



EU-CIVCAP

Preventing and Responding to Conflict: Developing EU
CIVILIAN CAPabilities for a sustainable peace

Report on key priorities for future EU security research

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive summary	4
1. Introduction	6
2. Conflict Analysis, Early Warning AND Conflict Prevention	7
3. The EU, Conflict Management, and Resolution.....	14
4. Learning, Best Practices & Knowledge.....	26
5. Concluding remarks	29
Annex I. EU-CIVCAP (selected) Deliverables.....	32
Annex II. Relevant EU-funded research projects.....	33
Bibliography	35

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper is a deliverable (DL7.3) prepared under Work Package 7 ('Lessons Learned and Best Practices') of the EU-CIVCAP project, which is conducting a range of research activities regarding four main stages of the conflict cycle: 1) Impending crisis/early warning; 2) Outbreak of conflict; 3) Conflict/war; and 4) Post-crisis settlement/resolution.

As outlined in the original grant proposal and subsequent agreements, the discussion below aims to offer suggestions for future priorities in the realm of EU security research themes under the Horizon 2020 programme and future research frameworks. The paper thus also contributes to a major theme of the Horizon 2020 'Secure Societies' programme: supporting the EU's external security policies through Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding (CPP) activities, with a focus on civilian capabilities. The content is derived from three main sources: findings from the EU-CIVCAP project (see Annex I), findings from related EU research projects under Horizon 2020 in recent years (see Annex II), and academic research on topics associated with security in general and CPP in particular.

This paper is divided into three main parts. Part one deals with research priorities regarding external (non-EU) conflicts and CPP during the pre-conflict/early warning phase. Part two deals with research regarding the EU's specific contributions in the realm of CPP once a conflict has broken out; this includes role of coordination with major EU partners and the post-crisis settlement/resolution process. Part three focuses on the after-action phase of CPP activities, in terms of future research regarding learning, best practices, and knowledge-creation, all of which tend to be oriented towards improving the EU's performance in handling CPP tasks in the future. **This paper identifies 20 future priorities for H2020 security research (see Box 1, below).**

Finally, it should be noted that the role of various intra-EU and extra-EU factors that may influence CPP activities overlap and vary depending on the four phases of the overall conflict cycle as presented above; these variations and overlaps will be addressed in more detail in each main section and in the conclusion.

Box 1. Summary of research priorities for future H2020 security research

1. Understanding and conceptualising EU conflict prevention.
2. Understanding how conflicts are conceptualised and prioritised in EU decision-making processes.
3. Analysing the functioning and effectiveness of the EU's Conflict Early Warning System.
4. Understanding and improving information-sharing in EU conflict prevention.
5. Examining the use of satellite/GEOINT technologies in EU early warning and conflict prevention.
6. Exploring the use of ICTs and Big Data in EU early warning and conflict prevention
7. Exploring solutions for improving cyber-security in the area of EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
8. Examining coherence and coordination problems in EU early warning/early response.
9. Investigating the role of new technologies in bridging the early warning/early response gap.
10. Examining and explaining the effectiveness of EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding policies.
11. Investigating the success of EU mediation initiatives and EU monitoring missions.
12. Exploring the potential for more synergies and a more integrated approach between civilian and military CSDP.
13. Understanding the conditions for successful implementation of EU capacity-building programmes.
14. Assessing conditions for effective implementation of partnerships with other international organisations (UN/NATO/OSCE/AU) in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
15. Investigating the actual implementation of the EU's resilience approach in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
16. Examining gender mainstreaming in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
17. Examining factors shaping the (differential) contribution and role of EU member states in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
18. Examining the monitoring and enforcement of compliance among EU member states in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
19. Examining the EU's learning and feedback mechanisms in CPP to provide more cost-effective solutions.
20. Investigating the impact of learning and knowledge-creation processes in the context of EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper is a deliverable (DL7.3) prepared under Work Package 7 ('Learning & Best Practices') of the EU-CIVCAP project, which is conducting a range of research activities regarding four main stages of the conflict cycle: 1) Impending crisis/early warning; 2) Outbreak of conflict; 3) Conflict/war; and 4) Post-crisis settlement/resolution. EU-CIVCAP also addresses four cross-cutting themes that apply to most if not all conflicts: 1) the early warning-response gap; 2) combining short and long-term approaches; 3) enhancing civilian-military coordination; and 4) ensuring local ownership of CPP efforts. As European defence/security policy research has become a major growth area among academics and policy/think tank researchers over the past decade, this paper will both reflect upon the current state of the art and attempt to suggest ways to push beyond it to enhance policy-relevant research activities funded or encouraged by the EU, in particular. In other words, the discussion below focuses on the EU's interests and capabilities for action in the realm of CPP, in terms of defining, choosing, and responding to particular conflicts.

Building on the findings of the first two years of the EU-CIVCAP project, in particular (2016-17), we also note throughout this paper the importance of a range of thematic priorities under the general topic of CPP research, which include intra-EU elements (such as general EU strategies/plans; specific EU concepts/doctrines; personnel/staffing/training issues; technology; and feedback/learning processes) as well as extra-EU components (a focus on the EU neighbourhood to the east and south; conditions within host countries; the role of other partners and donors/stakeholders; and the role of local stakeholders). These priorities are well documented in the literature on the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS), the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the 2016 European Union Global Strategy (EUGS) and other prominent EU policy statements, involving specific problems (i.e., the Maritime Security Strategy, the EU's Cybersecurity Strategy, or the Joint Communication on Resilience in the Neighbourhood among others) or geographic regions (such as the Balkans, eastern/southern neighbourhood, and the Horn of Africa, among others).

The rest of this paper is divided into three main parts. Part one deals with research priorities regarding the nature of external (non-EU) conflicts and conflict prevention. This part is divided into two sub-sections as identified in the EU-CIVCAP approach to CPP as a policy problem: the problem of forecasting conflicts and the early-warning/early response phase. Part two deals with research regarding the EU's specific contributions in the realm of CPP once a conflict has broken out; this includes the post-crisis settlement/resolution process. The EU's involvement in a particular conflict is a product of the EU's conception of its own political/security interests (including the advent of the 2016 EUGS), so we first need to understand the prospects for research regarding the EU itself (mainly regarding institutions and resources in Brussels), and regarding EU member states. This analysis of the EU also addresses the role of coordination with major EU partners. These topics are addressed in the two main sub-sections of the second part of the paper. Part three of the paper focuses on the after-action phase of CPP activities, in terms of future research regarding learning,

best practices, and knowledge-creation, all of which tend to be oriented towards improving the EU's performance in handling CPP tasks in the future.

Before proceeding, it may be useful to recall the fundamental external goals of EU CPP activities as outlined in DL2.1 (p. 6): to preserve lives and livelihoods, to address the root causes of conflict, and focus on prevention as much as possible. To achieve these aims, the EU needs to enhance its credibility, coherence, (internal and external) coordination mechanisms, and partnerships with local and third-country actors, all in the service of the so-called comprehensive approach or integrated approach to CPP.¹ Any research on such efforts by the EU must also take into consideration the possibility of unintended or unanticipated outcomes/risks, as well as consider the benefits of a more passive or 'hands-off' approach to certain conflicts to avoid doing more harm than good (i.e., 'Do no harm' principle). These factors will be addressed in more detail below.

2. CONFLICT ANALYSIS, EARLY WARNING AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

Numerous scholars and policymakers have noted that while major interstate wars have declined in frequency since World War II, intrastate or civil conflicts have become more frequent and more harmful in terms of direct effects (such as civilian deaths and material/economic damage) and indirect effects (such as refugee crises and organised crime activity) (Gates et al., 2012; Kaldor, 1999; Rotberg, 2003; Themnér and Wallensteen, 2013). In addition, the vast majority of such conflicts have also taken place in the developing world, particularly Africa, the Middle East, and Southwest Asia. Given the EU's extensive global interests, its extensive links to the developing world, and its geographic location, such conflicts have much potential to destabilise Europe itself and threaten a range of EU security and economic interests.

With the EU's vulnerability to such conflicts, and the high costs of attempting to control them, the conventional wisdom behind the EU's approach to external conflict is that prevention is much cheaper than dealing with a conflict and its aftermath (Council 2011). Accordingly, the EU stresses early warning and early action as part of a strategy of prevention, a focus which begs the question: how can we predict the outbreak of a conflict early enough to take decisive action?

¹ By 'comprehensive approach' we refer to the EU's recourse to its full range of policy tools, in a coherent and proactive fashion, across the entire life-cycle of a conflict (see Gebhard & Norheim-Martinsen 2011; Major & Mölling 2013; Smith 2013a). This is also shorthand for the EU's ability to: 1) combine short/medium-term and longer-term tools; 2) bridge the civilian-military gap; and 3) link the EU's security and development/humanitarian goals in a host country. The EU Global Strategy (HR/VP, 2016) refers to this as an 'integrated approach' (see also Commission and HR/VP, forthcoming). For more on the EU's comprehensive approach, see DL 4.3 and DL 5.4.

