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Gaps between Comprehensive Approaches of the EU and EU member states

Scoping Study



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Acronyms

AFD	French Development Agency
AU	African Union
BSOS	Building Stability Overseas Strategy (UK)
CAR	Central African Republic
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy (EU)
CICDE	Centre Interarmée de Concepts, de Doctrines et d'Expérimentation (France)
CMCO	Civil-Military Coordination concept (EU)
CPA	Concerted Planning and Action (Denmark)
CSDN	Defence and National Security Council (France)
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy (EU)
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
EEAS	European External Action Service
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
ESS	European Security Strategy
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FPI	Foreign Policy Instrument
ICAI	Independent Commission for Aid Impact (UK)
IHEDN	Institut des Hautes Etudes de Defense Nationale (France)
KPSRL	Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (Netherlands)
MFEA	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (France)
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoF	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MSB	Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCRU	Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit (UK)
PSC	Political and Security Committee (EU Council)
SDSR	Strategic Defence and Security Review (UK)
SIDA	Swedish Development Agency

SU	Stabilisation Unit (UK)
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme

Preface

This report has its origin in the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (KPSRL), which was established by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promote knowledge exchange and to identify, refine and respond to conceptual and operational questions underpinning Dutch development policy in fragile and conflict-affected situations.¹ One of the Platform's working groups focused on the "comprehensive approach to human security". That group proposed, as one of its work streams, policy research to deepen understanding of how to work more effectively through comprehensive approaches involving institutions in the Netherlands, but also how the Netherlands can better relate and interact with efforts to promote more comprehensiveness at the European level.² In response to the expectations of the working group, the current report identifies knowledge gaps and makes suggestions for further investigation.

This study on which this report is based was conducted in the context of ECDPM's Conflict, Security and Resilience Programme as well as the Centre's wider activities to promote comprehensive approaches in EU external action. It builds on earlier ECDPM work in the domain of conflict prevention and post-crisis transition, as well as on complementary research, peer discussions and comments by ECDPM colleagues.³ Given the vastness of the topic, the study cannot claim to discuss all angles and dynamics of the comprehensive approaches deployed by European institutional actors and EU member states. Furthermore, it was conducted through desk research; interviews with representatives from institutions of the respective EU member states and EU institutions were beyond the scope of this work. Its focus on the most up-to-date information available is intended to provide a firmer basis for informed discussion about the further pursuit of comprehensive approaches involving the EU institutions and EU member states.

¹ For more information about the Platform, see <http://www.kpsrl.org>.

² Volker Hauck (Head of the ECDPM Conflict, Security and Resilience Programme) and Camilla Rocca (Junior Policy Officer, ECDPM Conflict Security and Resilience Programme) are members of this working group.

³ Thanks go to Andrew Sherriff (Head of the ECDPM Strengthening European External Action Programme), Damien Helly (Deputy Programme Manager, ECDPM Strengthening European External Action Programme), Fernanda Faria (Programme Associate, ECDPM Conflict, Security and Resilience Programme) and Federico Santopinto (Head of Research at GRIP, Brussels).

Executive Summary

This report is written for policymakers and supporting officials interested in establishing more comprehensiveness in EU external action, with a particular focus on conflict, crisis and post-crisis transition. Investigation of the potential of a comprehensive approach at the EU level was recently advanced with the joint launch in December 2013 of the Communication entitled “The EU’s Comprehensive Approach to External Conflict and Crisis” by the European Commission and the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The European Council adopted that Communication in May 2014 (Council of the EU 2014b), creating renewed political momentum for further integration of the EU’s external action and demand for actionable follow-up. Moreover, increasing tensions worldwide, and persisting violent conflicts and fragility in the European neighbourhood and on the nearby African continent have given European actors a renewed sense of urgency to build on past reforms and proceed beyond the rhetoric of the Communication to more comprehensive action as a Union.

The aim of this report is to provide a better understanding of the various efforts being undertaken at the Union level, to shape more comprehensiveness in external action addressing conflict and crisis. It covers the role of EU institutions in Brussels, the relationship between the EU institutions and EU member states, and overlaps and divergences between six EU member states which were studied in some detail. It underlines the importance of an all-Union approach, but looks at the matter from a distinctly non-Brussels perspective. Adopting a focal angle emanating from the EU member states brings out the relevance of their individual inclinations and histories and what these might mean for the contributions that each can make towards more comprehensiveness in EU external action. Inevitably, working more comprehensively is a political process. To deal with the complexities that a EU comprehensive approach might bring, it will be important to know where synergies can be sought and how compromises can be brokered. For this, policymakers in Brussels and in the member states will first need to understand where the EU member states stand politically vis-à-vis a EU comprehensive approach. Second, they will need to be cognisant of the different historical backgrounds and cultures that inform the EU member states’ respective approaches. These aspects are set out in chapter 1.

Chapter 2 highlights some of the ideas and experiences that have informed conceptual thinking on comprehensive approaches, particularly those derived from civil-military cooperation and human security principles. The chapter furthermore emphasises the difficulty of establishing a set definition of comprehensive approaches. They should be seen instead as a call for more effective joint action between a range of actors in situations of conflict and crisis. The complexities of comprehensive approaches make their implementation highly challenging, presenting dilemmas and practical problems related to coordination, inclusiveness, policy

coherence and civil-military coordination, especially where humanitarian assistance is concerned. Comprehensive approaches can range from “national” or “whole-of-government” approaches to “intra-agency” and “interagency” approaches, as well as approaches involving interactions between a host country or government and the international community. An example of this last type is the New Deal, which was developed by a group of fragile and conflict-affected countries in cooperation with the international community (International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding 2011). A major challenge in effectively following up on the EU Council’s Conclusions of May 2014 will be to combine national comprehensive approaches with the EU’s intra-agency (or intra-institutional) action and to shape a framework through which more effective collaboration can be realised with other international and regional actors, such as the UN, the African Union and NATO.

Chapter 3 outlines the EU institutional context and evolution of policies that form the backdrop against which the 2013 Communication on the comprehensive approach was formulated and subsequently adopted by the EU Council (2014). The Communication is an important milestone, as it reflects on EU external action more widely, in addition to presenting the current consensus on how the EU could comprehensively address crisis and conflict management. Its particular focus is on conflict prevention and post-crisis recovery and what the EU could do jointly in these regards. The document attributes minimal attention to civil-military coordination, which is operationally a key domain of EU member states. While it paves the way for pragmatic next steps to advance the EU’s external action, it can only bridge the policy-practice gap if it gains political sponsorship from the highest political levels within the EU institutions and EU member states. The EU Horn of Africa Strategy (2011) and Sahel Strategy (2011) are presented as examples of good practice, illustrating how a EU comprehensive response could work in the domain of security, development and governance. Implementation of these strategies, however, is work in progress whereby operational issues still lag considerably behind conceptual development.

Chapter 3 also looks at the EU member states and how they have positioned themselves vis-à-vis the implementation of the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), which addresses the nexus between security, stabilisation, recovery and development. This section of the report draws on recent research by Santopinto and Price (2013) on the UK, Sweden, Spain, Poland, Italy, Germany and France. Analysis of these countries’ respective external policies, their views on the CSDP and their military engagement in conflict-affected contexts shows how much they differ in terms of political ability and willingness to use force (i.e., their “strategic cultures”) as well as their readiness to integrate politically within the Union. These are important elements that will have to be taken into account when promoting an EU comprehensive approach and negotiating a way forward within the Union.

Chapter 4 maps six EU member states (the UK, Germany, France, Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands) in terms of their respective whole-of-government approaches, or how they aim to promote the idea of a comprehensive approach at home. It analyses these countries’ positions in relation to support for an EU comprehensive approach and heightened European integration within the CSDP (see also summary table at the end of this executive summary). Our mapping of comprehensive approaches shows considerable divergences in terms of scope, level of

institutional integration, funding mechanisms and extent to which the countries support the EU's comprehensive approach.

Some of these countries have cooperation arrangements that go beyond narrow civil-military interaction. Most involve non-military actors, including those representing the interests of trade, development and even environment – though the extent to which non-military actors are brought into strategic planning and decision-making differ. In some countries, decision-making remains the exclusive purview of diplomatic and military circles, while in others complementary actors with a development mandate are drawn in so that the “soft” aspects of crisis recovery do not fall by the wayside. France is unique in its relative low attention paid to these “soft” aspects, evident in the slight role played by development actors in decision-making. The UK, Denmark and the Netherlands have taken a substantially different path, creating institutional structures and financing mechanisms that enable diplomatic, military and development actors to interact with a strategic purpose. The German approach, while being wide in scope, has overall limited strategic orientation and structural institutional embedding. Sweden's past experiences with comprehensive approaches, most recently in Afghanistan, have led it to settle on a formula of “collaboration” between military and civil actors instead of “integration”.

Concerning cross-institutional interaction and integration, the UK, Denmark and the Netherlands have created dedicated structures to integrate decision-making and the provision of guidance for implementation under an overall security strategy. In Germany, various coordination mechanisms exist between different departments and agencies, following the characteristically German approach of “networked security”. But these are not strategically guided, nor are there any dedicated institutional structures – the exception to this being on politically sensitive interventions, such as that in Afghanistan, as for these, country-specific task forces have been established with strong links at the highest political level. The Swedish institutional set-up is somewhere between the German model and those of the UK, Denmark and the Netherlands. Sweden has not established joint resource pools for operationalisation of the comprehensive approach and has to rely on funding available for post-conflict or transition situations through SIDA's development budget. Denmark, like the UK, has specific policies regarding fragility and conflict-affected countries and, similar to the Netherlands, earmarked funding from ODA and non-ODA sources. Noteworthy is also the attempt by the Netherlands to be widening the concept beyond integrating diplomacy, defence and development. It includes also the Ministry of Security and Justice and makes a variety of instruments available (including, for example the Royal Military Police and trade relations) to implement the approach depending on context. The French situation is informed by an institutional culture with comparatively little horizontal interaction and coordination. Strategic collaboration and decision-making on conflict management are primarily in the hands of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs in close collaboration with the Ministry of Defence.

The extent to which comprehensive approaches are operationalised within the respective countries, and the forms such operationalisations take, are strongly determined by countries' overall foreign policy, their “strategic cultures” for international engagement and their willingness to mobilise their military for interventions in situations of crisis and conflict – be it under NATO, the UN or CSDP missions. The countries differ considerably in their respective foreign policies. This explains the high level of fragmentation when it comes to the coordination of military activities at the strategic and operational levels. A Swedish priority is to maintain the country's

neutrality. Sweden aligns with NATO or CSDP missions only if they are covered by a UN mandate. Denmark has chosen to stand aside from European military action. It is the only EU state with an opt-out clause which allows it be exempted from EU-derived military obligations. That clause was negotiated by Denmark in 1999 when the ESDP was introduced (now CSDP). The Netherlands is a long-standing contributor to NATO and the EU, which remain the primary frameworks for the deployment of armed forces. Both are seen as 'multipliers' to support and promote the interests of the Netherlands. France promotes joint EU military action under CFSP and CSDP structures; it advocates comprehensive European military action whereby other EU member states ideally would follow its lead. The UK prefers to participate in military missions under NATO command. Germany takes a very different stance, informed by its history and a strong popular sentiment against military engagement. Germany, furthermore, has a weak strategic culture of engagement in external action and conflict. The extent to which EU member states have contributed to comprehensive action at the Union level and are promoting implementation of the 2013 Communication on the comprehensive approach are additionally determined by their willingness to integrate politically within the Union. It is no secret that considerable differences exist in this regard, for example, between Germany and the UK, while France, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden are somewhere in between.

