



CIVIL
SOCIETY
DIALOGUE
NETWORK



Mapping of actors: The European Union and peacebuilding

Background Paper

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European Peacebuilding Liaison Office

The European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) is the largest independent civil society platform of European NGOs, NGO networks and think tanks that are committed to peacebuilding and the prevention of violent conflict. EPLO's mission is to influence European policymakers to take a more active role in securing peace and resolving and preventing conflict through nonviolent means in all regions of the world, and to do so more effectively.

Civil Society Dialogue Network

The Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) is a mechanism for dialogue between civil society and EU policy-makers on issues related to peace and conflict. It is co-financed by the European Union (Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe). It is managed by the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), a civil society network, in cooperation with the European Commission (EC) and the European External Action Service (EEAS). The fifth phase of the CSDN will last from 2023 to 2026. For more information, please visit the [EPLO website](#).



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Objectives:

- To analyse the roles and responsibilities of European Union (EU) policy-makers insofar as they relate to conflict and peace in the EU's external action;
- To identify advocacy opportunities for civil society working on peacebuilding;
- To provide an overview of the roles of the EU institutions in conflict for participants in the Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) Training Seminar entitled 'Peacebuilding Advocacy towards the EU'.

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Abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean, and Pacific
AGD	Ambassador for Gender and Diversity
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
COREPER	Committee of Permanent Representatives
CPCC	Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability
DG	Directorate-General
EC	European Commission
ECA	European Court of Auditors
EDA	European Defence Agency
EEAS	European External Action Service
EFI	External Financing Instrument
EIB	European Investment Bank
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EOM	Election Observation Mission
EP	European Parliament
EPF	European Peace Facility
ESDC	European Security and Defence College
EU	European Union
EUCO	European Council
EUD	European Union Delegation
EUISS	European Union Institute for Security Studies
EUSR	European Union Special Representative
FAC	Foreign Affairs Council
FPI	Service for Foreign Policy Instruments
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GP	Geographic Programme
GSC	General Secretariat of the Council
HR/VP	High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the European Commission
IPA III	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance III
ISP	Directorate for the Integrated Approach for Security and Peace
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MPCC	Military Planning and Conduct Capability
MS	Member State
NDICI-GE	Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe
PESCO	Permanent Structured Cooperation
PSC	Political and Security Committee
RRA	Rapid Response Action
SECDEFPOL	Directorate for Security and Defence Policy
TFUE	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
TEU	Treaty on European Union
TP	Thematic Programme
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

Mapping of actors: The European Union and peacebuilding

European Council

The [European Council](#) (EUCO) defines the **overall political direction and priorities** of the European Union (EU). It is composed of head of government or state, the President of the European Commission (EC), and the President of the European Council. The EUCO meets at least four times a year, and decisions are usually made by consensus, except where the treaties provide otherwise.

The President chairs the meeting and is elected by qualified majority by EU Member States (MS) for a 2.5-year term, renewable once. The current president is António Costa, who was previously Prime Minister of Portugal.

The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the EC (HR/VP) also takes part in the work of the Council.

Role in EU foreign policy

The EUCO identifies the Union's **strategic interests**, determines the **objectives** of and defines **general guidelines** for the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Thus, the EUCO prepares the ground for policy developments in the CFSP by adopting general and strategic lines, which are expressed through conclusions and decisions.

Challenges and opportunities for advocacy towards the EUCO

- Access: since the EUCO gathers the highest level of political leadership, access to decision-makers is particularly difficult.
- Implementation: the EUCO provides overall policy guidance, while implementation is left to EU MS and institutions. For this, there is often a potential disconnect between policy ambitions and implementation resources and possibilities.
- Focus: Foreign policy discussions tend to focus on wide geopolitical issues and hard security, as well as topics such as counter-terrorism and migration, leaving little space for conflict prevention and peacebuilding (CPPB).

Useful links

- [European Council website](#)
- [Example of European Council conclusions](#) (27May 2024)

Council of the EU

The [Council of the EU](#) (hereinafter ‘the Council’) is the institution that **represents MS in the EU**. The Council meets in different configurations composed of the MS ministers responsible for the policy areas concerned.