2.1. UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT: THE EU'S PERSPECTIVE(S)

Research priority 1: Understanding and conceptualising EU conflict prevention

What do we know about predicting or forecasting conflict in general, particularly intrastate conflict of the type addressed by most EU CPP activities? As our initial EU-CIVCAP research has shown (DL3.2), the term 'conflict prevention' itself is used in different ways by different actors within the EU's external action machinery, notably to cover both conflict prevention as a way in which the EU acts in and engages with the rest of the world, *and* as a set of distinct activities, such as conflict analysis, conflict prevention, early warning, mediation, resolution, management, and peacebuilding. There is therefore more research to be done into how the EU itself defines and, especially, distinguishes between these related activities. Further, as a number of institutions speak for the EU in this realm, definitions by specific EU bodies (such as the Commission or the EEAS) may depend on historical, bureaucratic or other factors unique to their experience. Further research should also investigate whether and how these different conceptualisations affect the EU's policy implementation.

Research priority 2: Understanding how conflicts are conceptualised and prioritised in EU decision-making processes

Similarly, the problem of defining and diagnosing conflicts as potential targets for EU action requires more research into how specific EU stakeholders with foreign/security policy authority tend to explain why a specific conflict is likely to occur. This would involve understanding how the EU distinguishes between violent and non-violent conflict, or between direct and indirect (i.e., structural/root causes) sources of conflict, or between active and inactive/frozen conflicts.² As civil war scholars themselves continue to disagree on some of these fundamental definitions (Sambanis 2004), more research into the general intra-EU politics of defining conflict management and crisis response could be useful. Equally important is the question of whether the EU should treat all conflicts (violent and non-violent) as 'negative' problems to be prevented or managed, as opposed to potentially positive forces for change, which in turns lends itself to a self-stabilisation perspective rather than a more interventionist one (and in line with the 'Do no harm' principle). The EU's erratic approach to the 'Arab Spring' revolutions could be usefully interpreted from such a perspective, as a previous EU Framework 7 research project has found.³

² Note also that there are multiple forms of collective violence that occur at the intrastate level, such as mob violence, organised crime, low-level insurgencies and terrorism, resistance and separatist movements, coups d'état, and the like. It may be worth conducting more research on how the EU can mitigate these problems under certain conditions.

³ See the ArabTrans project: <http://www.arabtrans.eu>.

Overall, then, the fact that 'conflict prevention/management' and 'crisis response' are decentralised EU policy domains with open or permeable conceptual boundaries that overlap with other domains means that ongoing research is necessary to determine how fundamental concepts are defined and acted upon by various EU stakeholders during real-world situations. All policy requires politics, so a crucial early step in understanding how the EU pursues CPP is to recognise that understanding the politics behind the EU's own foreign/security policies is just as important as understanding the politics in host states where the EU intends to play a role.

2.2 IMPENDING CRISIS/EARLY-WARNING SYSTEMS

Research priority 3: Analysing the functioning and effectiveness of the EU's Conflict Early Warning System

Leaving aside the general conceptual problems above that may require further research, we turn our attention to the range of specific policy tools available to the EU for the purpose of early warning (and therefore potential prevention) in the realm of CPP. Most of these are associated with the EU Conflict Early Warning System (EWS) and (to a lesser extent) the Global Conflict Risk Index (GCRI), both of which should be a target for research in terms of how these tools work in the real world and how well they actually enhance the EU's ability to forecast, prevent, and respond to external conflicts in a timely and effective fashion. Many of these capabilities are based on specific technologies, and it is worth noting that there is currently no general EU strategy for using new technology in the realm of CPP (see DL 3.2), a problem that may require more attention as new technologies and the EU's global ambitions continue to develop.

Regarding the role of the EWS to prevent the emergence of conflicts in non-EU countries, one major issue involves the decentralised structure of the EWS. As noted in DL2.1 and DL3.1 and by other EU-funded projects (Beswick, 2012; Brante et al., 2011), multiple actors are involved and their roles vary depending on the phase of the conflict cycle: risk scanning (INTCEN; PRISM); prioritisation or agenda-setting (EEAS/Commission/PSC); shared assessment and follow-up (Commission/EEAS); and periodic monitoring (every six months; EEAS/Commission). This process feeds into a Conflict Analysis programme managed by the EEAS, focused on seven factors: context, roots, actors, various dynamics, potential outcomes, possible responses, and identification of gaps/options/realistic strategies. Statistical models like the GCRI and the Fragile States Index, as well as the advent of a Country Situational Awareness Platform (CSAP), can be used to supplement any deliberations about the prospects of a conflict breaking out.⁴ However, as noted above and throughout this paper, so many actors are involved in these distinct tasks (several of which are relatively new to the

⁴ Such statistical models are generally based on automated multiple regressions of clusters of dozens of quantitative variables, usually provided by open-source or public data (such as the European Media Monitor); the clusters usually include economic, political, social, security, geographic/environmental, public health, and related factors. The utility of these models for CPP purposes might be worthy of further exploration but will not be examined in detail here.

EU) that further research is required to determine how well the EWS works in practice, how coherent it is, and whether it can be streamlined or further rationalised in some fashion as a system to foster quick and decisive action. Furthermore, the number of actors involved here (and throughout all CPP activities) also makes the EU approach to CPP prone to three pathologies of complex organisations turf battles, information-hoarding, and an avoidance of responsibility (i.e., 'buck-passing') (Christensen and Snyder, 1990).⁵ The effects of these dynamics also deserve more attention by researchers. Similarly, it might be useful to research the effectiveness of, and potential synergies with, various related initiatives in conflict forecasting, analysis, and prevention developed by non-EU actors, such as the ICT4Peace Foundation, the PeaceTech Lab, and various UN initiatives.

Research priority 4: Understanding and improving information-sharing in EU conflict prevention

These problems are compounded by classification and information-sharing systems used by various actors throughout the EU. The EEAS, in particular, relies on systems inherited from two main sources: the European Commission and the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU, and different actors within the EEAS use different classified systems. The EEAS headquarters and designated delegations have a secret EU system called CIMS, and the civilian CSDP missions have access to another one (DEUS) and its mobile extension, NOMAD. However, the EUMS, the EU's Intelligence Centre, and the CMPD use several other classified EU information-sharing tools depending on the situation: SOLAN, EU OPS WAN, CAMEO, INTELLAN, and SINTCENLAN. As with the EWS noted above, so many systems controlled and used by so many actors is a recipe for incoherence at best and miscommunication and information blockages at worst. Although the EU is taking steps to address this problem and to update its outdated systems,⁶ further research on whether these improvements work as desired will almost certainly be necessary at some point. While EU-funded projects such as CIVILEX have examined communication systems in civilian CSDP, research could be further expanded to cover the whole spectrum of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. We return to some of these points below when discussing research into the conflict management/resolution phase of CPP policies.

⁵ As noted in Beswick (2012: 12): "Each EU in-country actor appears to have their own reporting line to Brussels" and that information transmitted is not being automatically shared with the relevant actors within the EWS. Furthermore, there are "outstanding technical obstacles that undermine cooperation and information- and analysis-sharing between departments."

⁶ Through the EC3IS (EEAS Corporate Classified Communication and Information System) programme. It is intended to replace the systems noted in the main text with a common platform to protect classified information used by the EEAS services.

Research priority 5: Examining the use of satellite/GEOINT technologies in EU early warning and conflict prevention

Regarding specific technologies for CPP activities (particularly for early warning), several of these deserve more focused and ongoing research attention, whether in the form of small pilot projects/feasibility studies or larger and more comprehensive assessments of their cost-effectiveness. As outlined in DL2.1 and DL3.1 in particular, there are several clusters of technologies worthy of further exploration along these lines: earth observation geospatial information (GEOINT); unmanned aerial systems (drones); and information communication technologies (ICT), including Big Data and social media.

For example, the EU has a very unique 'own resource' in the form of dedicated satellite/GEOINT capabilities, which can provide crucial real-time information about border control and border monitoring, treaty verification, arms control and non-proliferation (encompassing chemical weapons), illegal farming/fishing/wildlife activities, and environmental monitoring (among other uses). Further research into the value-added of the EU Satellite Centre (EU SatCen) and related EU programmes like Copernicus,⁷ Space Situational Awareness, Galileo/EGNOS,⁸ and others involving RTDI⁹ more generally would therefore be helpful. This could include (for example) detailed comparative case studies of previous EU SatCen contributions to early warning capabilities for completed and ongoing CSDP actions in conflict situations.¹⁰ It could also involve pilot projects regarding new capabilities such as micro-satellites and full-motion video surveillance via satellite. Similar to GEOINT capabilities in terms of offering real-time monitoring on the ground in host countries, drones may have more potential than we have seen during previous CSDP missions, where they were used in a limited capacity in EUFOR Tchad/RCA. The Commission has developed a strategy for drones, and the UN used them in the Democratic Republic of Congo, but the extent to which this capability will become a more prominent EU tool for CPP and other related humanitarian/development activities, such as delivering medicines (for example), remains to be seen.¹¹

⁷ Copernicus services include land management, the marine environment, atmosphere, emergency response, security and climate change.

⁸ Galileo is the Global Navigation Satellite System under development by the EU; planned full operational capability is 2019. EGNOS is the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service, which helps to ensure the reliability and accuracy of Galileo.

⁹ Research, Technology, Development, and Innovation.

¹⁰ Such as its role in EUMM Georgia, EUNAVFOR Somalia, EUFOR Tchad/RCA, EUTM Uganda, EUFOR Althea, and EUBAM Rafah.