Taking this background into account enables us to better understand why EU member states settled on the rather pared-down agreement which is today framed in the 2013 Communication on the comprehensive approach. Settling on the topic of conflict prevention – and leaving conflict management aside – provided a common ground on which member states could reach some form of consensus on EU external action. It serves the UK that prefers NATO as a construct for more robust and offensive military missions; it serves Denmark, which has an opt-out of the CSDP; it serves Sweden, which aligns itself with CSDP missions only if they are covered by a UN mandate; and it serves Germany, which has no strong ambition to act militarily at the EU level. Furthermore, it serves France, as it leaves the door open for more CSDP missions (and French control over them) as long as they are discussed among EU member states in the relevant Council bodies, including the Political and Security Committee (PSC).

There are, however, overlaps between the views and positions of some EU member states which may provide scope for closer collaboration in the future. In its 2014 Conclusions on the comprehensive approach, the EU Council invites the High Representative and Commission to present an action plan to EU member states before the end of the first quarter of 2015. This request offers opportunities to get dysfunctions, dilemmas and contradictions on the table. In principle, the Union as a whole is well placed to take the comprehensive approach forward. It possesses all of the necessary components – military, civil and emergency assistance, reconstruction, and development cooperation. What is missing is a politically guided and coherent approach to use these instruments effectively. The process of jointly discussing and formulating the action plan will be valuable for creating a shared understanding of the purpose of the comprehensive approach, to define what can be realistically achieved and to clarify a division of labour about who takes what forward where and in what areas. Several EU member states have signalled their interest in pushing for the action plan as a way forward, concentrating on concrete examples and issues where collaboration within the Union could be enhanced.

The question might be asked of whether such an action plan could gain momentum and make a difference. The reactions from within EU institutions have been rather lukewarm as yet, for several reasons. First, EU leadership is set to change before the end of 2014, interjecting many unknowns into relationships between the EU institutions and the EU member states and whether there will be political sponsorship from the new leaders to push ahead with the comprehensive approach. Second, track records are mixed in following up on EU action plans in the domain of security and development and situations of fragility. Political buy-in will be needed at the highest levels – of the Commission and EEAS as well as EU member states – to move ahead on a dossier that is so central to the EU's positioning vis-à-vis conflicts and fragility in Europe's neighbourhood and in Africa. As such, the comprehensive approach should not be seen as an instrument of the EU institutions alone but as a modality to be engaged in mutually and proactively by the EU and EU member states.⁴

Chapter 5 concludes the report with a number of questions worthy of further research in the context of the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law. These are grouped under implementation concerns and political/conceptual issues.

⁴ How the EU can take the comprehensive approach forward politically, is discussed in: Sherriff & Hauck. 2014: "More than the sum of its parts? A more effective EU response to violent conflict and fragility" published by the European Think Tanks Group. That paper identifies five opportunities where the EU could make a difference in addressing global problems.

	United Kingdom	Germany	France	Sweden	Denmark	The Netherlands
Terminology	Comprehensive or whole-of-government approach	<i>Vernetzte Sicherheit</i> , networked security or integrated approach	<i>Approche globale</i> or integrated approach	<i>Allomfattande ansats</i> or comprehensive approach	Whole-of-government or integrated approach	Integrated approach (or 3Ds approach, used earlier)
Scope of concept as reflected in policy documents	System-wide, structured interaction; concept covers all external action to address challenges pertaining to conflict and fragility	System-wide; policy papers stress importance of going beyond civil-military cooperation; concept underlines need to network between departments	Limited; importance of a system-wide orientation recognised, but there is a strong conceptual focus on civil-military cooperation	System-wide; though separation of civilian and military roles is stressed; thinking has evolved from “integration” to “cooperation”	System-wide; involving all actors of government in structured interaction; focus on situations of conflict and fragility	System-wide, structured interaction; concept based on experiences from operations on the ground; focus on conflict and fragility
Level of institutional integration	High; linked to national security strategy; at highest level, the National Security Council directs the political orientation of the three principal departments involved: MoFA, MoD and DFID; Stabilisation Unit ensures strategic coherence	Low and not guided by an overall security strategy; a plurality of coordination mechanisms in place with few coherent structures; effective ad hoc coordination with strong linkages to political leadership on top-priority conflicts and fragile situations	Somewhat high; MoFA coordinates inter-ministerial coordination for civilian and political crisis management closely with MoD; other ministries and French Development Agency are involved on an ad hoc basis, related to specific situations	High for diplomacy, foreign trade and development; structured coordination mechanisms are in place to engage with MoD and other ministries in decisions on responses to fragile and conflict situations	High; approach led by MoFA in close coordination with MoD; Danish Development Agency is integrated into MoFA; other government entities, NGOs and the private sector are part of framework	High; approach led by the MoFA with the MoD and extended to several government actors (development & police); coordination mechanisms and ad-hoc structures (involving NGOs) are in place; private sector plays a role

Funding mechanisms	Shared; conflict prevention pools jointly managed by three principal departments: MoFA, MoD and DFID	No shared funding mechanisms; different departments have discretionary powers due to constitutionally framed “principle of departmental responsibility”	No shared funding mechanisms, though intense involvement of Ministry of Finance in inter-ministerial meetings	No shared funding mechanisms; principal funding for fragile situations originates from ODA funding (SIDA)	Shared; comprising ODA and non-ODA funds from the MoFA and the MoD; decisions taken by inter-ministerial committee	Shared; conflict prevention pool jointly managed by three principal Ministers: Trade and International Cooperation, Foreign Affairs and Defence
Support to EU comprehensive approach and CSDP	Strongly supports European conflict prevention activities and supports CSDP military missions; is usually more keen on conflict management actions involving military engagement to be performed under NATO and not the EU umbrella	Supports EU comprehensive approach in external action, stressing conflict prevention; refrains from proactive military engagement; joins CSDP missions primarily in support of other EU members; is guided by European Security Strategy (ESS)	Supports European political integration, including the need to build up European defence capabilities; supports EU comprehensive approach but pays relatively limited attention to conflict prevention, compared to other EU members	Advocates a European approach to conflict prevention, with a strong human security focus; participates in crisis management operations under EU and NATO if UN mandated	Promoted debate on the comprehensive approach during its 2012 EU Presidency but has no role in EU defence policy due to opt-out option on defence; participates in NATO and UN operations	Supports European political integration, including the need to build up European defence capabilities; supports EU comprehensive approach; participates in crisis management operations under EU and NATO

Table 1 :Mapping Comprehensive Approaches of selected EU member states

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 *Growing momentum towards greater EU comprehensiveness*

Momentum is growing at the European level to work more comprehensively in external action, especially in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and post-crisis recovery. Testimony to this is the Communication entitled “The EU’s Comprehensive Approach to External Conflict and Crisis”, launched jointly in December 2013 by the European Commission and the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. At the same time, EU member states express concern that much remains to be done to work more comprehensively across EU borders, but also at the level of the EU institutions.

Violent conflict and fragility are perceived as a growing problem in Europe’s neighbourhood and nearby on the African continent. International crime and political unrest are on the rise, often leaving destabilisation and fragility in their wake; and the cost of dealing with conflicts is mounting. Against this backdrop, it is entirely realistic to expect that the EU and its member states will increasingly be faced with forms of conflict and fragility in the coming years. Demands for better EU-wide responses in specific geographic areas and on topical themes will thus remain at the top of Europe’s political agendas. Moreover, recent experiences in Mali, the Maghreb, the Central African Republic (CAR) or the Ebola crisis (Hauck & Desmidt 2014) have shown just how challenging it is to bring EU actions into a coherent framework. There is also awareness that the EU cannot afford to repeat its recent experiences in dealing with the crisis in Ukraine.

The most recent legal framework for practising more effective EU external action is the Lisbon Treaty of 2009, through which EU member states committed to join forces, including for the preservation of peace, the prevention of conflicts and the strengthening of international security (Art. 21). Many steps have been taken since Lisbon to effectively reform EU external action. The EU’s institutional architecture for external action has been reinforced, policy commitments and frameworks have been developed to address conflict and fragility, and working methods and intervention activities have been improved. But these reforms have not yet added up to effective overall EU external action responses, and EU initiatives continue to lack sufficient coherence, coordination and complementarity in relation to the actions of individual EU member states.

This should remind us that working more comprehensively is inevitably a political process. The growing momentum for comprehensive approaches has originated from the engagement of particular EU member states with the EU institutions, but it has often been more technical than political. This has resulted in some pressure on the EU to move ahead, leading among other things to the Communication mentioned above. Nonetheless, questions need to be raised about whether the steps taken up to now will bring about progress beyond the technical level, such as learning from good practices. Real political momentum is still absent, due in part to the unwillingness of EU member states to buy in and make concessions, and even political sacrifices, if necessary.

The extent to which EU member states work more comprehensively at the level of the EU and with other EU member states is strongly determined by their overall foreign policy, their “strategic culture”⁵ for international engagement and their willingness to mobilise their military to intervene in situations of crisis and conflict – be it under NATO, the UN or European Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions. Another important determining factor is member states’ willingness to integrate politically within the Union and to hand over external action responsibilities to a higher EU-wide institutional level. Many EU member states do recognise that more comprehensiveness is needed, which explains their creation of national frameworks and concepts to enable national institutions to work more comprehensively and to connect with other EU member states on issues of joint interest. Nonetheless, very limited preparedness is evident to overcome the currently fragmented EU-wide comprehensiveness and move towards a real comprehensiveness coordinated by a strong, or at least stronger, political leadership from within the EU institutions.

This reality needs to be taken into account when advancing policy and practice for a EU comprehensive approach for addressing external conflict and crisis. For this, a perspective on the Union is needed that goes beyond the institutional level in Brussels and gives primacy to a constructive mutual interplay between Brussels and the EU member states – while also recognising the extent to which members are able and willing to cooperate in a more integrated manner. This calls for an engrained notion of “division of labour” in the comprehensive approach. Such a notion must be cognisant of the added value that the EU as a whole can bring to preventing conflict and countering fragility and to the comparative advantage that EU member states might have in responding to geographic or thematic crises. Evidently, finding the right blend of action between Brussels and EU member states requires strong political engagement of all sides, extending beyond technical approaches to get the different entities speaking and acting together.

1.2 *Feeding the discussion*

This Discussion Paper addresses policymakers throughout the Union who need to know the position of the EU and of other EU member states vis-à-vis “comprehensiveness” in EU external action. It focuses particularly on how the respective actors respond to conflict and fragility, crisis

⁵ The term is framed as the willingness (or political ability) of EU member states to use force as a means of external action. See also Santopinto and Price (2013).

and early recovery. The term “comprehensiveness” refers to ongoing attempts to formulate, practice and advance a EU-wide comprehensive approach to external conflict and crisis.

More in-depth knowledge of European partners’ policies, their approaches and their interpretations of “comprehensiveness”, as well as of the practices and instruments through which they operationalise policies, can shed light on the scope for more complementarity and coherence between EU partners. When pursuing comprehensive approaches, it is vital to know who is open to cooperating institutionally and whether there are possible conceptual entry points for collaboration and compromise – technically as well as politically. More knowledge in this area can lead to identification of valuable experiences and lessons in specific geographic areas of relevance to ongoing or upcoming support in situations of conflict and fragility. These insights can also help to identify knowledge gaps that require further investigation and research.

To advance this discussion, following this introduction, chapter 2 of this report introduces a way to frame comprehensive approaches, also discussing their origins and some of the challenges in their implementation. Chapter 3 presents the EU institutions’ policy and emerging practice towards comprehensive approaches since the 1990s. It also provides background information on several EU member states’ positions vis-à-vis EU political integration and their willingness to act more jointly in EU external action. That latter is important to better understand the concepts and operational arrangements by which EU member states are endeavouring to work more comprehensively. These are presented and compared in brief in chapter 4 for six EU member states, namely, the UK, France, Germany, Sweden, Denmark and The Netherlands. Chapter 5 presents suggestions for further policy research.

Chapter 2

Concepts

2.1 *Precursors of the comprehensive approach discourse*

Thinking, policies and operational approaches for working more comprehensively go a long way back. There have been various situations in the recent and more distant past in which different actor-types, policies, institutions and even nations have connected to address conflict, crisis and post-crisis recovery. So no claims can be made that comprehensive approach thinking is a new phenomenon.