The presidency of the Council rotates every six months among MS in the framework of Presidency trios, which ensure that three consecutive presidencies co-operate on the basis of a shared programme. Apart from the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) (which is chaired by the HR/VP), the Presidency chairs all Council configurations.

The presidency is currently held by Poland (January-June 2025), and it will be followed by Denmark (July-December 2025).

Powers and competences

The Council is an essential **EU decision-maker**. In policy areas in which the EU has exclusive competence ([Article 3 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union \(TFEU\)](#)) or shared competence with the MS ([Art. 4 TFEU](#)), the Council negotiates and adopts legislative acts together with the European Parliament (EP) through the ordinary legislative procedure, also known as ‘[codecision](#)’.

The Council is also responsible for coordinating MS’ policies in various fields (e.g., economic and fiscal policies, education, culture, youth, employment policy, etc.) and adopting the EU budget together with the EP.

Structure

In a legal sense, the term ‘Council of the EU’ refers only to the official meetings of MS ministers in the different configurations. In fact, three layers can be distinguished in the Council hierarchy:

1. **Ministerial meetings** have the formal authority to make legally binding decisions – *top layer*
2. The **Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER)** is composed of MS’ ambassadors to the EU. It prepares the agenda for ministerial meetings and coordinates the work of subordinate bodies – *intermediate layer*
3. ~150 **working groups/committees/parties** deal with the day-to-day work of the Council and form the ‘backbone’ of the institution by preparing the decisions and negotiating on the different files – *bottom layer*.

In practice, Council decisions are prepared by the working groups/committees/parties, which are composed of delegates from the MS’ Permanent Representations. The file is then forwarded to COREPER, which discusses technical and political questions, before submitting it to the Council for voting.

The **General Secretariat of the Council (GSC)** assists the EUCO and the Council (including its presidencies, COREPER, and working groups/committees/parties) in organising and ensuring the coherence of the Council’s work. It provides coordination for the implementation of presidencies’ programmes and logistical and administrative support in organising the meetings.

Role in EU foreign policy

Foreign policy is not part of the EU's exclusive or shared competences. However, the Treaty on European Union (TEU) gives the EU competence to **define and implement the CFSP**. In this area, the Council is the main decision-maker and operates on the basis of the guidelines set by the EUCO.

In most cases, Council decisions and conclusions are adopted by unanimity, although in some cases policies can be adopted by a qualified majority.

The Council configuration with most responsibilities for the EU's response to conflict is the **Foreign Affairs Council (FAC)**. It covers, *inter alia*, humanitarian assistance, development, neighbourhood and enlargement negotiations, trade and defence policy, and CFSP-related policies.

The structure of the FAC is slightly different from the Council's other configurations. Instead of being chaired by the presidency, the FAC is chaired by the **HR/VP**. The intermediate level is called the **Political and Security Committee (PSC)** and is composed of MS' PSC ambassadors.

The PSC monitors the contexts in the areas covered by the CFSP and the implementation of EU foreign policy. It also exercises political control over and strategic direction of Common Security and Defence (CSDP) missions¹. The chair of the PSC coordinates the Committee's work and ensures coherence between the work of the Council and the European External Action Service (EEAS). The PSC's work is prepared by an informal group of delegates from MS known as **Nicolaidis group**.

A non-exhaustive list of thematic working groups/committees/parties with relevance to CPPB includes:

- Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM)²
- Politico-Military Working Group (PMG)
- Working Party on Non-proliferation and disarmament (CONOP)
- Working Party of Foreign Relations Counsellors (RELEX)
- Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM)
- Working Party on Development Cooperation and International Partnerships (CODEV-PI)

In addition, regional geographic working groups also cover aspects related to CPPB.

FAC conclusions are used for various purposes:

- to invite MS or other EU institutions to take action on a specific issue
- to ask the EC to prepare a proposal on a specific issue
- to coordinate MS' actions
- to state the EU's political position regarding a particular event or country
- to set a coordinated position between the EU and its MS in international organisations.