¹¹ The advent of drones and similar forms of remote aerial surveillance (micro-satellites) could inspire a major research project in itself, considering the rapid proliferation of these technologies and their wide variation in terms of utility, size, altitude, on-board equipment (including lethal and non-lethal weaponry), and so on.

Research priority 6: Exploring the use of ICTs and Big Data in EU early warning and conflict prevention (e.g. improving effectiveness and mitigating adverse effects)

There may be even more potential, from an early warning standpoint, for the use of ICTs and Big Data capabilities in conflict situations. These technologies include smartphones, PCs, Big Data, social media analytics, crowdsourcing software, and their synergies with other technologies (such as GEOINT-supported location/mapping services). While these can be very useful in host countries for situational awareness/surveillance/change detection, and therefore enhance early warning about potential conflicts (for example, by feeding real-time information into the EWS), DL2.1 has shown that the EU does not make much use, if any, of phones, software, or social media analytics in the realm of CPP the way other actors do, such as the UN. Similarly, DL3.1 found that apparently the EU does not have a policy on the use of ICT for peacebuilding, conflict early warning or conflict prevention. The EU could therefore pursue further research in this area to develop new concepts/doctrines and capabilities for CPP, possibly involving pilot projects and/or findings from similar efforts by other international actors (such as the Libya Crisis Map project and the UN's Global Pulse project in Indonesia, both of which involve social media analytics), as well as related efforts by private firms and non-governmental organisations involved in CPP activities.¹²

In addition, although the Council of the EU has called for 'Mainstreaming digital solutions and technologies in EU development policy', DL3.1 notes that there does not appear to be a systematic and direct use of ICTs for early warning and conflict analysis at the EU level. For instance, out of 292 projects funded by the EU's Instrument on Contributing to Stability and Peace, only 12 have an ICT component and most of these focus on the media in general, including radio, with only one project specifically having reference to ICT. The security-development nexus in EU CPP activities also raises the question of the larger digital divide between foreign stakeholders such as the EU and potential host countries, which tend to be developing states, as pointed out in DL2.1 and DL3.1. This inequality of access to ICT resources and related goods/services could lead to a mis-deployment of CPP resources, with potentially catastrophic consequences.¹³ In view of this the EU could consider researching ways to bridge the digital divide through its development policies, and link those efforts to improving its conflict management capabilities, especially regarding early-warning and preventative mediation. Research could examine whether there has been a democratisation of the use of technologies in conflict-affected areas, whether the introduction of ICTs makes peacebuilding processes more inclusive, and whether the use of ICTs in conflict prevention can be sustainable and locally owned.

More focused research is also required into the unintended consequences or trade-offs in deploying these new technologies in conflict zones, for the purpose of early warning or other tasks, as discussed in DL3.1. All high-tech surveillance mechanisms, whether based on GEOINT, drones, or ICT/Big Data, raise difficult ethical questions regarding personal privacy, freedom of expression, and data protection (among

¹² A useful example here is the H2020 funded project iTRACK, which seeks to develop real-time tracking and threat identification solutions to improve the protection of aid workers in conflict situations.

¹³ For example, such data may reflect the interests/needs/activities of the urban, male, wealthier population rather than a host country at large. See DL2.1 and DL3.1.

others); failing to understand and effectively address these concerns, as well as making sure they conform to EU privacy norms, could seriously undermine the EU's general reputation and its specific CPP activities as a security provider in the developing world. Other risks relating to the use of these technologies could also be examined in more detail, including issues of vulnerability of systems and dependence and the use of technologies by spoilers or violent actors. The use of Big Data (as well as artificial intelligence), in particular for CPP tasks, raises other problems in light of the inherent difficulties involved in interpreting the data accurately and then acting accordingly.¹⁴ The EU should therefore not deploy these tools more widely without conducting further research into these questions, which could involve comparative case studies on how other actors (such as the US or UN) deploy them and mitigate their adverse effects (or not). For digital data sources in particular, it also might be possible to devise pilot projects using different types/sources of such data to determine their cost-effectiveness for CPP tasks, and then pursue this capability accordingly.¹⁵

Research priority 7: Exploring solutions for improving cyber-security in the area of EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding

One final point is that the EU's increasing reliance on high-tech solutions to CPP and early warning means that cyber-security issues will require far more attention in coming years. All of these various capabilities and the systems that support them must be protected from disruptions or misuse, whether deliberate or accidental, if they are expected to perform as desired in difficult threat environments. In addition, technologies can be used by parties to a conflict (including its 'victims'), by other donors, and by outside spoilers in ways that could exacerbate conflict and undermine the efforts of the EU. This trend is now evident, even with relatively old technologies such as mobile phones (Pierskalla & Hollenbach 2013; Klausen 2015; Shapiro & Weidmann 2015). Balancing the utility and security of these systems where they are used – whether in the field, in Brussels, in EU member states, or by EU partners – could require an extensive cyber-security/new technologies programme for the CFSP/CSDP in general and CPP in particular, especially if the EU continues to implement the ambitious goals outlined in the 2016 EU Global Strategy. On a smaller scale, the EU should require a cyber-security component (or impact assessment) for any calls for H2020 proposals that rely on digital data in particular. However, as with other areas of EU security affairs, cyber-security remains a highly decentralised EU policy domain with multiple stakeholders, both public and private, which can inhibit effective and stable solutions to these problems (Bendiek & Porter 2013; Silwinski 2014; Barrinha & Carrapiço 2016).

¹⁴ These problems are often termed the 'Five V's': volume (a great amount of data); variety (diverse data from multiple sources); velocity (a rapid influx of the data stream); veracity (uncertainty of the data); and value (information extracted from the data). See DL3.1.

¹⁵ For example, major types of Big Data include: 1) Digital 'breadcrumbs,' or traces of human actions picked up by digital devices, or the digital translation of human actions (making a phone call, making a purchase, online research, sending a tweet, updating a Facebook profile or posting a blog); 2) Open web data (social media, blogs, online news, etc.), most of which is unstructured; and 3) Remote sensing data using satellite imagery and drones. See DL3.1.

3. THE EU, CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION

Having discussed some areas of opportunity regarding conflict analysis, forecasting, and early warning, it must now be clearly acknowledged that a lack of data or analysis is in fact rarely an obstacle, in and of itself, to the EU taking firm action in the realm of CPP. In fact, it could be argued that thanks to the EWS, a 24-hour news cycle, the internet, social media, technical means of surveillance, and other forms of global political monitoring, the EU already has plenty of information about potential and actual conflicts that could affect its interests. Yet despite this glut of information and analysis, the EU still often fails to take preventative action in some cases, and fails to manage conflicts in other cases when violence actually breaks out.¹⁶ These observations lead us to consider the need for further research on how the EU moves from the 'monitoring' phase to the 'action' phase in the realm of CPP, and what factors might inhibit such a transition even when circumstances seem to indicate that the EU should be doing more about a particular conflict (or impending conflict). Such research could be divided into two main categories: research involving EU actors and institutions in Brussels, and research involving EU member states.

3.1. THE EU AND CPP

Research priority 8: Examining coherence and coordination problems in EU early warning/early response

The EU's structures and policies in the realm of CPP have evolved considerably since the EU's initial experiments with conflict resolution in the Balkans during the 1990s and the advent of CSDP missions in 2003. Some of these changes have been mandated by formal treaty decisions (such as the Treaty of Lisbon) while others have been the result of operational experiences, learning exercises, and other forms of self-reflection (i.e., concepts, doctrines, regional/country strategies, thematic strategies, etc.) on a regular basis. There is also considerable evidence that this learning-by-doing approach to institutional reform has indeed enhanced the EU's capacity to take on a wide range of CPP-related tasks using the CSDP and other policy tools (Smith 2017). Yet for all of this innovation, the fact remains that CPP is still a decentralised policy domain (or set of policies) managed by a range of actors in the EU and its member states. This problem is compounded by the ongoing divide between civilian and military approaches to CPP, each with their own chains of command, cultures of decision-making, and other institutional infrastructures, despite the emergence of the so-called comprehensive/integrated approach to EU external relations in general and the CSDP/CPP domain in particular (see DL 4.3, DL 5.4 and other projects such as EUNPACK).

¹⁶ The 'warning response gap' identified by George and Holl (1997), constitutes one of the four cross-cutting challenges identified by the EU-CIVCAP project.

Therefore, from a macro-level EU perspective, most EU-CIVCAP outputs, along with related projects (EUCONRES, FORESIGHT, WOSCAP) and other large-scale research projects in the literature (Gross & Juncos 2011; Carbone 2013; Dijkstra 2013; Juncos 2013; Engberg, 2014; Pohl 2014; Smith 2017), continue to stress the need for better coordination and coherence along the full decision cycle of specific CPP actions, from early warning to contingency/advance planning to decision/policy-making to resourcing/implementation to after-action feedback/monitoring (including learning). In addition to the sheer number of actors involved in these decisions, two other key factors – the lack of a central institutional home for all CPP activities,¹⁷ and the fact that the EU itself is always evolving – make it very difficult for outside researchers to get a handle on how, why, and with what impact the EU takes decisions in the real world, even when they conduct extensive interviews with knowledgeable insiders. Therefore, in addition to ongoing and comprehensive research projects that engage with these coordination problems (turf battles, buck-passing, information-hoarding, coordination/leadership, etc.),¹⁸ it might be useful to consider allowing outside researchers to be embedded in various EU bodies to engage in participant observation on a longer-term basis (i.e. several months or more).¹⁹ The EU could also consider a fellowship programme to host resident scholars to study EU foreign/security policy (CPP-related and otherwise), similar to the NATO fellowship programmes.