The term “comprehensive approach”, as currently used in the context of international peace and stability operations, emerged from efforts to integrate military, diplomatic and civilian actions in contexts of fragile and conflict-affected countries. Thinking in terms of comprehensive approaches is largely grounded in the humanitarian and security crises of the early 1990s, which heightened awareness that better and more comprehensive policies, institutional arrangements and instruments were needed for peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding. Exposure to a growing number of crisis situations lent a sense of urgency to better understand context and to connect more effectively with local actors and the civilian setting. Discourse on the comprehensive approach has also been informed by questions about acceptable rationale for military action, the legal basis for armed interventions and the extent to which armed interventions could be combined with complementary non-military action.

While “comprehensive approach” was first widely used for “out-of-area” interventions to stabilise a context in response to a crisis, the term was later broadened to include longer-term processes of political and economic development. In the EU, it gained currency in discussions on integrating civilian and military components in the CSDP (Johannsen 2011). The term’s tenets were soon applied in domestic settings as well, in relation to various forms of “interagency cooperation” and collaboration between civilian and military actors.

A number of governments have reframed the idea of working more comprehensively to make it congruent with their own institutional settings, policies and strategies. They have translated it variously as “whole-of-government approach” (used by a number of countries), the “integrated approach” (used by the Netherlands), “*reponse globale*” (France), “*allomfattande ansats*” (Sweden), “*vernetzte Sicherheit*” (Germany) and “*3D: defence, diplomacy, development*” (Canada). International actors, like the UN, have adopted the term “integrated approach” for approaches aimed towards more coherent country-missions involving different elements of the UN family. All of these concepts convey the need to adjust measures for conflict management

and post-conflict recovery to complex security situations and fragile environments by bridging policy and institutional gaps, reconciling dilemmas posed by involving military and civilian actors, and formulating common objectives and more integrated strategies (Post 2012).

Other factors and agendas have also informed the discourse on the comprehensive approach. Some of these originate in experiences with institutional interactions and pressures to respond effectively in fragile and conflict-affected countries where crises could not be solved by one actor alone. As documented later in this report, levels of institutional comprehensiveness span a considerable range, from rather loose, networked approaches to highly sophisticated and strategically focused interaction involving both the political and operational levels.

The renewed security agenda associated with military experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan has also informed development of the comprehensive approach. The practicalities of such involvement have fed formulation of various counterinsurgency approaches and initiatives, such as creation in Afghanistan of provincial reconstruction teams bringing together civilian and military personnel for insurgence-relevant development work. The “US Government Counterinsurgency Guide” (2009) describes its counterinsurgency theory (termed “COIN”) as ‘a blend of comprehensive civilian and military efforts designed to simultaneously contain insurgency and address its root causes’ (p. 7) (Box 1).

• Box 1: COIN Theory

COIN is described as a highly complex undertaking requiring detailed understanding in specific fields, as well as broad knowledge of a wide variety of related disciplines. Strategies to deploy COIN theory focus first of all on the population, while also seeking to reinforce the legitimacy of the affected government or governance structure and reducing insurgent influences. The theory comprises five functional components: (i) political, to provide a framework of political reconciliation and reform; (ii) economic, to provide essential services and stimulate long-term economic development; (iii) security, to enable the other functions to unfold; (iv) information, comprising intelligence (to gain understanding) and influence (to help stabilise the situation). These four functions contribute to the overall aim of (v) establishing control.

Source: US Government (2009: 8)

Concepts from outside the military domain equally informed thinking on comprehensive approaches. The conflict prevention and peacebuilding agenda set out in the 2001 Gothenburg Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts (Council of the EU 2001) played a strong role in this regard. “Conflict prevention” here refers to a variety of short-term and long-term activities aimed at anticipating and averting the outbreak or recurrence of violent conflict. Measures might include silent diplomacy and mediation, but also disarmament and the threat of use of force. Effective conflict prevention requires addressing the root causes of conflict and instability early on and comprehensively so as to potentially create demand for diplomatic, military and civilian actors to work together in an integrated manner. This thinking was strongly motivated by the international community’s failure in the 1990s to prevent or resolve the conflict in former Yugoslavia and the genocide in Rwanda.

Another conceptual and policy-related discussion dating from the early 1990s, that on human security, further informed thinking on comprehensive approaches. The human security

discussion evolved in stages alongside the factors described above (Fukuda-Parr 2011). It has helped to widen policy agendas from a rather narrow definition of security, focusing on the security of states, to an integrated agenda recognising that development efforts and objectives of stabilisation and security must be addressed in a way that serves the security of individuals as well as that of the state (Box 2).

• Box 2: Human Security

The term “human security” gained currency with the publication of the UNDP “Human Development Report 1994: New Dimensions of Human Security”. This document is generally seen as the basis of current human security thinking and policy discussions. Awareness of the human security dimension emerged in response to the changing nature of conflicts in the post-Cold War era. Criticism arose during that period of state-centred concepts of security, based on the idea that peace could be better promoted by assuring individuals’ security rather than by reinforcing the security of the state (Sogge 2013). The human security concept was further developed in the early 2000s after creation of the UN Commission on Human Security (CHS) and publication of its report “Human Security Now: Protecting and Empowering People” (CHS 2003). The CHS sees the state as the primary source of security but recognises that states often fail to fulfil their security obligations and, at times, even become a threat to their own people. In the CHS’s view, a focus on human security complements state security by enhancing human rights, advancing human development and giving prominence to the idea that state security and human security are ‘mutually reinforcing and depend on each other’ (ibid.).

Nonetheless, the concept of human security has been considerably criticised as lacking a commonly agreed definition and being ambiguous (Paris 2001). The term has nonetheless come into use in international policy discussions on security and helped to reframe approaches, including those on conflict management and post-crisis recovery. Several international organisations, including the UN, the African Union (AU), and state and non-state actors, as well as the EU have pursued the notion of human security. Led by former EU High Representative Javier Solana, the EU set up the Study Group on Europe’s Security Capabilities, labelled the “Barcelona Group”. Building on the European Security Strategy (ESS 2003), it proposed that human rather than nation-state security should be at the heart of European policy. Instead of defeating enemies or pacifying warring parties, EU missions should focus on protecting civilians through law enforcement with the occasional use of force.⁶ Ideas formulated by the Barcelona Group have been influential in the conceptualisation of EU regional strategies, such as those for the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, and in deployment of CSDP civil and military missions.

Because the human security notion stresses the centrality of human beings and the security of civilians, it has also constituted an important conceptual underpinning of strategies and interventions that are motivated by the “responsibility-to-protect” (R2P) principle. Adopted by the UN in 2005, this principle holds that foreign governments may intervene when a sovereign state fails to prevent atrocities. It can save lives, say human rights advocates. But sceptics point to Western powers’ misuse of the concept in several instances to pursue their own interests internationally (Incognitowl 2013).

⁶ The Barcelona Group proposed a force of 15,000 personnel at the time. See Albrecht (2004).

2.2 *Framing comprehensive approaches*

2.2.1 *A notion rather than a definition*

There is no universally accepted definition of a comprehensive approach to crisis and conflict management. It is a concept that means different things to different organisations and individual countries. The development of the concept has been promoted by the UN family in search for better linking security and development concerns; by NATO in search for better interaction between its military efforts and endeavours in civil reconstruction; and by the EU as set out in chapter 3 below. It has been informed by shortcomings noted during various civil-military missions and developed with the aim to achieve greater harmonisation and synchronisation of action among activities of international and local actors (De Coning and Friis 2011: 246).

In a pragmatic way, the comprehensive approach is “a process aimed at facilitating system-wide coherence across the security, governance, development and political dimensions of international peace and stability operations.” (idem: 245) Broadly speaking, the notion links diplomacy, development and security whereby military-led peacekeeping, political engagement through diplomatic channels and broader civilian-led peacebuilding are viewed as functionally complementary to one another. As processes of peacekeeping and peacebuilding are highly intertwined, former ideas of sequencing action are abandoned in favour of the understanding that progress in development can be achieved only with a certain degree of security, and that security will fail unless there are advances in development (Rosgaard 2008).

This awareness of mutual dependence, informed by critical reviews of earlier experiences (UN 2000, see also Collier et al. 2003), led to questions about how these interdependencies can be better managed to achieve efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. Hence, the notion of working more comprehensively, as of the early 2000s, communicated the need for more (policy) coherence and consistency, better operational integration of activities and enhanced collaboration among the different actors. That last extends beyond better coordination of the civil and military actors provided by one peacekeeping or peacebuilding entity, such as a nation state or an international organisation, to also comprise cooperation with local actors and with others on the international stage (Wendling 2010).

2.2.2 *Practical problems, dilemmas and challenges*

The complexity of comprehensive approaches makes them difficult to implement and gives space to a wide range of interpretations on how to take the basic concept forward. This has resulted in different structures and processes depending on the (institutional) contexts in which the concept has been applied and, even more importantly, on the objectives it is to serve. A

short literature review (Borgh and Jeursen no date) on experiences with comprehensive approaches shows that the concept has been used in the framework of international crime fighting (piracy), counter-terrorism campaigns and post-crisis reconstruction and recovery programmes. Without claiming to be comprehensive, it pinpoints a number re-emerging critical issues:

- There is ongoing difficulty in coordinating comprehensive approaches internationally. International actors appear to share a general understanding of what a comprehensive approach should entail, but translating this into implementation is often problematic. Different actors tend to have their own policies and bureaucratic procedures, which may hamper comprehensive approaches' operationalisation.⁷
- Involving local actors is often difficult, especially in situations of violent conflict such as Afghanistan and Iraq, where the level of conflict is generally less than full-scale combat but high enough to present a severe security threat to civilians engaged in governance and economic development efforts (Alderson 2009).
- No consensus has yet been reached about the possibilities of and practices for integrating different policy fields and the potential for cooperation between civil and military actors. The different actors should understand that implementation of certain activities, for example, counter-insurgency operations that require intense military engagement, should be subordinate to the political objectives of an intervention (Alderson 2009).
- The integrated approach is contested in NGO circles. Some NGOs reject collaboration in operations that include a military or political component, while others maintain more pragmatic standpoints or outright support (for details see Frerks et al. 2006).

There is, moreover, fear that military and political dimensions might overshadow development and humanitarian components, leading to what has been called the "militarisation" or "securitisation" of aid (Aderinwale 2008). Security-related considerations, such as the presence of foreign terrorist groups or shared borders with a state that sponsors terrorism, have in fact played an important role in the distribution of aid on the African continent (Aning 2010).

The implementation of comprehensive approaches has also been criticised as being overly state-centric and technocratically oriented, a view fed by recent experiences in South Sudan (Pantuliano 2014). Civil society and the private sector are required to build a political consensus, yet they are often perceived as being sidelined in favour of state institutions (Hull 2011).

Finally, De Coning and Friis, observe that current approaches towards comprehensiveness tend to put pressures on all parties involved to adopt a maximal approach to coherence, regardless of their relation to each other, resulting in unrealistic expectations and policies. Instead, they

⁷ About the problems to coordinate at national level between different ministries ('whole of government approach') see Borgh (2008).

recommend accepting that different types of relationships exist between actors and that levels of coherence can differ accordingly (De Coning and Friis (2011: 272).

2.2.3 Types of comprehensive approaches

To position the various perspectives and practices within the EU, it is helpful to categorise the interpretation of comprehensive approaches in terms of their broad institutional arrangements and relationships. From an implementation viewpoint, Hull (2011: 7-11) distinguishes four broad categories: (i) national, or whole-of-government approaches, (ii) intra-agency approaches, (iii) interagency approaches and (iv) international-local approaches⁸.

