated Annual Review of Civilian Capabilities (CARCC), a mechanism for coordination and cooperation among the relevant stakeholders adapted from the CARD.

Even if the civilian field is not affected by the same level of sensitivity in information-sharing that characterises the military field, levels of reluctance for coordination among the 27 will probably be the same. Moreover, there are two elements that make this exercise more complicated: national stakeholders in the defence field can be easily identified in the ministers of defence, whereas the civilian sector is much more complex and variegated, and involves ministries of foreign affairs, ministries of interiors, ministries of justice, police services and others. Thus, making it much more difficult to identify who should sit at the CARCC table to make it representative and effective. Second, the secretariat of CARD is performed by the European Defence Agency (EDA), which ensures that up-to-date and detailed information on defence planning is both extracted from already existing EDA databases and additionally collected and validated with member states.

It is still to be defined which structures among the different actors involved in civilian crisis management – PSC, CIVCOM, CMPD, CPCC – will do that for CARCC and with what resources. The experience with CARD showed it to be an extremely complex and time-consuming process and its civilian cousin could be even more so, considering that civilian capabilities come from different national administrations, thus multiplying the number of actors feeding information into the CARCC. The creation of restricted groups of member states to develop specific capabilities could lead to a sort of ‘civilian PESCO’ or to the implementation of

pilot projects in specific areas, from mediation to SSR, but this remains subject to available resources and capacities at member state level.

It will therefore be crucial to stimulate commitment by member states through adequate support by the EU institutions. Both the EEAS and the Commission could mobilise tools and resources to contribute to this process, with two main priorities: (1) to rationalise the EU civilian crisis management machine, from the political and institutional level, down to the operational reality on the ground; and (2) to guarantee financial investments. On the first aspect, the recent proposal put forward by the Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker in his State of the Union 2018 Address to extend qualified majority voting to decisions on civilian missions might act as a “catalyst to engage member states in building effective consensus and achieving unity”. A clarification and rationalisation of competences between civilian crisis management structures – in particular CMPD, CPCC and PRISM – is needed in order to mitigate inter-institutional competition and overlapping functions, together with the improvement of the working relationships between civilian crisis management structures, geographical desks at EEAS and relevant Commission units. This rationalisation should also contemplate the streamlining of the chains of command for civilian CSDP missions, including also chairpersons of the PSC and CIVCOM, and aim at a better cooperation between CSDP missions and EU Delegations on the ground from planning to implementation and exit strategies.

With regard to funding, the good news is the increase of the CFSP budget planned in the next multiannual financial framework (MFF) 2021-27. But it would be wise to think about a specific budget line for civilian crisis management to limit the planned redirection of resources to military and defence-related activities. At the same time, new funding schemes for civilian personnel to be employed in civilian CSDP missions (from training to salaries) should be identified to promote the deployment of seconded personnel and not to lose ground to Frontex/JHA, which usually offer more favourable conditions to the same categories of personnel.

### What should the Compact (and civilian CSDP) look like?

The civilian component of EU crisis management has often been neglected in terms of visibility and resources, but it is mainly through civilian CSDP missions that the EU has been able to show its added value – compared to other regional and international security actors – in addressing complex

crises and post-conflict instability. The EUGS and its Implementation Plan have recognised the role of soft power and civilian actions, placed emphasis on an integrated approach to conflicts and crises and advocated for a more flexible, faster and more targeted civilian crisis management. The Civilian CSDP Compact can help with these objectives, in particular by: (1) providing a revised strategic framework for civilian CSDP in accordance with the evolution of the security context – through the April 2018 Concept Paper; (2) developing and adapting existing capabilities and identifying additional needs – through the July 2018 Civilian Capabilities Development Plan; (3) ensuring a sustainable and broader commitment by EU institutions and member states – through the Civilian Compact.

The ‘ball gown’ of the EU’s crisis management Cinderella – the Concept Paper – updated civilian CSDP through the identification of additional issues areas to be addressed, but failed to recast civilian crisis management by providing a clear definition of goals and scope. The pragmatic approach chosen undoubtedly strengthens the link between internal and external security, but ultimately risks being short-sighted and hijacked by the current hysteria surrounding migration, overlooking core stabilisation and peacebuilding tasks, as well as broader civilian-military coordination objectives. A forward-looking framework with a stronger focus on foreign policy priorities and a comprehensive vision of security should be promoted in the Compact and in its implementation, at least until the next overall strategic revision.

The ‘pumpkin carriage’ offered by the Civilian Capabilities Development Plan provides the blueprint to tackle well-known shortcomings in the preparation and use of human capital of civilian CSDP – especially the fragmentation and inadequacy of training, recruitment and career paths for civilian personnel. The solutions suggested, especially the creation of standing pools of trained experts to be employed at short notice and for targeted civilian tasks, go in the right direction, but remain to be tested against the availability of resources and the stickiness of consolidated operational procedures. Investing more in EU training, promoting the reform of national legislation to facilitate deployment, and creating a shared roster of civilian experts at an EU level are required elements to achieve the desired outcome.

Member states, the ‘Prince Charming’, are now called to turn the Compact into reality, either through collective engagement that should more effectively involve line ministries and institutions in all national capitals or advanced projects carried out by restricted groups of countries in the

form of a ‘civilian PESCO’. In the defence field, the attempt to find a magic formula to make inclusivity and ambition compatible led to suboptimal results. The civilian dimension could find its own way, if it is supported by a rationalised civilian crisis management machine at an EU level and adequate financial incentives coming from the CFSP budget and other funding schemes.

The content of the Civilian CSDP Compact is particularly rich, but what format will it take? It has been proposed to release it in the form of a Declaration by member states as an annex to the EU Council Conclusions, so as to ensure ownership and engagement at a national level. However, in order to transform it into a meaningful exercise, it should be accompanied at least by two additional documents: (1) an Action Plan 2019-2024, detailing the actions to be carried out at the strategic, institutional and operational levels; and (2) a detailed Review Process which outlines responsibilities, required steps and timelines.

Cinderella currently has to make do with a decent ball gown, a partially-transformed pumpkin carriage and a still undecided Prince Charming. But she is still waiting for her glass slipper to live happily ever after.

**Nicoletta Pirozzi is the Head of the ‘EU, politics and institutions’ programme at the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) and an Associate Analyst at the EUISS.**

*Disclaimer: the views expressed in this Brief are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the EUISS or of the European Union.*

## Endnotes

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