Research priority 9: Investigating the role of new technologies in bridging the early warning/early response gap

Such research into the 'who does what and how' aspect of CPP tasks must also consider another area of opportunity for further work: the EU's longstanding problem of taking decisions in a crisis situation when the policy domain at stake is so decentralised (Gourlay, 2004). This is why the early-warning/response gap analysed by EU-CIVCAP and other projects (e.g. FORESIGHT) is so critical; information flows are only likely to increase because of the trends in technology and other factors noted above, so more research is necessary into the question of whether the EU's structures and decision-making procedures for CPP established by the Lisbon Treaty are still fit for purpose in light of the increasingly fast pace and growth of data flows regarding

¹⁷ From the Gothenburg Programme to the Lisbon Treaty and beyond, the EU still retains a decentralised system for the CSDP/ CPP domain, involving general political guidelines from the Council of the EU and specific decision-making tasks shared among the PSC, the EEAS, and the Commission. Resourcing then depends on EU and EU member state contributions, depending on the task at hand.

¹⁸ As DL3.2 explains, most of the EU's CPP resources – the budgets, personnel, expertise of the context and influence over third parties – lies with the Commission, and not just those parts of the Commission (such as the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, DG DEVCO) traditionally associated with conflict-prevention-as-activities but also Directorate-Generals for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), Energy (DG Energy), Trade (DG Trade) and Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) at least.

¹⁹ For a notable example of such an approach, see Ross 1995. George Ross, a political sociologist, spent 1991 as a participant observer in the Cabinet of Jacques Delors to produce this highly detailed and informative study of high-level EU decision-making.

conflict, as DL3.1 notes. Big Data, in particular, may challenge the EU beyond its capabilities, in terms of overwhelming it with so much information that either prevents action or results in actions that end up doing more harm than good in the host country. The EU already suffers from not just a leadership deficit in many such situations but also from a coordinated *planning* deficit (Mattelaer, 2013) so more work on the question of how the EU can realistically balance (short-term) crisis response against (longer-term) development/humanitarian goals would be useful, especially if the EU does not plan to delegate all of these functions to a single institutional actor, as seems to be the case (see Youngs 2008; Keukeleire & Raube 2013; Smith 2013b).²⁰

Research priority 10: Examining and explaining the effectiveness of EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding policies (including local perspectives)

Once the EU does take a decision to act, this brings us to the types of CPP policy tools available to the EU and their effectiveness – or mapping the EU's comprehensive/integrated approach, which involves drawing upon all EU capabilities across all phases of the conflict cycle. These tools range from shorter-term mechanisms to longer-term ones, involving diplomatic, economic, police, and military resources. As several comprehensive studies have pointed out (Ginsberg 2001; Ginsberg and Penska 2012), and as noted by DL3.2 in particular, it is still very difficult to ascertain how specific EU actions have contributed to changes in a particular host country. In fact, the literature on civil (or intrastate) wars also shows that in many cases it is not possible to determine if a conflict is truly finished, or merely in a state of hibernation until a new crisis ignites it again (Fortna 2004; Boyle 2014). This is especially true of conflicts that end without a formal peace agreement or similar instrument of cessation. While there is an increasing body of literature on CSDP effectiveness (Juncos, 2013; Peen Rodt, 2014; see also findings from IECEU), more work on the impact of all EU policies related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding (rather than just CSDP) would be very useful: how does the EU, for example, know a 'resolved conflict' when it sees one? Such studies should also include an overall net assessment of the outcomes, positive and negative, to determine whether the benefits of involvement outweighed the various costs: economic, socio-political, environmental, human rights, and so on. Extensive donor involvement in foreign countries, especially those prone to instability/conflict, almost always raises problems such as corruption, nepotism, misuse (or abuse) of resources or authority, and so on; such problems not only impact effectiveness on the ground, they can also undermine the EU's own reputation and legitimacy as a security provider. Linked to this suggestion, more research could also look into local perspectives on effectiveness and how this might differ from how the EU understands effective conflict prevention/peacebuilding.

²⁰ How to ensure an appropriate balance between short-term and long-term interventions constitutes another cross-cutting challenge examined by the EU-CIVCAP project.

Research priority 11: Investigating the success of EU mediation initiatives and EU monitoring missions

Regarding shorter-term political/diplomatic policy tools and CPP tasks,²¹ there is scope for more work on the EU's use of mediation and preventative diplomacy in the realm of CPP, which could encompass elections monitoring as well. The EU has produced a Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities, yet it could be argued that it is not clear enough to provide principles or adequate training to allow more preventative diplomacy, as DL3.2 notes. Studies of mediation in civil wars have shown that the credibility of the mediator is a critical factor in whether warring parties will accept such outside involvement (Greig and Regan 2008), and the EU still has limited experience, and therefore credibility, in this area.²²

Another short-term tool involves civilian monitoring of peace agreements and ceasefire agreements to prevent new outbreaks of previous conflicts; however, although the EU has conducted such operations (the Aceh Monitoring Mission and the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia), and has participated in related border-monitoring activities in areas prone to conflict (EUBAM Rafah, EUBAM Libya, and EUBAM Moldova-Ukraine), the actual record of these operations reveals considerable limitations that are worthy of further exploration.²³ Most intrastate wars in fact end by the surrender or destruction of one side or the other, often because it is difficult, if not impossible, for the parties themselves to make credible guarantees to each other regarding a settlement. Yet the EU still has very limited experience in extending such security guarantees. In fact, among the several missions noted above, only the Aceh Monitoring Mission can be considered a success in terms of fulfilling its (very limited) security mandate; the others involved shortfalls in terms of limited participation by EU member states exacerbated by difficulties on the ground because of local political factors and outside interference by powerful actors (such as Russia).²⁴ Considering the high-risk nature of sending EU civilians into potential conflict zones,²⁵ the EU should conduct further investigations into the costs and benefits of such missions in general and the factors behind their prospects for success in particular.

²¹ Although the EU has not engaged in all of them, these tasks include (but are not limited to): support to the police; security sector reform; border management; counter-terrorism/piracy; support to the judiciary/penitentiary sector; mediation/confidence-building; support to the armed forces; monitoring; riot control; and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration. See DL4.1.

²² Intrastate wars are in fact much less likely than interstate wars to end in a negotiated settlement; 55% of interstate wars that ended between 1940 and 1990 were resolved by bargaining, while only 20% of intrastate wars ended in the same manner (Walter, 1997).

²³ It must also be noted that one major study suggests that the effectiveness of foreign peacekeeping operations is enhanced when military forces play a greater role than police or civilian observers (Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon 2014).

²⁴ Some form of 'international trusteeship' over a weak or conflict-prone state that involves the taking over of a state's administrative functions by an outside authority is also conceivable (Fearon and Laitin 2004; Fortna 2004). The EU played such a role in Kosovo, of course, yet this option is still extremely rare and will not be considered here. A similar 'extreme' option involves partitioning a conflict state into two or more smaller states; this option will not be considered here either.

²⁵ Such as the killing in 2013 of a Lithuanian customs officer working for the EU in Kosovo and the death of a Belgian national in the EU's Mali delegation after a terrorist attack in 2015.

Research priority 12: Exploring the potential for more synergies and a more integrated approach between civilian and military CSDP

Coordination between civilian missions and military operations has also been identified as a key challenge in CSDP.²⁶ Some of these problems have been explained in the literature in relation to bureaucratic politics. From this perspective, each bureaucratic organisation has its own specific interests (often in the form of increasing competences, size, budget, prestige) that it will seek to promote, resulting in constant competition among organisations (Allison and Zelikow, 1999). This was especially the case during the pre-Lisbon period, when both the European Commission and the Council Secretariat sought to protect/extend their areas of competence in civilian crisis management (Klein, 2010). Whether it was EUPM or EUJUST THEMIS, CSDP missions suffered from problems of institutional turf wars between the Commission and the Council (Gross, 2009; Ioannides, 2009; Juncos, 2013). Problems of coherence were also evident between civilian and military operations, as in the case of EUFOR Althea and EUPM in Bosnia, where both missions were active in the fight against organised crime (Juncos, 2013). This problem extended to the EU's coordination with other partners in the area, particularly NATO, which was engaged in similar activities.

The Lisbon Treaty and the development of the comprehensive approach have gone some way towards dealing with these problems.²⁷ However, some overlaps and inconsistencies remain and a culture of coordination still needs to be developed. As such, the potential offered by the newly established EEAS has not yet been fulfilled (Major and Molling, 2013). For one, there have been some problems of coordination between CMPD and CPCC (Pirozzi, 2015: 303). The new Joint Communication on the Integrated Approach should help bring more coherence into the system, but there are still considerable challenges, especially regarding interoperability (see IECEU, 2017), pooling and sharing (DL 2.5), and the need to increase synergies between civilian missions and military operations (DL 5.3) and with other international actors such as the UN, OSCE or NATO (see DL 4.2, DL 4.3 and DL 5.4). While academic attention has focused on the political/strategic and tactical levels (Dijkstra, 2013; Klein, 2010), more research could be done on coordination at the operational level. Further research could examine the potential for more joint (civ-mil) or integrated EU crisis management missions, for instance, by drawing on previous examples (EU SSR Guinea Bissau, EUSEC RD) or comparative research (e.g. UN missions). While there are a number of EU-funded projects that seek to improve the standardisation of training in the area of CPP (see EU-CIVCAP DL 2.1 and 2.4; Peacetraining; GAP), more research could also look into the development of a more integrated civil-military planning, common doctrine and mission support, to name a few areas.