“National approaches” are those that aim to generate coherence between different governmental departments and agencies within states. Over the last 15 years, influenced by experiences in Afghanistan, Iran, Sierra Leone and Liberia, various states have invested in formulating more consistent national strategies and policies to deal with the complexities of conflict, crisis and post-crisis recovery. The focus of these “whole-of-government approaches” has been to achieve more coherent action involving a range of national departments and agencies. The Canadian government has labelled this the “3D approach”, referring to establishment of more effective interactions between Defence, Diplomacy and Development. Mechanisms to translate strategy into action range from regular meetings and information exchange, to formulation of a joint national strategy and establishment of specific task forces, joint offices and other coordination structures with a dedicated funding mechanism. The focus of the whole-of-government approach is thus coherence of national actors, which places it in the national category of comprehensive approaches.

“Intra-agency approaches” involve several different departments, units and offices within a larger organisation, often a membership organisation. Their effectiveness depends on the mandate they are given by their members (e.g., nation states) and the levels of influence the respective members have on these larger agencies through their personnel or supervising bodies. A prominent example of an intra-agency comprehensive approach is the UN’s “integrated missions”, which bring together the various UN agencies that deal with peacekeeping and peacebuilding under an integrated command structure. The UN’s approach is characterised by its broad framing, aimed at system-wide strategic planning and coordination across the political, security, development, rule of law, human rights and humanitarian dimensions (De Coning 2008). An example in the sphere of relief and development is the Joint Resilience Strategy for Somalia, which involves FAO, WFP and UNICEF.⁹ The EU Civil-Military Coordination (CMCO) concept, aimed at coordinating the various instruments of the CSDP, is

⁸ This fourth relationship has also been described as ‘internal-external’, see De Coning and Friis (2011).

⁹ Goals and outcomes are jointly agreed upon by the three agencies, while outputs and activities are agency-specific. Common analysis, monitoring, evaluation and accountability with a common framework (see: Somalia Joint Resilience Strategy Information Portal). Though these approaches are difficult to sustain over time and beyond the short-term or the acute crisis situation.

another example of this category of comprehensive approach. This last example is discussed further in chapter 3.

“Interagency approaches” involve the wider system of national and international actors and organisations engaged in multilateral peace support or crisis management operations. These types of comprehensive approaches exist primarily at the conceptual level,¹⁰ as there have been few strategies or operational attempts to implement them in practice. Interagency approaches require action in concert by a multitude of international agencies and states engaged in conflict and post-crisis recovery. They can work, if at the strategic or headquarters level, the different actors manage to package their engagement into one coherent strategy that can pave the way for more harmonised action at the implementation level. This is rather challenging, however, because of the complexity of coordination, entities’ unwillingness to be coordinated by others and, more importantly, the political economy that drives the interests and actions of the respective actors.

“International-local approaches” involve a host, or a transition government, and the international community (particularly donors). We would qualify these as the most “system-wide” type of comprehensive approach, as they add on to the interagency approach. International-local approaches recognise that effective change requires local ownership and engagement with local organisations, structures and procedures to the extent they still exist in fragile or conflict-affected environments. The idea of international and local actors working more comprehensively has been practiced in the context of electoral processes whereby the UN cooperated with national electoral commissions (e.g., Sudan 2010). Other examples are the cooperation of EU CSPD missions with national governments. It has also been explored through two principal international frameworks. The first is the poverty reduction strategies that developing states have negotiated with the World Bank (in coordination with other members of the international community) and which in several countries have served as points of departure for national development strategies or, as in the case of Liberia, as the basis for formulation of a common (intra-agency) UN development assistance framework (UNDAF). The second framework, still in its pilot phase, is the New Deal (2011) developed by fragile and conflict-affected countries in cooperation with the international donor community. The New Deal spells out five peacebuilding and statebuilding goals and several operational steps for transitioning towards stability and development. A key element of the New Deal is formulation of a “compact”, which sets out a country-specific approach and road map to achieve the five goals.

¹⁰

E.g., the Multinational Experimentation (MNE), which sees attempts to better harmonize as a continuously ongoing negotiation process, like a in a marketplace, rather than a destination or en state to be reached. Actors are only “loosely” coupled, driven by a high degree of self-awareness among each other ensuring that they understand what assets they can offer to the system and what assets other actors have that are of interest to the system and to themselves (Logos Technologies for MNE, in Hull 2011).

Chapter 3

The Union's march towards comprehensiveness

3.1 Policies

3.1.1 Institutional Context

The fundamentals for the current discussions on comprehensiveness can be found in the “3Cs” of the Maastricht Treaty (1992) whereby European leaders committed their countries to work towards better *Coordination*, more *Complementarity* and greater *Coherence* across EU matters. The 3Cs ideology is legally enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty of 2009 (Art. 21) and has provided the conceptual basis for early EU external action policies and operational responses to preserve peace, to strengthen international security, to prevent conflict and to stabilise fragile and conflict-affected countries.

The EU's current institutional set-up makes it more challenging to deploy an effective comprehensive approach. While adoption of the Lisbon Treaty considerably advanced EU external action reform, working comprehensively in conflict management and post-conflict recovery still involves a variety of institutions, including the EU Council, the Commission, the EEAS and the European Parliament. Within the Commission, several directorates and instruments are entrusted with external action tasks in relation to conflict and recovery, in particular DG Development, ECHO and the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI)¹¹, but also including DG Trade and DG Justice. There is also a plethora of actors and coordination mechanisms dealing with crisis response, including the European Defence Agency (answering to the Council) and the EU Crisis Response System that consists of the EU Crisis Platform (chaired by the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy), the EU Situation Room and the Crisis Management Board. Yet there is no structure that could provide strategic oversight and authority to take decisions across these different departments and institutions.

¹¹ The FPI is responsible for operational expenditures in crucial areas of EU external action. It works alongside the EEAS in areas related to the CFSP, the Instrument for Stability, election observation missions, sanctions and the Kimberley Process. See Hauck and Sherriff (2013a).

Relationships with EU member states add to this complexity and influence the scope of EU comprehensive approaches, as EU member states and EU institutions have different areas and levels of competencies. Trade, for example, is the exclusive competency of the EU and the Commission is responsible for implementation. Development and humanitarian assistance are so-called “parallel competencies”. They are implemented through common funds managed by the EU Commission, while EU member states engage in these domains as well. Since the signing of the Lisbon Treaty, the European Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) have been singled out as the only intergovernmental policies allowing EU member states to retain full authority. Decisions on the CFSP and the implementation of the CSDP, which guides civil and military EU missions, are made on the basis of unanimity and thereby reflect the lowest common denominator. These missions are closely monitored through regular Council committees, in particular the EU Military Committee, which receives its political instructions directly from the Political and Security Committee (PSC). This latter is a body of the Council, permanently chaired by the European External Action Service (EEAS) and comprising one ambassador per member state alongside a permanent representative of the European Commission. The PSC plays a central role in defining and following up EU responses to conflict and crisis (EU 2009).

The fact that development and adoption of the earlier-mentioned Communication on the EU's comprehensive approach to external conflict and crisis (December 2013) took more than two years to finalise must be seen against this backdrop. The Communication is a relevant document, as it reflects the current consensus on basic principles and how the EU should address crisis and conflict management, as well as on EU external action more widely.

3.1.2 Conflict prevention and peacebuilding policy

The 2001 European Commission Communication on Conflict Prevention marks a brief interlude of EU leadership in global conflict prevention (Sherriff & Hauck 2014b). It focused on prevention and post-conflict recovery aimed at reducing the chances of a relapse into conflict. Summarising what the EU was already doing and the instruments at its disposal, it suggested possible future conflict prevention activities as well. Ahead of its time, it stressed the need to take a genuinely long-term and integrated approach to address all aspects of structural stability in countries at risk, and it called for more effective coordination between activities of the Commission and those of EU member states. Ideas on longer-term transition and integration were also reflected in the EU's Country Strategy Papers and the Regional Strategy Papers. While focusing their attention primarily at development cooperation, they were – at the time – at the heart of attempts to promote more comprehensive action and to coordinate the different EU tools towards common targets, including shaping stability for unstable countries. The call for a mainstreaming of conflict prevention was also reflected in the EU Gothenburg Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts (EU 2001b) and in the conflict response-related ideas enshrined in the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) and its 2008 revision (ESS 2003, 2008).

As a follower, or “norm-taker”, in the international discussion and practice of support to fragile and conflict-affected countries (Furness 2014) the EU launched in 2007 the Communication entitled “Towards an EU Response to Situations of Fragility: Engaging in Difficult Environments for Sustainable Development, Stability and Peace”. This Communication stressed the importance of acting coherently and in a coordinated manner at different levels and at different stages of fragility (EU 2007). The provisions on the CSDP included in the Lisbon Treaty of 2009 created the current legal basis on which comprehensive action on conflict and crisis within the Union is shaped. These incorporate the European – now Common – Security and Defence Policy (mentioned above) and all its developments since the Cologne European Council in 1999 (EEAS, no date). Concerning the link between conflict, fragility and development, the EU Commission’s “Agenda for Change” (EU 2011) sets out the overall objectives for EU development cooperation in the coming years and formulates specific provisions for fragile and conflict-affected countries in line with international guidelines to enable recovery and build resilience.

The 2013 Communication builds on these documents (Box 3). It sets out the Commission and High Representative’s joint understanding of how the Union could respond more comprehensively and effectively in the various stages of conflict and other external crises, to promote early recovery and peacebuilding. It is a more consolidating document, as it contains no proposals for in-depth changes to existing structures, processes and relations between the EU institutions and member states. Neither does it offer recommendations for how the EEAS, the High Representative and the Commission could draw on and direct the full range of instruments and resources at the Union’s disposal. It does offer a potentially useful mapping of institutional actors, action points for follow-up and the roles that EU member states and EU institutions could play to advance the EU’s performance. The extent to which this Communication is implemented depends on the readiness of EU member states and political actors within the EU institutions to formulate an effective Action Plan, supported by top-leadership (Sherriff and Hauck 2014a). EU inter-institutional discussions in 2010 resulted already in the drafting of an Action Plan on Security, Fragility and Development and was about to be presented to the EU Council but the process stalled with the creation of the European External Action Service, which did not consider it opportune at that time to commit to such an Action Plan (Faria 2014).

Box 3: Highlights of the Communication on the EU’s Comprehensive Approach to External Conflict and Crisis

The Communication on the EU’s comprehensive approach to external conflict and crisis was launched jointly by the European Commission and the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy in December 2013. It refers to conflict and crisis in its title but, in essence, goes beyond this, as it aims to clarify the guiding principles for joint EU external action across all areas, though stressing the areas of conflict, conflict prevention and post-crisis recovery. The EU started discussing the need for this policy document in 2011, which should come as no surprise given the many political views within the EU institutions and member states on how comprehensive the EU should act externally. Various of these views have been informed by member states’ fears, in particular, of losing political power, and by the desire to gain more control in any moves undertaken towards greater comprehensiveness.

A number of tangible actions are mentioned in the Communication, which is commendable, but it is not a document that provides clarity on all aspects. It does not set out concrete and tangible structures and processes for determining who and with whom the Union should work or when, where and how. Neither does it propose any in-depth changes in relations between the EU institutions and member states or in how the EEAS, the High Representative and the Commission could draw on and direct the full range of instruments and resources at the Union's disposal. As such, questions about the scope of the EU's comprehensive approach and the level of integration between EU institutions and EU member states are only partially answered.

Overall, however, the document represents progress on a highly political dossier. In view of the political space given to the EU institutions, the status quo of EU external action and the evolving relationships within the Union, the document takes earlier EC communications, strategies and programmes on conflict prevention and responses to conflict further to a next step. It sets out the Commission and High Representative's joint understanding of how the Union could work more comprehensively and effectively to respond to various stages of conflict and other external crises and to promote early recovery and peacebuilding, while carefully recognising the nature of the partnership between EU institutions and EU member states. It also sets out areas where the comprehensive approach should be taken forward. The action points for follow-up and further improvement are potentially useful. The document points out the main actors to be involved and the roles that the EU institutions (including its delegations) and EU member states should play to advance the reforms. But it requires follow-up in the form of an Action Plan supported and acted upon by political leadership.

The document is a pragmatic next step towards getting the EU's external action into better shape. Lessons were learnt from the 2001 Communication on conflict prevention, which was a highly ambitious document but without the political sponsorship required for it to bridge the policy-to-practice gap. Accordingly, this new Communication will add value only if political leaders take action to monitor and review its implementation. Unfortunately, this document proposes no clear steps for engaging in this type of comprehensive change management. This leaves a crucial role to the creativity and craft of the EU and EU member state officials in devising the follow-through.

Source: Hauck and Sherriff (2013b)

3.1.3 The EU's Civil-Military Coordination (CMCO) concept and the European Security Strategy (ESS)

The 2013 Communication takes an all-encompassing perspective and includes CSDP missions and operations as one of the shared responsibilities of the EU institutions and member states. Nonetheless, it makes no explicit reference to the need for better civil-military coordination, to the respective roles of the actors involved or to how this area of activity could be taken forward.

The EU formulated its Civil-Military Coordination concept (CMCO) in 2003, and subsequent policy papers and strategy documents have presented it as a comprehensive approach to crisis

management (e.g., Council of the EU 2005). Conceptually, it aims to coordinate the military, political and policy instruments of a CSDP mission. CMCO 'addresses the need for effective co-ordination of the action of all relevant EU actors involved in the planning and subsequent implementation of the EU's response to [crisis] ... rather than seeking to put too much emphasis on detailed structures or procedures' (Council of the EU 2003).¹² The difficulty in defining and implementing a coherent concept is due to the complexity of EU policymaking structures, the lack of resources and a lack of willingness among institutional actors. That last was remarked upon as early as 2006 stemming from experiences in the EU's engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Juncos 2006). The European Council also approved in 2003 the European Security Strategy (ESS). It outlines the very ideas of the EU's comprehensive approach to crisis management and states that "the challenge now is to bring together the different instruments and capabilities: European assistance programmes, the European Development Fund, military and civilian capabilities from Member States and other instruments." (European Council 2003: 13) The document underlines the necessity of bringing together different EU civil and military instruments but does not link these to any specific objectives and does not identify the means and conditions on how to reach them (Johannsen 2011: 206).

The minimal attention given to civil-military coordination in the 2013 Communication can be explained by two factors. First, early concepts of working more comprehensively on crisis and conflict management focused on questions about how civil and military actors could engage more effectively through joint action. These provoked bold criticism, particularly from non-state actors who feared that military and political dimensions might overrule the humanitarian and development components of their work. Not elaborating on this issue made it easier for the Communication's authors to maintain consensus with humanitarian actors within the EU. The second factor is similar to the first, but regards instead the relationship between the EU institutions and EU member states concerning civil-military operations, which are operationally under the clear purview of the member states. EU member states have different ideas about the right approach to civil-military operations and the role that the EU should play in crisis management (we will elaborate on this later). This complicates the creation of an all-Union approach to civil-military coordination (Khol 2008).

3.1.4 Putting concepts into practice

The 2013 Communication stresses conflict prevention and peacebuilding, which are the soft-power dimensions of external action. It remains much less pronounced on civil-military coordination. The Communication does remark on the importance of CSDP missions, but puts responsibility for their effectiveness very much under the PSC, in which the EU member states have the principal say. 'EU Member States exercise political control over, and provide strategic direction for, CSDP missions and operations through the Political and Security Committee' (EC 2013a: 4).

¹² The PSC adopted a revised version of the CMCO concept in 2006 to improve management of EU Crisis Management Operations, including greater coherence at the planning stage, an enhanced coordination role of the EU Special Representatives and improved sharing of information by EU actors in the field (Johannsen 2011: 201-202)

This is a legal arrangement, reflecting the Union's political landscape as well as a growing conviction that the comparative advantage of EU external action is in the use of soft power. It also reflects lessons learnt by the Union from emerging practice in dealing with regional conflict and crisis. The EU Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa (2011) and the Sahel Strategy (2011) can be viewed as forerunners that have now been followed by a EU strategy for addressing the challenges in the Gulf of Guinea (HRVP 2013b) (Council of the EU 2011, 2014a; EEAS 2011) and a Strategic Framework for the Africa Great Lakes (HRVP & EC 2013c). All of these strategies explicitly spell out the EU's response as encompassing security, development and governance and to be implemented in an integrated manner and in partnership with the countries of the region, multilateral organisations and regional organisations.

With the Lisbon Treaty, the EU adapted its institutions and facilitated enhanced comprehensiveness of external action through use of the various civilian and military instruments that the EU has at its disposal. But, as Barry (2012) states in an analysis of the comprehensive approach in the Horn of Africa, this is work in progress; and operational aspects still lag behind conceptual development. Overarching problems include financing CSDP missions and the lack of a strategic framework clarifying EU-NATO relations, including overlapping memberships, mandate, responsibilities and division of labour (ibid: 11-12). The lessons learned have been that putting various approaches together to address different aspects of one problem will not add up to a fully functioning comprehensive approach (van Ginkel 2014).

The Council has requested the EEAS and European Commission to formulate an action plan for implementing the 2013 Communication on the comprehensive approach. Operational issues, like more structured information sharing, testing of early warning mechanisms across the Union and joint conflict analysis has started ahead (Jenny 2014). Though progress has been piecemeal as yet, momentum might pick up when the new High Representative and Head of EEAS take office towards the end of 2014.

Meanwhile, there is a growing awareness that external crisis management (through CSDPs) and the defence of Europe against external threats need to be addressed more comprehensively (Drent, et al 2014).¹³ This has resulted in an emerging discussion about updating the European (external) Security Strategy (ESS) of 2003 and absorbing elements of the EU's (internal) Security Strategy of 2010 into a "European Global Strategy". According to Drent et al, the 2014 EU Maritime Security Strategy can be regarded as the first integrated strategy of the EU, combining policy comprehensiveness on both internal and external security issues, as well as civilian and military maritime concerns. It needs to be seen whether the ESS will be revised. The forthcoming European Council meeting in June 2015, when security will be the principal agenda point, will provide for an opportunity to improve the linkages between these policies.

¹³ The following text makes use of a background paper presented by M. Drent during a seminar entitled 'The EU as a Security Provider' (Clingendael and Egmont Institute, 5 November 2014, Brussels).

3.2 *How ready are EU member states to act more comprehensively?*

To fully appreciate the current level of EU-wide agreement on both the comprehensive approach, as framed in the 2013 Communication, and how it can be taken forward, it is imperative to look at the matter from the perspective of the EU member states. From this angle we can appraise the extent to which the Union's members are able and willing to cooperate in a more integrated manner in crisis and conflict situations.

The inner core of the comprehensive approach discourse is formed by the linkages between security and development, and improved civil-military coordination is part of this. Over the years, the scope has widened to include diplomacy, humanitarian action, rule of law and trade. Today, the discourse centres, in essence, on the nexus between external policies and diplomacy, security, stabilisation, recovery and development.

The CSDP formalises the idea of working more comprehensively with a framework for cooperation in which the EU can conduct civil and military missions in third countries. Within the Council, the EU member states set objectives and take decisions on CSDP missions by unanimous vote.¹⁴ Civil and military assets for joint security efforts under the EU flag are provided by the member states on a voluntary basis. Tasks, as defined in the Lisbon Treaty, may be humanitarian and rescue-related, conflict prevention and peacekeeping, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, joint disarmament operations and military advice and assistance, including peacemaking and post-conflict stabilisation.¹⁵

All EU member states subscribe to the scope of CSDP operations (with the exception of Denmark, which can invoke an opt-out clause to the ESDP/CSDP¹⁶). However, member states may differ in their interpretations of the purpose of CSDP operations and the aims they ultimately should serve. The book "National Visions of EU Defence Policy" (Santopinto and Price 2013) sets out these national-level views for seven EU member states. Looking at its findings is helpful for better understanding the various national comprehensive approaches formulated or under development by the respective EU member states. We draw on the results

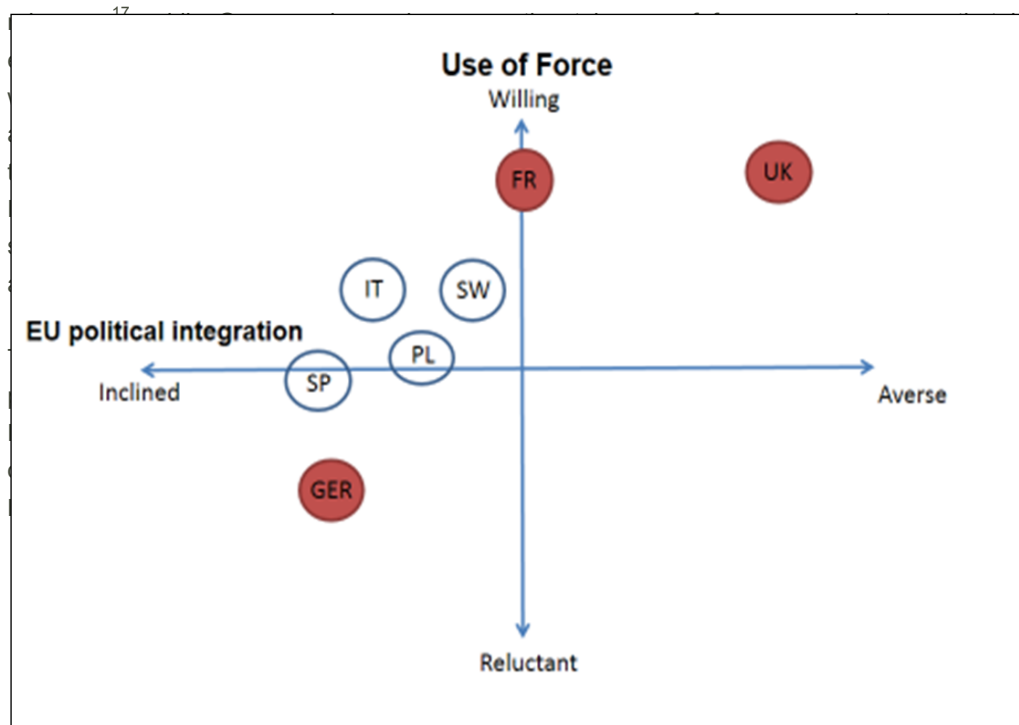
¹⁴ With some exceptions relating the European Defence Agency (EDA) and permanent structured cooperation (PESCO). See: European Parliament (no date).

¹⁵ The so-called Petersberg Tasks have been expanded by the Lisbon Treaty. See Art. 43 in European Union (2008a).

¹⁶ This was negotiated during the time of the ESDP, now CSDP.

of this research in our examination of EU member states' willingness and ability to engage together in a wider European approach towards conflict management and crisis recovery. Based on research in the UK, Sweden, Spain, Poland, Italy, Germany and France, Santopinto and Price (ibid) present a framework that situates EU member states along two axes. The first is their willingness (or political ability) to use force, or – to use these authors' term – their "strategic cultures". The second is their readiness to integrate politically within the Union (Figure 1).

Figure 1: EU States' Positions between Integration and Strategic Culture



Source: Santopinto and Price (2013)

Readiness to integrate politically within the Union is the second axis that is said to influence EU member states' engagement in CSDP missions. The greatest differences exist among the three big states, while the smaller ones tend to find themselves somewhere in between these three positions (ibid: 162-164). Germany views collective CSDP action as a strategic goal in itself, as it is seen to represent a step forward in the European integration process. Germany stresses the use soft power and is relatively willing to contribute to civil CSDP missions. Using CSDP operations as an instrument to achieve goals outside of Europe is a secondary issue (ibid: 162).