²⁶ Civil-military coordination is one of the four cross-cutting challenges identified by EU-CIVCAP. The IECEU and WOSCAP projects have also examined this issue.

²⁷ See for instance, DL 4.3, for a discussion on the evolution and implementation of the EU's comprehensive approach.

Research priority 13: Understanding the conditions for successful implementation of EU capacity-building programmes, in particular those ensuring meaningful local ownership and the sustainability of the reforms

Regarding longer-term tools for CPP, it seems clear that the EU is now placing as much or even more emphasis on longer-term host country capacity-building (CB) programmes as it is on shorter-term crisis response/conflict resolution missions. This approach draws upon the EU's extensive experience with preparing countries for EU membership (particularly involving the enlargement of the eastern borders of the EU), and has been implemented in a range of settings so far, although the term 'capacity-building' is not always used (i.e., mentoring/monitoring/advising, security sector reform, rule of law reform, train and equip, resilience, etc.). As DL6.1 notes, however, such CB programmes have not always been well coordinated with other donor activities or local priorities; this problem, coupled with other limitations in host country environments, means that the impact of CP activities has been quite limited in some cases. This finding also points to a need for more research into how to improve the local legitimacy and 'ownership' of CB programmes (and related projects) in the relevant host countries, which could have a major impact on their effectiveness.²⁸ Such work would include the effective selection and inclusion of local elites in both the planning and implementation phases of CB programmes, as well as how to devise feasibility/impact assessments to improve the overall net benefits of such efforts. As DL6.1 also notes, the EU does not always involve local partners in planning CB programmes before they are agreed by the EU, as in the case of EUCAP Nestor, for example. The general concept of 'the local' is itself unclear, so more research on how outside donors like the EU define and select 'locals' for inclusion would be helpful (along with understanding why 'locals' would participate in the first place); the same holds true for defining terms such as 'ownership' or 'stakeholder' or 'partner' at the 'local' level where CB programmes are implemented.²⁹

In addition, CB programmes are often meant to be long-term investments by the EU but they also should become relatively self-sustaining, if possible, so that new (or reformed) host-country institutions can continue and function effectively on their own, with little or no outside donor support. In other words, such programmes should seek to reduce dependency rather than reinforce or even institutionalise it, as may have happened with certain programmes in Kosovo. Despite various obstacles, research by EU-CIVCAP demonstrates that such self-sustaining outcomes are possible. For example, DL6.1 notes that in the case of Bosnia, the Peace Support Operations Training Centre (PSOTC) became completely self-sustaining in the past five years; this was an international project consisting of 12 countries helping Bosnia to develop a capacity for training its own personnel before being deployed to Peace Support Operations. It has now turned into a Bosnian structure, and hosts international officers from several countries (particularly from the Western Balkans).

²⁸ On local ownership, see also Ejodus, 2017; Bojicic-Dzelilovic and Martin (2016).

²⁹ As discussed in DL 6.1, the term local "usually comprises a wide range from the population at large to traditional structures, from central state government to civil society organisations, from specialized professional groups to local spoiler groups" (Narten 2008: 375).

Using case studies like this from the EU and other IOs, further research should be conducted on the factors behind such self-sustaining and effective reforms, including training, personnel deployments, the role of outside expertise and 'twinning' projects, the commitment of physical/material resources for reform, the legitimacy/credibility of donors, the role of local institutional insiders (or 'entry points', as discussed in DL6.1), the relationship between CB programmes and other EU projects in host countries, the role of transparency and the media/public diplomacy, the diffusion of CB benefits/spending, and so on. It also might be useful to examine whether there is some kind of 'base line' level of indigenous state and civil society capacity needed to make CB programmes more effective and sustainable. Such studies could build upon and extend the broader research literature regarding weak or fragile/failed states.

The variation in outcomes across specific sectors addressed by the EU's CB (and related) programmes seems to be another fruitful area for further research; these would include the security sector (including police, military, and maritime CB), the judicial/rule of law sector (including prisons and courts), the development sector (including public health), and the civil society sector (among others).³⁰ Comparative analyses of best practices and their potential impact on the division of labour between such partners in host countries would be very helpful. Similarly, the variation in geographic outcomes of such programmes that DL6.1 discovered (i.e., the Balkans vs. Africa) also suggests the importance of comparative (country/regional) case studies on this topic, which could include detailed analyses of the overall winners and losers resulting from a reform process. Understanding these dynamics could help the EU devise ways to incentivise local actors who may be wary of reform and potentially prevent them from acting as disruptive 'spoilers' in such processes (Stedman, 1997).

Research priority 14: Assessing conditions for effective implementation of partnerships with other international organisations (UN/NATO/OSCE/AU) in the area of conflict prevention and peacebuilding

The EU's desire to work with other donors also suggests a need for ongoing, long-term work on the evolution and effectiveness of CB programmes implemented by the EU's closest partners, such as the UN and the AU, as well as the programmes run by individual EU member states (see below). This would include a better understanding of how various EU partners determine their priorities for specific CB programmes, as well as how they handle the various problems noted above regarding local ownership and legitimacy. More research along these lines could even help facilitate a more coordinated and even a shared strategic approach among major IOs with involvement in a particular region, such as central Africa. Such work should also pay greater attention to informal channels of coordination as it actually occurs at various levels of analysis (from headquarters to host countries), since the tendency in the literature is to focus more on formal arrangements agreed among headquarters of IOs (see DL4.2). It might also be worthwhile to build into these studies a more systematic exploration of the role of disruptors/spoilers, whether domestic or international, in undermining

³⁰ In this regard, the effectiveness or impact of CB programmes could be measured in terms of the quality of service delivery, increased responsiveness, accountability, or conflict resolution; see DL6.1 for details.

CB projects, especially as many of them are implemented in countries/regions facing a range of political competitors. This would include analysing the problems raised by alternative models of CB promoted by other leading donors, such as Russia, Turkey, and the United States.

For example, the EU's most important partner from a CPP standpoint is the UN, and these two IOs have produced a range of documents and guidelines to help reinforce their cooperation, extending back more than a decade to the earliest days of the CSDP. Some of the EU's very first CSDP actions, in fact, were takeovers of previous UN missions or EU support operations to help reinforce the UN's own efforts in conflict zones (i.e., the EU Police Mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina; Artemis; EUFOR RD Congo, and EUFOR Tchad/RCA). Each of these operations also produced new guidelines for enhancing EU-UN coordination, which seem to have improved the overall working relationship between them (Smith 2017), yet the recurrence of coordination problems involving planning, training/staffing, communications, equipment/resources, and other issues clearly indicates a need for ongoing and detailed research on the evolution and performance of this critical partnership, especially in light of the new ambitions under the EU/UN 'Strategic Partnership in Crisis Management and Peacekeeping 2015-18' (see DL4.2).

Similarly, although the EU and NATO have used their formal Berlin Plus arrangements for only two CSDP operations (Concordia and Althea) over a decade ago, there is still a fairly high degree of EU-NATO coordination in various theatres of operation, such as the Horn of Africa (counter-piracy) and the Mediterranean (counter-trafficking), among other areas, like cyber-security (S. Smith 2013; Smith 2017). In addition, the NATO Warsaw Summit in 2016 agreed on seven strategic areas in which EU-NATO cooperation should be strengthened; these developments clearly suggest several areas of opportunity for research on various EU-NATO cooperation models.³¹ The same holds true for the EU-AU partnership and the 2003 African Peace Facility (APF), funded by the European Development Fund, along with other EU/AU programmes.³² However, the EU-OSCE partnership is somewhat lacking, as no general agreements have been signed by the two organisations to govern their cooperation. Instead, the EU is guided by its own 2003 Council draft conclusions, which identified five areas of potential enhanced cooperation: "exchange of information and analyses, co-operation on fact-finding missions, co-ordination of diplomatic activity and statements, including consultations between special representatives, training, and in-field co-operation" (see DL4.2 on the NATO/AU/OSCE partnerships). Even so, further work could be carried out to enhance the EU-OSCE partnership in the realm of CPP, as the EU has taken over one OSCE mission in the past.³³

³¹ These are: countering hybrid threats, operational cooperation including maritime issues, cyber security and defence, defence capabilities, defence industry and research, parallel and coordinated exercises, and defence and security capacity building.

³² The APF helps fund African-led Peace Support Operations, supports long-term development and institutional capacity building of the African Peace and Security Architecture, and funds an Early Response Mechanism to prevent crises or their escalation, through mediation efforts, among others.

³³ This was the EU Special Representative Border Support Team in Georgia (2005), which was not an 'official' CSDP mission; see Popescu, (2010) and Smith, (2017). It effectively assumed the responsibilities of the OSCE Border Monitoring Mission in Georgia.