France tends to see the European defence policy mainly as an instrument to pursue well defined national interests and to coordinate European nations' joint military power outside the continent. For France, European integration comes second. A recent French White Paper (French Government 2013) states the need for the country to uphold its capacity to enter a

¹⁷ This is particularly true for francophone countries in Africa, though it has been reluctant to send troops to Iraq.

conflict area first, ahead of the other EU member states and before the EU, a practice that has been exercised since 2011 in Libya and Mali and repeatedly in the case of France's engagement in CAR (ibid: 162).

The UK is willing to use force but unwilling to operate under an EU military structure. Instead, it holds that force should be used only under the NATO umbrella, and that the EU should not duplicate action at that level. Hence, the UK's vision of the EU role is more limited than the ambitions set out in the CSDP. The UK would prefer that the EU focus on stabilisation and conflict prevention, thereby playing a complementary role to that of NATO (ibid: 164). This focus on soft power for EU comprehensive actions (including the civilian instruments, diplomacy, mediation, strategic communications, civic action and economic reconstruction and development) matches Germany's strategic culture, which refrains from the use of hard power insofar as possible.

This mix of preferences, interests, political abilities and readiness to work more (or less) comprehensively can be discerned in the 2013 Communication on the comprehensive approach. The Communication reflects the current extent of consensus on joint EU external action. This issue is further discussed in the last part of chapter 4.

Chapter 4

EU Member States and Comprehensive Approaches

In drafting the current report, information was collected on the UK, France, Germany, Denmark and Sweden related to use of the comprehensive approach in external action and crisis. In particular, we mapped five dimensions of the comprehensive approaches in use by the countries examined: (i) their political and strategic purpose, (ii) their scope, (iii) their degree of interaction and use of instruments, (iv) their level of institutional formalisation and (v) their national or international orientation (Box 4). Details were sought on the relevant policies, and an overview was developed of institutional structures, actors and key instruments used in each country to implement the approach. The main features emerging from this mapping per country are highlighted here, including complementary information about the strategic and military cultures that these countries display, as well as their willingness towards political integration within the EU. The chapter closes with several examples of how these countries are testing cooperation with other European partners (Box 5).

• Box 4: Comprehensive Approach Dimensions

- **Political and strategic purpose:** Reasons for formulating a comprehensive approach can be rather different, depending on the policies, strategies, values and interests of the actors promoting the approach.
- **Scope:** Comprehensive approaches may be “narrow” (involving only civil-military coordination), “medium” (entailing, e.g., diplomacy, security/crisis management, humanitarian action and development), or “system-wide” (including diplomacy, security/crisis management, humanitarian action, development, rule-of-law support, employment/business cooperation and trade).
- **Degree of interaction and use of instruments:** This dimension may be “low” (sharing of information), “medium” (sharing of information and coordination of activities) or “high” (integrated processes for initiating, programming, implementing and monitoring joint action).
- **Level of institutional formalisation:** Low institutional formalisation is represented as “ad hoc cooperation”, with “flexible arrangements” in the middle and highly formalised initiatives having “standardised and predictable use of an agreed institutional framework”.
- **National or international orientation:** This dimension reflects the extent to which comprehensive approaches have been practiced beyond the national institutional set-up (i.e., involving cooperation with other EU member states and/or the EU institutions, multilateral organisations and governments or other structures in partner governments or regions).

Source: Sherriff (2013)

4.1 *United Kingdom*

The **UK** is among the most advanced country in Europe in terms of comprehensive approach design, testing and implementation. Its approach is highly strategic, structured and targeted. The country has formulated system-wide national concepts involving the major institutional actors dealing with external action and crisis (i.e., the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Department for International Development). Institutional mechanisms and funding arrangements have been created that link these actors on equal footing and provide them with pooled financial and human resources to perform comprehensively. Their activities are linked to a national security strategy and guided by decision-making in the strategic upper-tiers of government. The UK has tested and elaborated its “whole-of-government” approach since the early 2000s in several countries in Africa and in Afghanistan. One objective in implementation has been to further strengthen and optimise national comprehensive action to the greatest extent possible.

At the same time, the UK has closely followed and accompanied the development of a European comprehensive approach. Its position on EU foreign policy and defence cooperation is to ensure that European cooperation bolsters NATO rather than duplicates or weakens it. UK policy holds that military engagement with other states to deal with situations of conflict and crisis should take place preferably within the context of NATO.¹⁸ The EU’s responsibility, it holds, should preferably reside in the domain of the use of soft power. This has led the UK to participate in proactive military engagement alongside other European countries under the umbrella of the NATO, for example, in Afghanistan and Libya. The UK’s reluctance to be bound by an EU comprehensive approach at the European level in external action and crisis management is coherent with its overall policy of refraining from further European political integration. Expectations that the UK will strongly engage in a widening and further elaboration of the EU’s comprehensive approach towards military engagement should therefore be tempered.¹⁹

4.2 *Germany*

Since the early 2000s, **Germany** has developed a variety of concepts and institutional arrangements to enhance comprehensive action across its institutions. The conceptual scope is very broad, with the country stating the need for a holistic approach for efficient crisis management. This is to be realised through combined civil and military action that addresses political, economic and environmental aspects, as well as social stability. But Germany does not yet have a national security strategy that would give direction to all actors within government

¹⁸ Though the UK has led two of the EU’s most influential military missions - in Bosnia Herzegovina and off the Horn of Africa - and provided civilian and military personnel to many others.

¹⁹ On the other hand, the UK has strongly supported the development of a EU comprehensive approach in the domain of conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

and public administration. Its approach instead is called “networked security”, reflecting a style of comprehensive action that receives, compared to the UK, limited central steering and is shaped, instead, through a multitude of institutional actors, exchanging information and collaborating structurally at various levels but operating fairly independently (supported by the “principle of departmental responsibility”, which is written into the German constitution). The chancellor has created several highly visible ad hoc cooperation arrangements linked to top government for certain politically sensitive topics and country situations, such as for Afghanistan and the Sahel. A shift in thinking is hinted at in the recently published “Federal Government Policy Guidelines for Africa” (2014), as these guidelines refer to the “networked approach” as a guiding principle for bringing different governmental actors into alignment for action under the overall coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This reflects a growing German consensus that a well functioning comprehensive approach is required, but it still falls short in guidance on how such an approach could be institutionally translated into better day-to-day coordination and management.

Germany is very supportive of a European comprehensive approach towards external action and crisis, but it has refrained from any lead in the military domain within the EU context. This policy has its origins in Germany’s history. Germany provides support to CSDP missions as long as it can join other European countries in concerted action under international law. In the absence of a national security strategy, its external actions are undertaken within the framework provided by the European Security Strategy (ESS), in line with its policy to support greater European political integration. Germany’s preference for the use of soft power in external action makes it – though for different reasons – an ally of the UK at the European level, as like the UK it sees no role for stronger European international military engagement. One should expect Germany to support further development of a European comprehensive approach but – in line with the networked approach that it follows nationally and its lack of a strategic or military culture at home – it will tend to favour task-specific operational actions that stress the soft power dimensions of European external action.

4.3 *France*

France is less advanced than other European countries in conceptual thinking and policies towards more comprehensive external action in fragile environments and states in crisis. French institutional actors have recently acknowledged the need to better link crisis response and military action with post-conflict recovery and development. Yet there is still a lack of full collaboration and integration between diplomatic and military activities, on one hand, and French institutions dealing with development, on the other. This divide is reinforced by France’s vertically oriented institutional culture with high walls separating ministries and few permanent structures for inter-ministerial coordination. Another factor is the established intense collaboration between the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs concerning external action. In contrast, responsibilities for international cooperation are fragmented and vested partially in a development agency (l’Agence Française de Développement) that is legally an implementing agency working under the supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Pooled funding mechanisms for fragility and post-conflict operations

are also absent. Nonetheless, operational experiences and learning are emerging about bridging military engagement and post-conflict reconstruction, for example, from provincial reconstruction teams in Afghanistan.

The primacy of the military is evident in France's doctrines spelling out civil-military collaboration during operations aimed at securing order and stability. Complementary doctrines addressing the linkages between pacification and post-conflict operations are absent. Neither does the December 2013 Elysée Summit Declaration (Elysée 2013) link security and development. France is known for its ability to respond swiftly to acute crises that are of political and strategic relevance to the country. This focus on the use of hard power in external action and crisis is also reflected in France's policy at the European level. It combines support for European political integration with advocacy of building up a robust European defence capability and operationalising these through CSDP missions led according to French standards and expectations. Following its practice at the national level, French investments in European conflict prevention and post-crisis reconstruction have been relatively low to date. Thinking in this domain is evolving, however, as demonstrated by developments concerning Mali. France is pushing hard through the EU to support interagency coordination and the "*approche globale*", with a view to better direct the aid pledged for Mali. From the diplomatic level, signals are also strongly in favour of consolidating experiences in dealing with the security and development nexus.²⁰

4.4 Sweden

Sweden has a long tradition of designing and testing various forms of comprehensive approaches. These are influenced by the country's military defence thinking during the Cold War as well as by its value-driven foreign and development policy in which human security principles are prominent. During the Cold War, Sweden developed a strategy called "total defence" through which a large military and civil capacity could be mobilised in case of a conflict with the Soviet Union. In light of its territorial vastness and small population Sweden could not base its defence on a standing army. Methodologically, "total defence" was founded on close coordination of military planning with civil and economic defence plans engaging almost the entire population. Against this background, comprehensive approach concepts were developed starting in the early 2000s to better deal with external action and conflicts from a whole-of-government perspective. At the same time, Sweden followed a policy that placed development cooperation, conflict prevention and (UN) peacekeeping at the core of its external action. Its national strategy, formulated in 2008, to integrate military and human security action was tested in Afghanistan, though this produced considerable disillusionment across government ministries and agencies as well as resistance from Swedish NGOs.

This led to a further reconceptualisation from the "integrated model" to the "collaborative way of working", framed in a new policy that separates military and civilian roles but executes operations through a structured process of exchange and coordination between the different institutions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs integrates diplomacy, foreign trade and development,

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Interviews conducted in the context of ongoing ECDPM work on the Sahel, April 2014.

and the state secretaries from all ministries meet regularly to provide guidance on Sweden's engagement in international conflict management. A dedicated agency working under the Ministry of Defence coordinates activities of non-military actors working in conflict situations and natural disasters. The choice to work collaboratively, instead of using a fully integrated model, has prevented establishment of shared financing instruments (similar to the UK approach) for addressing situations of fragility and conflict.

Sweden's engagement at the European level has been informed by its focus on human security. Another factor is its national policy which recognises the need for a stable and functioning international order to permit trade and access to markets. Sweden has strongly supported the development of a European-level conflict prevention approach. It stresses the importance of mediation and advocating for human rights, rule-of-law reforms and establishment of democratic structures. It favours participation in UN-mandated crisis management operations through either EU or NATO frameworks, while upholding its non-alignment with NATO. This combined value-driven and normative approach with carefully defined participation in international military actions is likely to continue to influence its conceptualisation and participation in CSDP missions. Sweden has actively contributed to these since it joined the EU in 1995. Its policy of working through UN-mandated crisis management operations means that it is unlikely to favour engagement in a comprehensive approach that stresses enhanced collective defence obligations. Its focus on human security, however, will likely lead it to continue promoting EU frameworks in the domain of conflict prevention and mediation.