Research priority 15: Investigating the actual implementation of the EU's resilience approach in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

The new resilience turn at the EU level (see Commission and HR/VP; Juncos, 2017) also raises important questions. First, while the EU has largely adopted resilience discourses from other international organisations (UN, OECD, WB), it remains unclear whether and how the EU's approach might differ from those international discourses. In particular, it would be interesting to examine whether the EU's own institutional properties (its institutional configuration, financial procedures and internal fragmentation) might affect the implementation of resilience on the ground. This strand of research would necessitate a comparative study of EU resilience approaches with those of other international actors (e.g. UN). Second, while the resilience approach has been hailed as a more cost-effective approach to international intervention, we still know little about how it contributes to sustainable peace in the medium and longer term. Hence, more research is needed on how resilience can be implemented in practice, indicators of resilience, and factors determining its effectiveness. For instance, research projects could consider how to design resilience indicators to be incorporated into the EU's EWS drawing on other international best practices and/or designing pilot projects. Alternatively, it is worth examining whether and how the existence of different understandings of resilience among different policy communities (development, foreign policy, security) shapes the implementation of resilience in CPP. Finally, while the resilience approach embraces a stronger focus on local ownership, bottom-up approaches and partnerships, it is still unclear how this might shape EU policies and initiatives on the ground and whether this represents a 'paradigm shift' in EU foreign and security policies. This research could draw on comparative analyses of different EU CPP policies (humanitarian, development, CSDP) and different geographical case studies.

Research priority 16: Examining gender mainstreaming in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

Last but not least, gender constitutes a cross-cutting issue throughout the conflict prevention and peacebuilding continuum and deserves further attention. The EU has been at the forefront of the implementation of a gender perspective to conflict following the adoption of the UNSCR 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security and related resolutions. However, there is still a gap between the EU's ambitions and the practical implementation of this policy priority in conflict prevention and peacebuilding policies both at the EU and national level (see DL 3.4; also Villelas et al. 2016). In particular, the involvement and participation of women in the development, design, and implementation of conflict prevention activities in line with the women, peace and security agenda has not been consistently demonstrated and the EU has not always used its political and financial weight sufficiently to push for the inclusion of women in the peace processes it supports (EPLO, 2012; 2013). This implementation gap could be further investigated through more in-depth case studies and/or comparative research (including comparisons with the work in this area of other international actors/organisations. More focused research is still needed on how

successfully the EU has mainstreamed gender into different areas of conflict prevention and peacebuilding and not just into its CSDP/SSR policies. Moreover, further analysis of the links between gender and local ownership and, in particular, aspects of inclusivity, accountability and legitimacy could be encouraged.

3.2. EU MEMBER STATES AND CPP

Research priority 17: Examining factors shaping the (differential) contribution and role of EU member states in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding

One of most critical aspects of understanding EU foreign/security policy in general and CPP policy in particular involves the central role of EU member states. As these policy domains remain largely intergovernmental,³⁴ and as the CSDP in particular still relies heavily on resources contributed by EU member states, it is important to conduct ongoing and systematic research about EU member states themselves. Yet this focus seems to be a major missing link in the evolution of security-related EU research programmes. This issue should be addressed more directly in future work on the CSDP/CPP domain, whether funded by the EU or otherwise. The fact remains that if EU member states are unwilling to delegate more security authority to central bodies like the Commission or the EEAS, it is critical to examine different national priorities and capabilities (among other factors) that directly influence their willingness to support the EU's CPP agenda. This support is required throughout the CSDP/CPP policy cycle, from broad political/strategic direction, to agenda-setting and decision-making, and to resourcing and implementation, whether in the civilian or the military realms.

In the broadest sense, scholars have periodically conducted comprehensive comparative studies of the foreign/security policies of EU member states to help address these questions. These have focused not just on material/physical resources but also the political cultures, institutions, history, and special interests or relationships of EU member states (Hill 1983; Manners & Whitman 2000; Hill and Smith 2011; Hadfield et al. 2017). These studies are a very useful 'first cut' at how individual EU member states engage with the CFSP/CSDP, yet there is still scope for more focused studies about the role of EU member states in specific conflict environments. For example, this could involve studies of EU member states with particular interests in conflict zones (such as France in Africa) or of EU member states that face security challenges owing to their proximity to the EU's southern and eastern/Baltic flanks (i.e., the EU's own neighbourhood). Similarly, comparative studies of which EU member states contribute what resources to CSDP/CPP actions, and why, would be very helpful; the same holds true of any coalition-building activities among EU member states in this domain. How are coalitions of the willing formed by EU member states to address specific conflicts and other security problems? How

³⁴ This is, relying generally on consensual agreement among all EU member states for major CSDP/CPP decisions (i.e., deployments), which often require intensive negotiations among EU member states and a reduced role, relative to EU economic policies, for the Commission, European Parliament, and Court of Justice of the EU (Moravcsik 1993; Wagner 2003).

persistent and stable are they, or do they arise only on a case-by-case basis? Do any EU member states claim specific forms of expertise or types of resources especially useful for CPP? How is leadership exercised over CPP by specific EU member states when this issue-area is weakly institutionalised and decentralised and largely intergovernmental? And so on.³⁵

Taking a look at more detailed areas of opportunity here, in the CPP realm in particular both EU-CIVCAP and EUCONRES (among other projects) have found important, even critical, details about the roles of EU member states that deserve much more attention by researchers. For example, France is almost single-handedly responsible for the leadership and conduct of the EU's four independent military peacekeeping operations in Africa, but has been less prominent as a leader in the civilian CSDP/ CPP domain. Germany acts in precisely the opposite manner, while the UK has been reluctant to contribute much to either element of the CSDP, barring its important role in two early EU takeovers of NATO operations (the EU's Concordia and Althea operations in the Balkans) and its role in the counter-piracy operation EUNAVFOR Somalia (or Atalanta). Thus, it is important to map and analyse the roles of other EU member states as well, as even small EU member states can play a leadership role in more limited CSDP/ CPP missions, such as the role of Finland in launching the Aceh Monitoring Mission or the role of Belgium in the EU's two police missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (EUPOL Kinshasa and EUPOL RD Congo) or the roles of Sweden and the three Baltic EU member states in promoting more EU involvement in the Southern Caucasus, in part through a rule of law mission in Georgia (EUJUST Themis).

These general variations regarding leadership and contributions can be examined with further comparative research regarding national recruitment/training efforts and pre-deployment training to support CPP tasks; these efforts are partly handled by EU member states (especially pre-deployment training), can vary widely, and are not always compatible with those of the EU itself (see DL 4.1 in particular).³⁶ Similarly, there are varying contributions regarding technology and other material resources regarding CPP, as noted in DL3.1, DL3.2, and DL4.1. France for example plays a prominent role in imagery and drones but less so in the realm of ICT; Italy and Sweden are frequent contributors and provide ICT support in the civilian and military realms, with Italy also a prominent actor in the EU's maritime security affairs. Germany however is more likely to make token contributions and play a more passive role (especially regarding CSDP military operations), although it did offer leadership in the EU's very difficult police mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan). Given these significant differences, a fully detailed and comparative study of national capabilities and roles/inputs in this realm would be useful, with a view to greater harmonisation

³⁵ For examples of such approaches to consensus-building in EU foreign policy, see Giegerich (2006); Ådahl (2009); Duke (2009); Adler-Nissen (2013).

³⁶ As suggested by the findings of DL4.1, such studies could extend to comparative research on the roles of various national ministries in supporting and contributing staff to CSDP/ CPP missions, as well as related issues such as central coordination by national governments of such contributions, training (pre- and post-deployment), procurement/contracting, and duty of care concerns, among other issues.

and rationalisation – or even the 'Europeanisation' of CPP.³⁷ This could involve, for example, a detailed and realistic capabilities catalogue of CPP and civilian crisis management missions led by the EU,³⁸ in terms of which EU member states are best placed to provide which contributions to which types of missions, and where they can be deployed. Such work is especially important in the civilian CSDP/CPP realm, as military units are usually 'pre-packaged' and fit for purpose long before deployment, while civilian contributions often have to be put together on a case-by-case, ad hoc basis once a mission has entered the planning phase. Even then, there have been shortfalls in staff and equipment in most if not all CSDP missions, largely owing to national-level problems. The facts clearly indicate a need for intensive and ongoing work regarding the politics and economics of CSDP/CPP contributions by EU member states, including a comparison of best practices along these lines.

Research priority 18: Examining the monitoring and enforcement of compliance among EU member states in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

A final area of opportunity involves the monitoring and enforcement of compliance among EU member states in the realm of CPP. Studies of compliance in this area are virtually non-existent, since it is assumed by most analysts that these are all voluntary missions and therefore that the EU does not need to police the compliance of EU member states that agree to contribute. The issue of compliance here also raises the question of who would be authorised in the EU to monitor and sanction any defectors, as such formal arrangements are lacking in the realm of CSDP/CPP. What about informal compliance, peer pressure, naming and shaming, and so forth? And what about the prospects for formal measures of compliance/support, such as the annual 'foreign policy scorecard' approach of the European Council on Foreign Relations?³⁹ These questions are controversial in a domain that is supposed to be largely intergovernmental because of the 'natural' sensitivity among EU member states about security/defence policy, yet the topic must be explored if the EU hopes to live up to its global ambitions as not just an effective but also a *strategic* security actor (Asseburg & Kempin 2009; Hagemann 2010; Chappell et al. 2016). Relying on the goodwill of EU member states to contribute the necessary resources to most if not all CSDP/CPP missions is hardly a long-term strategy for improvement. Thus, if EU member states are not willing to delegate more authority in this realm to the EU itself (i.e., the EEAS and the Commission), then they must devise more robust methods of monitoring, measuring/comparing, and enhancing their own contributions to this realm, all of which demand more research at the EU and member state levels of analysis.

³⁷ On domestic adaptation to European-level processes, see Tonra 2001; Smith 2004; Major 2005; Hill and Smith 2011; Hadfield et al. 2017.

³⁸ That is, beyond the EU's more general Civilian Headline Goals of 2008 and 2010, and the Civilian Capability Development Plan of 2012 (among other concepts).

³⁹ See <http://www.ecfr.eu/scorecard>.

4. LEARNING, BEST PRACTICES & KNOWLEDGE

Research priority 19: Examining the EU's learning and feedback mechanisms in CPP to provide more cost-effective solutions including through comparative analysis of its member states and other IOs.

One of the most interesting developments in EU security policy cooperation since the late 1990s is not just the growth of the CSDP as a policy tool and the emergence of CPP as a policy domain but also the pursuit of a 'learning culture' across the EU to help assess specific CSDP/ CPP outcomes with a view to improving the EU's performance in future endeavours. Although this culture has become increasingly institutionalised in various EU institutions/bodies, and has led to some major reforms (see DL 7.4 and Smith 2017), there is scope for further work on this topic to build upon the findings of EUCONRES, EU-CIVCAP, and similar projects (e.g. EUNPACK, IECEU, and WOSCAP).⁴⁰

For example, such learning can occur at multiple levels of analysis, from the strategic/political level to the operational/planning level to the theatre/host country level. Future studies should analyse these levels in detail and attempt to model the interactions between them, which would include hypotheses on blockages to feedback and learning processes up and down the chain of command. Although technical solutions to facilitate real-time feedback may exist (see DL 3.1), political and economic factors (among others), such as bureaucratic competition, are likely to persist as long as CPP remains decentralised, as noted above. From a more horizontal perspective, there is also a clear distinction between the civilian and military approaches to learning within the EU (Pihs-Lang 2013; Smith 2017), which may not only inhibit effective civilian-military coordination but may also may lead to the development of distinct strategic cultures regarding how to conduct CPP activities.⁴¹ Similarly, some of the EU's closest operational partners, particularly the UN, have their own learning processes and the EU has attempted to devise more synergies between them using the coordinating mechanisms noted above. Yet there is still scope for further work on how such IOs develop and implement such programmes, and then attempt to learn from each other through the use of joint fact-finding missions,

⁴⁰ For the purposes of EUCONRES and EU-CIVCAP, learning is defined as changes in the EU's responsibilities, rules, and resources in the realm of CPP due to new experience, information or observation. This learning process also involves: 1) periodically benchmarking or reviewing the EU's performance in a policy domain; 2) actively generating policy-relevant lessons as a result of specific CSDP actions; 3) deliberately transforming those lessons into cumulative knowledge through feedback/monitoring/evaluation processes; and 4) institutionalising and disseminating that knowledge for application in ongoing and future CSDP actions. See DL 7.4 Institutional Learning and Lessons Identified in EU Civilian Conflict Prevention: A framework for analysis, available at https://eucivcap.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/eu-civcap_deliverable_7-4.pdf.

⁴¹ Despite the EU's limited experience with major CSDP/ CPP deployments, especially military ones, there is a longstanding debate in the literature about the advent of an EU strategic culture; see Quille 2004; Cornish & Edwards 2005; Meyer 2005; Meyer 2006; Biava, Drent, and Herd 2011; Haglund 2011; Haine 2011; Norheim-Martinsen 2011; Pentland 2011; Peters 2011; Zyla 2011; Schmidt & Zyla 2013.

deployments, after-action reviews, best practices, and so on.

In addition, one critical finding that applies to both the vertical and horizontal aspects of feedback and learning is that the EU often simply fails to follow its own rules regarding lessons identified, a point that dovetails with the issue of dealing with failures of EU member state compliance noted above. Actors throughout the EU are guilty of such behaviour; this includes the Commission. Such failings can include minor problems (such as neglecting to hold learning meetings or to issue a scheduled learning report, or taking longer than expected to issue a report) to major ones (such as neglecting to change a CSDP/CPP mission in light of previous lessons identified).

The problem of transparency is also worth considering further, as some learning processes are not open to public scrutiny. Given these problems, which have been identified in both civilian and military CSDP actions, the EU's learning culture itself could certainly be enhanced further in terms of more rigorous and consistent procedures across all actors involved in the CSDP, more central coordination of all EU learning activities, more staff resources for learning activities (particularly the appointment of learning/best practice officers for all CSDP actions), and, possibly, the use of outside evaluators or auditors. Further research could help evaluate such solutions in terms of their feasibility and cost-effectiveness.

Feedback and learning processes in EU member states should also be the subject of further investigation, to build upon the work necessary (noted above) regarding their specific contributions to CPP activities. Learning processes and the lessons that result are likely to vary widely across and even within EU member states along the civilian-military divide (and among other divisions, such as security-development and political-economic). However, no comprehensive studies have attempted to map and explain these differences with a view to improving the EU's ability to monitor and then learn from its own CSDP/CPP initiatives.

Research priority 20: Investigating the impact of learning and knowledge-creation processes in the context of EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

More specifically, one expected outcome of these learning processes is the production of policy-relevant knowledge for the EU and similar actors, which should in turn be disseminated and institutionalised in the EU (through training and orientation programmes, for example), to help improve future performance and perhaps 'de-politicise' CPP activities as a policy domain (Haas 1990). New knowledge is also generated more widely through the use of military and civilian exercises involving the CSDP, training materials and workshops, and the establishment of a European Security and Defence College in 2005. The EU has improved its ideational inputs regarding the development of the CSDP, as through the EU Institute for Security Studies, an EU think-tank of independent policy experts that provides analysis and recommendations regarding the EU's new security capabilities. The EU SatCen, OpsCen, SitCen, and other intelligence-sharing efforts also add to the EU's resources for building a knowledge

base for future CSDP/CPP actions (Norheim-Martinsen & Aasland 2011).

Some studies have argued that such efforts may in fact represent a so-called 'epistemic community' in the realm of EU security affairs, which is defined as a distinct network of policy professionals who rely on the same policy-relevant knowledge base and who share the same views regarding a specific policy domain. Although this might be true in a general sense across a wide range of EU security priorities (i.e. a preference for multilateralism, a focus on prevention with civilian tools, stressing the EU's neighbourhood, and so on; see Howorth 2004; Cross 2013)) other work under the EUCONRES project (Smith 2017) and by other experts (Pihs-Lang 2013) suggests that the EU has not succeeded in building a true epistemic community in the CSDP/CPP domain, partly because of failures in learning noted above. High staff turnover and the decentralised nature of the CSDP (especially regarding the civilian-military gap), along with other factors, may contribute to this problem, and deserve more attention by researchers.

Similarly, others have noted the difficulties involved in building a true *esprit de corps* among staff members in the EEAS soon after it was created (Spence 2012; Juncos and Pomorska 2013; Juncos and Pomorska 2014), and there are in fact limited studies of cognitive change along these lines among EU staff in the realm of foreign/security policy (for an early example, see Tonra 2003). Therefore, and despite the many learning processes discussed above, it is still not possible to identify the emergence of a more 'technocratic' approach to EU conflict resolution/crisis management whereby professional experts play the leading role in planning and implementing specific CSDP/CPP actions when an opportunity presents itself. The fact is that although shared knowledge exists regarding the general outlines of CPP as a policy domain, this knowledge (as of yet) still varies across *multiple* networks (particularly civilian and military) and targets *multiple* conflict issues or other policy goals. Although this situation may have improved since the early days of the EEAS and other related EU bodies, further and ongoing research is necessary to demonstrate the extent to which, and why, various reforms in learning and knowledge-creation are working as desired.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The EU has made significant advances in the realm of CPP, through the CSDP mechanism and other policy tools. In less than 15 years the EU has launched over 30 CSDP foreign security assistance actions, many of which involve CPP goals, and has developed a range of strategies, concepts, guidelines, and other policy statements to guide its ambitions as a conflict manager and peacekeeper. This activity, which is a major departure from the EU's foreign/security policy cooperation from the 1970s to the 1990s, has also inspired a number of research strands to help understand and improve it. Building on these themes, and on the findings of EU-CIVCAP and related projects, this paper has identified a number of areas of opportunity for future work. Our emphasis throughout this paper has been on the politics and practice of EU CPP activity, viewing it not as an ideal type or distinct EU policy domain but as an arena for political contestation within and among key stakeholders in Brussels, host countries, EU member states, and major EU partners. In this light, we have attempted to raise questions about the politics of CPP in the real world, to help lessen a tendency towards wishful thinking and over-reliance on technological or 'one size fits all' solutions to these difficult problems.