4.5 *Denmark*

Denmark is a pioneer in exploring comprehensive approaches for addressing situations of conflict and fragility. Denmark is both a leading development aid donor and a long-standing contributor to international security. In the early 2000s, development of a "whole-of-government approach" proceeded in parallel with a rethinking of Denmark's positioning and participation in international peace support operations. Learning from experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, from the mid-2000s the Danish government increasingly merged its diplomacy and development efforts to respond to the challenges of social fragility. It formulated a whole-of-government policy for fragile states in 2010, setting priorities for Danish bilateral engagement and for its contributions to international initiatives. This strategy was further refined in a 2013 policy document setting out a common framework for Denmark's integrated stabilisation engagement in fragile and conflict-affected areas. In addition, it recently put a dedicated structure in place mandated to plan and implement cross-ministerial cooperation between the policy departments and the operational level. The whole-of-government approach in Denmark is led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which cooperates closely with the Ministry of Defence under a body functioning under the former's lead. The Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), headed by the minister of development cooperation, is an integral part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Danish activities in fragile and conflict-affected contexts are supported by a dedicated funding mechanism, called the Peace and Stabilisation Fund. That fund combines official development

assistance (ODA) and non-ODA resources, thus allowing for Danish contributions to international security cooperation and global stabilisation efforts. Denmark has a long tradition of active engagement in peacekeeping, under both NATO and the UN. It is credited with mainstreaming comprehensive approach practices within NATO. An emphasis of the 2012 Danish EU Presidency was to promote debate about comprehensive approaches to crisis management within the EU. Nonetheless, Denmark has, in principle, no role in the elaboration and implementation of EU defence policy, due to its opt-out option on defence that is part of the overall membership agreement between Denmark and the EU. In practice, this means that Denmark has an opt-out to participate in EU military operations or any defence-related decisions or initiatives. There are, however, bilateral opportunities for cooperation with like-minded countries in the Danish priority areas of conflict prevention, stabilisation, post-conflict recovery and development.

4.6 *The Netherlands*

The foreign policy objectives of **the Netherlands** are the protection of national economic interest (mainly trade) and the preservation of stability at the international level. The close links between internal and external interests is an essential reason for the Netherlands to engage in international peace support operations. The Netherlands is a long-standing contributor to NATO and the EU, which remain the primary frameworks for the deployment of the Dutch armed forces (Colijn et al. 2013). A comparative advantage of the Netherlands within the EU is its advanced experience in civil-military cooperation, and the testing and applying of integrated approaches in different contexts.

As of the mid-2000's, the Netherlands earned international recognition for its thinking and practice of integrating diplomacy, defence and development to address conflict and fragility. This approach, formerly labelled a '3D approach', was gradually extended towards an integrated whole-of-government approach which includes today the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and International Development Cooperation, Defence and Security and Justice. The Dutch Parliament plays also a role, as it is given the right to approve the deployment of Dutch armed forces outside the Netherlands. To provide orientation on how to implement the approach and establish a culture of working comprehensively a set of policies and guiding documents have been produced overtime, including the 2013 Dutch International Security which lists the integrated approach amongst its foci, acknowledging the need for more joint efforts to achieve long-term security. The Dutch concept and practice of working comprehensively has mostly been shaped by lessons from the field, and in particular its engagement in Afghanistan (in Uruzgan and Kunduz) and in Burundi. In the Dutch integrated approach, the relationship between security and development is central, informed by questions such as local ownership in statebuilding and peacebuilding processes.

The 2014 Guideline on the Integrated Approach (the '*Leidraad Geïntegreerde Benadering*'), formulated by the four ministries mentioned above, is the leading document to orient the different departments in implementing the approach. An advisory structure in support of the Government was created comprising top senior officials of the four ministries and the

President's Office. It focuses on how to implement the integrated approach at home (the whole-of-government approach) and clarifies the concept, how intense integration should be (and should not be) in working with humanitarian organisations, how the different institutions will work together to overcome gaps in coordination and integration and the instruments available for missions and operations. It is a pragmatic document, which sets out the ideal situation in working comprehensively but it underlines that this can only be done through a continuous engagement with the approach, learning from practice and further improvement.

• **Box 5: Examples of Cooperation and Integration across EU Member States**

EU member states are not new to the culture of cooperation in areas of relevance to the comprehensive approach. The following examples provide an overview of the types of cooperation models that have been developed in recent years. Our desk research suggests that a prominent military element is a common denominator, although wider approaches including civil-military and political cooperation are also described. Cooperation models range from bilateral agreements to multilateral exercises. These generally include interoperability of military capabilities and education and training.

Bilateral within the EU

UK-France: An agreement signed in 2014 provides for both parties to jointly invest in the procurement of defence equipment, the joint training of armed forces and the continued development of the Anglo-French Combined Joint Expeditionary Force. The defence cooperation builds on the Lancaster House Treaty, signed in 2010, and includes a statement of intent for a future air combat system and contracts for development of military technology. Within this framework, France and the UK have made arrangements for increasing interoperability and set up mutual exchange programmes to give pilots and engineers experience in operating the partner's aircrafts (UK Government 2014; Gomis 2014).

Germany-Netherlands: The Netherlands and Germany are committed to expand their existing military cooperation in expeditionary forces, maritime security and the comprehensive approach to crisis management. Both countries have engaged in stabilisation and reconstruction operations and have policies and structures in place for comprehensive operations involving civil and military actors. The First German-Netherlands Corps headquarters in Münster is experienced in planning and commanding operations under a comprehensive approach (Dutch Ministry of Defence 2013; Dickow 2013).

Multinational within the EU

Belgium-Netherlands-Luxembourg (Benelux): Various forms of defence cooperation have existed within the Benelux for many years. This cooperation was recently reaffirmed with the Benelux Declaration of 18 April 2012. The three countries are committed to increasing the efficiency of their military by bringing their forces together, sharing costs where possible and increasing their operational capacities. Cooperation exists in four main areas: logistics and maintenance; education and training; executing military tasks; and procurement of equipment. The Belgian-Dutch naval cooperation is a foremost example of capability sharing within Benelux defence cooperation. Progress has been made in education and training, as demonstrated by a para corps training school set up for the whole Benelux (Biscop 2013).

Multinational within and beyond the EU

Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFECO): A 2009 memorandum of understanding signed by the five Nordic nations (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) established NORDEFECO, merging all previous cooperation

frameworks for peace support, education and training, armament cooperation and enhanced military cooperation. The main aim and purpose of the cooperation is to strengthen the participants national defences, to explore synergies and to facilitate efficient solutions to common problems. All cooperative activities are open to the five signatories, but may take place in bilateral or trilateral clusters as well. Several of the main objectives are (i) a comprehensive, enhanced and long-term approach to defence issues; (ii) identification and discussion of defence-related strategic and policy issues of common interest; and (iii) development of cooperative initiatives in the area of multinational operations, defence-related security sector reform and capacity building in support of international peace and security (NORDERFCO no date).

Multilateral

Exercise Viking: Viking is the largest reoccurring civil-military exercise in the world aimed to operationalise a comprehensive approach. Exercise Viking 14 is the seventh in a series of major multifunctional civil-military exercises organised by Sweden over the past thirteen years. The exercise is multidimensional, multifunctional and multinational, with an emphasis on realism and current operational concepts. Its objective is to train and educate participants – civilian, military and police – in planning and conducting a UN-mandated Chapter VII peace support operation, using a comprehensive approach and focusing on cooperation and coordination within an unstable environment, involving all stakeholders (Swedish Armed Forces no date; Folke Bernadotte Academy no date).

Provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs). PRTs were established in Afghanistan in the early 2000s at the US's initiative. The teams gathered both civilian and military professionals, with the objective of stabilising a region or province through a combination of security measures, reconstruction and development. Their overall aim was to extend the reach and influence of both the Coalition Forces and the Afghan government to other provinces of the country. Use of such teams gradually expanded to the forces of nations other than the US, such as Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, Sweden and France. PRTs can be seen as part of the implementation of a countrywide comprehensive approach, in which civilian and military actors from varying contributing countries take on roles ranging from development to security and post-conflict recovery. Depending on the lead nation, PRTs differ in size and structure (incorporating a broad range of skills or with a narrower civil-military focus).

4.7 Overlaps and Divergences

Our mapping of the comprehensive approaches used by the EU member states under study, summarised in Table 1, shows considerable divergence in terms of scope, level of institutional integration, funding mechanisms and extent to which the countries support a EU comprehensive approach. Overlaps can be found, however, which may provide scope for closer collaboration in the future.

4.7.1 Scope and levels of institutional integration

In terms of scope, all of the comprehensive approaches analysed above aim at cooperation arrangements that go beyond narrow civil-military interaction. Most approaches bring in a range of non-military actors system-wide, including from trade, development and even environment, as in the case of Germany. All stress the importance of information sharing too, but countries differ in the extent to which non-military actors are involved in strategic planning and decision-

making. In some countries, these remain the exclusive purview of diplomatic and military circles, while in others complementary actors with a development mandate are brought in, so that the “soft” aspects of crisis recovery do not fall by the wayside. In several countries, an evolution of thinking and agreement is evident that effective action can take place only if diplomacy, defence and development departments work together to ensure establishment of effective linkages between conflict management and civic post-conflict recovery and development. This evolution in thinking also recognises the need to respect the mandate of humanitarian organisations and to accept their decision to join, or not join, depending on the conflict or post-conflict context at hand.

Particularly notable is the relative lack of attention to these “soft” aspects in the approach followed by France, evident in the comparatively slight role played by development actors in decision-making. As such, France concentrates its conflict prevention activities on intelligence gathering and political dialogue, giving much less attention to resilience and developmental issues. The UK, Denmark and the Netherlands have taken a substantially different path, creating institutional structures and financing mechanisms that enable diplomatic, military and development actors to interact with a strategic purpose and to take decisions at an eye-to-eye level. The German approach, while wide in scope, overall has less strategic orientation and institutional embedding. It is executed by a range of actors that function through the “networked approach”, focused on loose exchanges and technical collaboration. For certain country- and conflict-specific situations, Germany has developed cross-departmental, task forces that have strong linkages to the highest political level, where decisions going beyond technical aspects are taken. Also noteworthy is Sweden’s past experience with comprehensive approaches, which have led it to settle on a formula of “collaboration” between military actors and civil actors instead of “integration”. Based on lessons from Afghanistan and following humanitarian actors’ rejection of integrating their activities under a joint comprehensive approach, Sweden has adopted this formula. The UK, Denmark and the Netherlands follow a fully integrated model, though recognise the specific situation of humanitarian assistance which might require a less intense collaboration with humanitarian actors.

The countries under review display varying degrees of cross-institutional interaction and integration. Most elaborate are those in the UK, Denmark and the Netherlands, which have dedicated structures for integrating decision-making and providing guidance on implementation under an overall security strategy. In Germany, various coordination mechanisms exist between different departments and agencies at different levels. But there is no standing institutional structure to ensure cross-institutional civil-military integration, except for politically sensitive interventions, such as in Afghanistan. Germany has no national security strategy but, rather, orients its policy by the ESS. This relative looseness of Germany’s comprehensive action is reflected in the term “networked approach”, which expresses the autonomy of the respective departments – a legal guarantee enshrined in the German constitution. The Swedish institutional set-up is somewhere between that of Germany and those of the UK and Denmark. Following attempts to integrate various actors’ actions, Sweden decided to collaborate through dedicated institutional structures in which various departments have a seat, but which ensure that humanitarian and development activities can take place independent from military interventions. Sweden devotes relatively limited attention to conflict and post-conflict situations in terms of policy and financing instruments, while Denmark has specific policies on fragility and

conflict-affected countries and, similar to the Netherlands, earmarked ODA and non-ODA funding to help in such situations. Noteworthy is also the attempt by the Netherlands to widen the concept beyond integrating diplomacy, defence and development. It includes also the Ministry of Security and Justice and makes a variety of instruments available (including, for example, the Royal Military Police and trade relations) to implement the approach depending on context. The French position is informed by an institutional culture with comparatively little horizontal interaction. Strategic collaboration and decision-making on conflict management take place primarily in a close collaboration between the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and the Ministry of Defence. Development agencies and other French institutions are brought into external action as technical actors.

4.7.2 Support to an EU comprehensive approach and CSDP integration

The extent to which comprehensive approaches are operationalised within the respective countries and the forms such approaches take are strongly determined by the countries' respective national foreign policy, strategic culture (i.e., political ability to use force) and willingness to mobilise their military for interventions in situations of crisis and conflict – be it under NATO, the UN or CSDP missions. European countries differ considerably in their respective foreign policies, which explain the high level of fragmentation in coordination of military activities at the strategic and operational levels. Sweden, for example, is not part of NATO, Denmark does not fully subscribe to the CSDP, France promotes joint European military action under the CFSP and CSDP, and the UK prefers to mobilise its military under NATO command.