By way of conclusion, the single most important fact to bear in mind about the EU's role in world politics in general and in CPP in particular is that European integration is an ongoing experiment in international policy coordination; there is no clear endpoint or stable solution to the problems the EU hopes to address in security affairs. And like all experiments, the EU must be regularly monitored and adjusted accordingly when its means do not produce the desired ends. Rigorous, theoretically informed, and empirically supported research can help guide this process of self-reflection and adaptation.

A second important fact to bear in mind is that, indeed, these means have not always produced the desired outcomes, so that the EU has not lived up to its claims as a security provider or stabilising force in areas where it claims to have an interest, such as the Middle East, North Africa, and the eastern borders of the EU itself. In some cases the EU failed to act at all; in others the EU took too long to act to make a real difference (i.e., a failure of rapid crisis response); and in others the EU did act quickly enough but was not resourced adequately and/or had to scale back its mandate because of factors beyond its control, whether inside or outside of the host country.⁴² This finding in turn has inspired a debate about evaluating/researching new solutions and institutional reforms to the CSDP/ CPP domain, such as the creation of the EEAS and the more recent EU Global Strategy. A third and final finding is that for all of its bureaucratic and legal complexity, the EU is still a treaty-based international organisation composed of sovereign states, many of which have their own views about security policy, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding. As EU member states still retain a high degree of authority in those domains, and must often be called upon

⁴² For examples of such assessments, see Grevi et al 2009; Dijkstra 2010; Gowan 2011; Haine 2011; Juncos 2013; Engberg 2014; Smith 2017.

to contribute to specific CSDP/CPP missions, any research projects on this topic that do not analyse their role in detail will be missing an important causal factor.

With these central points in mind, in our view much of the applied research funded by the EU in this realm tends to focus more narrowly on specific tools and technologies for CPP, so that a more comparative or comprehensive perspective is lacking. The deployment and effectiveness of new technologies, new coordinating mechanisms with partners, new institutional frameworks, and so on are highly contingent on the situations in host countries and on the EU's internal decision-making structures, which require a high degree of involvement by EU member states during not just the decision-making phase but also the resourcing/implementation phase. The EU should therefore be paying as much research attention to the critical role of EU member states as it does to the use of new CPP tools such as Big Data, social media, drones, and so on. As research by EU-CIVCAP, EUCONRES, and other projects clearly demonstrates, coordination within the EU to launch and conduct CPP activities is probably as or even more difficult than coordination with external partners and local stakeholders, where the EU is already respected and highly supportive of multilateralism. This involves agreement among EU member states but also the question of leadership, as 'conflict prevention' as a policy domain is shared between the EEAS and the Commission. Moreover, even when individual CPP actions are agreed and resourced adequately, the comprehensive approach is often still lacking, whether in terms of linking civilian and military policy tools or linking the EU's security/CPP agenda with its development/humanitarian agenda. The failure to live up to the comprehensive approach in turn makes it seem as if the EU is not a proactive strategic actor capable of shaping events but rather merely a reactive bit player that offers a token contribution in certain host countries before moving on to the next crisis.

The EU must therefore not just be more comprehensive and strategic but also far more realistic in terms of what it can achieve and why it is attempting to achieve it. And it must be prepared to explain these decisions to European citizens, especially if the programmes fail or if EU citizens are harmed/killed when running them. There are always winners and losers inside and outside the EU whenever it commits resources to a conflict, and future research on this topic should bear this in mind when evaluating new technologies or other mechanisms to enhance CPP actions. This is especially true if the EU intends to maintain CPP as a diffuse and decentralised policy domain, which seems to be the case despite the ambitions outlined in the EU Global Strategy. It is equally important in all CPP research to have a realistic and ongoing assessment of other factors that might undermine or even prevent effective EU action; this includes the recognition that the EU's most important partners such as the US, NATO, the AU, and so on, as well as the EU's own member states, have their own agendas and make their own political calculations about whether to contribute to the EU's security goals. This was true long before the Brexit vote in the UK and the election of President Trump in the US, and will always be the case.

Thus, although the EU has made significant advances in the CSDP/CPP domain, and has built upon this experience through the creation of policy-relevant knowledge

about conflict and crisis management, it does not always manage to meet the growing demand for decisive security or CPP actions, especially on its borders. This is not for lack of resources; the EU and its member states today possess the human resources, knowledge base, and material/technological base to act like other major powers in many areas of CPP, yet it still falls short in this area because of the various factors discussed in this paper and in the research it draws upon.

Any future research funded by the EU in this domain should thus attempt to challenge the conventional wisdom about security/crisis/conflict management in general and the EU's potential contributions and CPP role in particular, including the real world barriers to collective action by the EU. Findings from such research, in turn, should help empower the EU in terms of choosing its strategic priorities, streamlining its decision-making procedures (in Brussels and in EU member states), and resourcing its CPP missions adequately and quickly, whether in the civilian or military spheres. There is no shortage of opportunities for the EU to get more involved in conflict resolution and crisis management; the only question is whether the EU can find the political will – in Brussels and among its member states – to make the reforms suggested by the considerable body of research it has funded, and will continue to fund, in this area.

ANNEX I. EU-CIVCAP (SELECTED) DELIVERABLES

All available from: <https://eu-civcap.net/portfolio/deliverables/>

DL 2.1: Tommaso De Zan, Paola Tessari and Bernardo Venturi (2016) “Procedures, Personnel and Technologies for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: An Assessment of EU Member States’ Capabilities”.

DL 2.6: Ana E. Juncos and Gilberto Algar-Faria (2017), “EU Capabilities for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: A Capabilities-Based Assessment”.

DL 3.1: Jenny Berglund and Denis Bruckert (2017), “Report on Technological Shortcomings in Early Warning and Conflict Analysis”.

DL 3.2: Laura Davis, Nabila Habbida and Anna Penfrat (2017), “Report on the EU’s Capabilities for Conflict Prevention”.

DL 4.1: Hylke Dijkstra, Petar Petrov, and Ewa Mahr (2016), “Reacting to Conflict: Civilian Capabilities in the EU, UN and OSCE”.

DL 7.4: Michael E. Smith (2017), “Institutional Learning and Lessons Identified in EU Civilian Conflict Prevention: A Framework for Analysis”.

DL 6.1: Ana E. Juncos, Gilberto Algar-Faria, Timothy Edmunds, Katarina Đokić, Erik Plänitz, Khadir Abdi and Savannah Simons (2017), “Evaluating international efforts on local capacity building”.

ANNEX II. RELEVANT EU-FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECTS

Project title	Programme	Summary
MICROCON: Micro Level Analysis of Violent Conflict http://www.microconflict.eu/	FP6-CITIZENS ID: 28730	Increase our knowledge of conflict analysis in Europe, through the construction of an innovative micro level, interdisciplinary approach
CORE: The role of Governance in the Resolution of Socioeconomic and Political Conflict in India and Europe	FP7-SSH ID: 266931	Examine governance initiatives in conflict transformation and peacebuilding in India and Europe
A European Approach to Conflict Resolution? Institutional Learning and the ESDP (EUCONRES)	FP7-IDEAS-ERC ID: 203613	Develop a theory of institutional learning to analyse the EU's instigation and implementation of CSDP missions and operations
Building Just and Durable Peace by Piece (JAD-PbP)	FP7-SSH ID: 217488	Investigate the <i>problematique</i> of building just and durable peace in the Western Balkans and the Middle East
Do Forecasts Matter? Early Warnings and the Prevention of Armed Conflicts (FORESIGHT)	FP-IDEAS-ERC ID: 202022	Analyse the impact of forecasts on political action, how they are communicated, perceived and used in order to prevent harmful events
Beyond Sovereignty: Delegation and Agency in International Security	FP7-People ID: 298081	Comparative analysis of the EU, NATO and UN in the planning of military operations
Local ownership in security sector reform activities within CSDP operations of the EU	H2020-IF ID: 656971	Comparative analysis of the implementation of the principle of local ownership in CSDP operations
Developing EU Civilian Capabilities for a Sustainable Peace (EU-CIVCAP)	H2020-SC7 ID: 653227	Analysis of and contribution to the strengthening of the civilian capabilities for EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding
Whole of Society Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding (WOSCAP)	H2020-SC7 ID: 653227	Enhance EU capabilities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding through sustainable/comprehensive civilian means
Improving the Effectiveness of the Capabilities in EU conflict prevention (IECEU)	H2020-SC7 ID: 653371	Analyse best practices to enhance the civilian conflict prevention and peace building capabilities of EU

A conflict sensitive unpacking of the EU approach to conflict mechanisms (EUNPACK)	H2020-SC6 ID: 693337	Using bottom-up perspectives with an institutional approach, increasing our understanding of how EU crisis responses function and are received on the ground
PeaceTraining	H2020-SC7 ID: 700583	
GAP – Gaming for Peace	H2020-SC7 ID: 700670	Using Serious Games, it increases the understanding of conflict prevention and peacebuilding personnel, their creativity and ability to communicate and collaborate with the other organisations
CIVILEX	H2020-SC7 ID: 700197	Identify, characterise and model the communication and information systems in use within the EU Civilian missions
iTRACK	H2020-SC7 ID: 700510	Build the iTRACK system, an integrated intelligent real-time tracking and threat identification system to improve protection of responders and assets, and provide information management and logistics services.

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