The extent to which European member states contribute to more comprehensive action at the EU level and promote implementation of the 2013 Communication on the comprehensive approach is additionally determined by their willingness to integrate politically within the Union. Considerable differences exist between Germany and the UK, while France, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden are somewhere in between. These differences are reinforced by a lack of joint thinking and agreement about the purposes for which the Union should promote comprehensiveness. Consequently, EU member states formulate different positions, or interpretations, on the mobilisation of military and civil CSDP mission and why, when and how to use them.

France has a culture of using force more readily. It would tend to promote comprehensive European military action, particularly if other European member states would follow its lead. Germany takes a very different stance, informed by its history and the strong sentiment against military engagement among much of its population. Its willingness to promote European political integration is therefore not matched by strong support for joint military action. A strategic culture and thinking about how to engage in external action and conflict is similarly absent. The Netherlands is a long-standing contributor to NATO and the EU, which remain the primary frameworks for the deployment of armed forces. Both are seen as 'multipliers' to support and promote the interests of the Netherlands. Sweden is concerned with maintaining its neutrality. It aligns with NATO or CSDP missions only when they are covered by a UN mandate. Denmark,

finally, has an option to stand aside from European military action based on an exemption from military obligations which it negotiated with the Union in 1999.

Considering this background, it becomes easier to understand why European member states settled – through an elaborate process of intra-agency exchange and long negotiations between the EU institutions and EU member states – on the pared-down understanding that is today framed in the Communication on the EU's comprehensive approach. The language of the Communication reflects a joint understanding of the principles underpinning the EU comprehensive approach, while setting out action areas for better coordination and collaboration in conflict prevention and clarifying the relationship with humanitarian assistance actors. Moreover, it leaves the military dimensions regarding working more comprehensively to the EU member states.

Settling on the topic of conflict prevention provided a common ground on which member states could reach some form of agreement on EU external action. It serves the UK's preference to undertake military action under the umbrella of NATO; it serves Denmark, which has an opt-out possibility of the CSDP; it serves Sweden, which aligns itself with CSDP missions if they are covered by a UN mandate; and it serves Germany and the Netherlands, which have no strong ambition to act militarily at an all-EU level (though ready to test more EU integration through bilateral arrangements, such as via the German-Netherlands Corps). Furthermore, it serves France, as it leaves the door open for more CSDP missions (and French control over them) as long as they are discussed among EU member states in the relevant Council bodies, including the PSC.

It is perhaps difficult to anticipate the positions that the respective EU member states will take in future discussions and engagement on the principles, ideas and proposed actions enshrined in the 2013 Communication. But the factors described and analysed above will certainly play a role in determining how the EU member states will go about working with the comprehensive approach in the short and medium term.

4.8 *The way ahead*

The EU Council Conclusions on the Comprehensive Approach (2014) invite the High Representative and Commission to present an action plan to EU member states before the end of the first quarter of 2015. That action plan 'should outline how key actions set out in the Joint Communication and these Council Conclusions, in close cooperation with EU member states, and based on concrete country and regional cases, will be taken forward, implemented and reported, with identified lead structures' (ibid).

In principle, the Union as a whole is well placed to take the comprehensive approach forward. It possesses all the necessary components – military, civil and emergency assistance, reconstruction, and development cooperation. What is missing is a politically guided and coherent approach to use these instruments effectively. Several EU member states have signalled their interest in pushing for the action plan as a way forward, concentrating on concrete examples and issues where collaboration within the Union could be enhanced. While

each EU member state is likely to retain its own conceptual understanding of a comprehensive approach and reasons for engaging (or not), the Council request provides opportunities to get the dysfunctions, dilemmas and contradictions on the table. If it is taken seriously by all of the parties involved, the process of jointly discussing and formulating action will be of value for creating a shared understanding of the purpose of the comprehensive approach. Defining what can realistically be achieved will be important, as the exercise may otherwise backfire and result in a blocking of the process. A division of labour will also be needed, with clarity on who takes what forward, where and in which areas.

The question might be asked of whether such an action plan could gain momentum and make a difference. The reactions from within EU institutions have been rather lukewarm as yet, for several reasons. First, EU leadership is set to change before the end of 2014, interjecting many unknowns into relationships between the EU institutions and the EU member states and whether there will be political sponsorship from the new leaders to push ahead with the comprehensive approach. Second, this is a mixed track record of following up on EU action plans in the domain of security and development and situations of fragility. For example, while the EU compiled detailed annual reports on implementation of the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts (Gothenburg Programme) between 2002 and 2010, little could be found in terms of strategy or direction to clarify what the action plan was actually meant to achieve – though this was a useful exercise in collecting information and indicating the actions taken by the involved partners (Sherriff and Hauck 2014a).

To take effective steps forward, lessons need to be learnt from past experiences. First of all, political buy-in is required from the highest tiers of leadership, within both the Commission and the EEAS. Second, EU member states will need to ensure that the incoming leadership puts its focus on the comprehensive approach so that the respective institutions become engaged in following it up. Third, the action plan should not be seen as an instrument of the EU institutions alone. Indeed, it can only be brought to life if the EU as a whole and EU member states engage mutually and proactively in its formulation, following the agreed “unity for purpose principle” enshrined in the EU legal documents (ETTg 2014).²¹

²¹ How the EU can take the comprehensive approach forward politically, is discussed by Sherriff A. & V. Hauck. 2014. A more peaceful and secure world: a more effective response to violent conflict and insecurity. It has been published in a report written by the European Think Tank Group, *Our collective interest Why Europe's problem need global solutions and global problems need European action* (September 2014) identifying five opportunities where the EU could make a difference in addressing global problems (climate change; poverty reduction and inequality; trade and financial policy; conflict and security; and democracy and human rights).

Chapter 5

Knowledge Gaps

This report has examined the different basic understandings of the comprehensive approach found in six EU member states. This range of understandings, as we read, has evolved from differences in value-driven factors, policy choices and cultures of using military force. We also highlighted some of the policies and approaches through which the EU institutions currently aim to work more comprehensively, and discussed some of the ways that EU member states have promoted the comprehensive approach concept at the national level, as well as across Europe more widely.

Our aim with this report is to provide background to facilitate further discussions within the Netherlands and involving other EU member states on the pursuit of a comprehensive approach and its promotion – not limited to the EU but also involving non-EU partners that are engaged in conflict prevention, conflict management and post-crisis recovery, such as the UN and NATO. The Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law, initiated by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is well positioned to identify knowledge gaps and to help feed this discussion through additional policy research and policy dialogue events.

Our systematic desk research uncovered a wealth of information on comprehensive approaches in Europe, but – given the time available for this work – gaps inevitably remain. To complete the picture, a number of questions remain which could usefully be addressed in the context of the Platform's activities. These are listed below.

Questions related to operational and implementation issues

1. What key lessons can be learnt from the operational experiences of EU member states with comprehensive approach concepts?
2. To what extent have EU strategies and frameworks, such as the Strategy for the Horn of Africa, been useful for achieving more comprehensiveness in action and better results on the ground by the EU family, and have they helped the EU in coordinating its actions with those of non-EU actors?
3. What are the positions of different EU member states vis-à-vis their support to military and civil CSDP missions and how is current thinking towards more integrated civil-military cooperation in the context of CSDP missions evolving?
4. How have comprehensive approaches addressed challenges arising from civil-military cooperation and provision of humanitarian assistance in conflict-affected and fragile situations (see also Schirch 2014)?

Questions related to the political and conceptual level

1. What theories of change underpin the comprehensive approaches applied by EU member states in various types of crisis – including piracy, counter-terrorism, post-crisis transition and recovery? What are their objectives, and what policies, values and strategic cultures drive them?
2. How has international law on armed interventions influenced the practice of comprehensive approaches (e.g., laws shaped by resolutions of the UN and other international bodies)?
3. How do the EU member states not examined here deal with the comprehensive approach, and how do they relate to the comprehensive approach discussion at the European level?
4. To what extent do the EU's member states promote, or are planning to promote, the human security concept in their responses to fragile and conflict-affected countries?

	United Kingdom	Germany	France	Sweden	Denmark	The Netherlands
Terminology	Comprehensive or whole-of-government approach	<i>Vernetzte Sicherheit</i> , networked security or integrated approach	<i>Approche globale</i> or integrated approach	<i>Allomfattande ansats</i> or comprehensive approach	Whole-of-government or integrated approach	Integrated approach, or 3Ds approach (used earlier)
Scope of concept as reflected in policy documents	System-wide, structured interaction; concept covers all external action to address challenges pertaining to conflict and fragility	System-wide; policy papers stress importance of going beyond civil-military cooperation; concept underlines need to network between departments	Limited; importance of a system-wide orientation recognised, but there is a strong conceptual focus on civil-military cooperation	System-wide; though separation of civilian and military roles is stressed; thinking has evolved from “integration” to “cooperation”	System-wide; involving all actors of government in structured interaction; focus on situations of conflict and fragility	System-wide, structured interaction; concept based on experiences from operations on the ground; focus on conflict and fragility
Level of institutional integration	High; linked to national security strategy; at highest level, the National Security Council directs the political orientation of the three principal departments involved: MoFA, MoD and DFID; Stabilisation Unit ensures strategic coherence	Low and not guided by an overall security strategy; a plurality of coordination mechanisms in place with few coherent structures; effective ad hoc coordination with strong linkages to political leadership on top-priority conflicts and fragile situations	Somewhat high; MoFA coordinates inter-ministerial coordination for civilian and political crisis management closely with MoD; other ministries and French Development Agency are involved on an ad hoc basis, related to specific situations	High for diplomacy, foreign trade and development; structured coordination mechanisms are in place to engage with MoD and other ministries in decisions on responses to fragile and conflict situations	High; approach led by MoFA in close coordination with MoD; Danish Development Agency is integrated into MoFA; other government entities, NGOs and the private sector are part of framework	High; approach led by the MoFA with the MoD and extended to several government actors (development & police); coordination mechanisms and ad-hoc structures (involving NGOs) are in place; private sector plays a role

Funding mechanisms	Shared; conflict prevention pools jointly managed by three principal departments: MoFA, MoD and DFID	No shared funding mechanisms; different departments have discretionary powers due to constitutionally framed “principle of departmental responsibility”	No shared funding mechanisms, though intense involvement of Ministry of Finance in inter-ministerial meetings	No shared funding mechanisms; principal funding for fragile situations originates from ODA funding (SIDA)	Shared; comprising ODA and non-ODA funds from the MoFA and the MoD; decisions taken by inter-ministerial committee	Shared; conflict prevention pool jointly managed by three principal Ministers: Trade and International Cooperation, Foreign Affairs and Defence
Support to EU comprehensive approach and CSDP	Strongly supports European conflict prevention activities and supports CSDP military missions; is usually more keen on conflict management actions involving military engagement to be performed under NATO and not the EU umbrella	Supports EU comprehensive approach in external action, stressing conflict prevention; refrains from proactive military engagement; joins CSDP missions primarily in support of other EU members; is guided by European Security Strategy (ESS)	Supports European political integration, including the need to build up European defence capabilities; supports EU comprehensive approach but pays relatively limited attention to conflict prevention, compared to other EU members	Advocates a European approach to conflict prevention, with a strong human security focus; participates in crisis management operations under EU and NATO if UN mandated	Promoted debate on the comprehensive approach during its 2012 EU Presidency but has no role in EU defence policy due to an opt-out option on defence; participates in NATO and UN operations	Supports European political integration, including the need to build up European defence capabilities; supports EU comprehensive approach; participates in crisis management operations under EU and NATO

Table 2: Mapping of the Comprehensive Approaches of Six EU Member States

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