¹ For more information about CSDP missions, please consult the relevant section on page 15.

² This committee is particularly relevant for CPPB. In recent years, CIVCOM was tasked by the PSC with the preparation of different relevant Council conclusions on issues such as disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR), peace mediation, and the role of cultural heritage on promoting peace, democracy and sustainable development.

Challenges and opportunities for advocacy towards the Council

- Agenda-setting: given the important role of the Council in EU decision-making process, specific issues can assume great relevance if they are included in the FAC agenda. On a technical level, advocacy on a specific issue can target working parties/committees or the Nicolaidis group in order to influence PSC agendas. Even though presidencies have limited powers in external action, they tend to organise several events on foreign policy, which can help to raise awareness and increase visibility on a specific issue.
- Influence negotiations: reaching out to EU MS representatives in working groups and providing information, recommendations and input on items that are debated can be very effective in influencing negotiations and the content of specific files. Obtaining drafts and leaks from MS or EU officials can make this particularly effective as advocacy can be tailored to specific references in the documents discussed.
- Access: it is generally quite difficult to access decision-makers in the Council, especially at the higher level, and there is not a strong culture or history of exchanging with civil society. In addition, EU MS' representatives in Brussels are ultimately following guidance from capitals, which limits their margins of manoeuvring.
- Transparency: minutes of working parties/committees/groups are not available publicly and agendas of discussions are not detailed. For this, it is difficult to find out precisely what is being discussed.
- Politics: Since decisions on the CFSP are adopted unanimously, it is important that a specific issue is taken onboard by several MS to remain relevant in discussions. In addition, decisions are often the result of a compromise, where one MS may concede a given point in exchange for another on a different file.

Useful links

- [Council of the EU website](#)
- [Polish Presidency Website](#)
- [List of Council preparatory bodies](#)
- [Example of Council Conclusions](#) (17 December 2024)
- [Example of Foreign Affairs Council meeting](#) (18 November 2024)
- [Example of General Affairs Council meeting](#) (17 December 2024)

European External Action Service

The European External Action Service (EEAS) is the EU's diplomatic service.

The EEAS is headed by the **HR/VP**, currently Kaja Kallas (Estonia). The EEAS supports the HR/VP in developing and implementing the **CFSP**, including the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), and ensures the **consistency of EU external action**.

The EEAS also supports the HR/VP in their capacity as President of the FAC and Vice-President of the EC.

The EEAS consists of officials in Brussels and in EU delegations (EUDs) in third countries. Currently, it comprises over 5,200 staff members (including contract agents, temporary agents and seconded national experts) divided between headquarters (2,400+) and EUDs (2,800+).³

Powers and competences

The EEAS is responsible for supporting the HR/VP in developing and coordinating EU foreign policy, contributing to the programming and management of foreign policy instruments, coordination of EU MS in third countries and representing the EU outside its borders.

The EEAS is also responsible for communication and public diplomacy in third countries as well as election observation missions (EOMs). EUDs in third countries take instructions and report to either the HR/VP and/or the Commissioner responsible for the country concerned (e.g., the EUD in Belgrade reports to the Commissioner for Enlargement, copying the relevant EEAS staff).

The EEAS also provides support to the European Defence Agency (EDA), the EU Satellite Centre (EU SatCen), the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), and the European Security and Defence College (ESDC).

Role in EU foreign policy

Being responsible for designing EU foreign policy, the EEAS has an influential role in shaping EU action on CPPB. Together with the Council, the EEAS is responsible for producing EU **foreign policy geographic and thematic strategic documents**, including by drafting, revising, and updating norms and guiding documents for policy implementation.

The EEAS also contributes to the **programming and management cycle of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI-GE)**.⁴

³ EEAS (by the end of 2023) 2023 Annual Activity Report, consulted on 05/03/2025 at https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/eeas-human-resources-reports-0_en. In addition, 3,296 staff members of the EC are employed in EUDs.

⁴ Under the current long-term EU budget cycle (2021-2027), the EU has merged several of its external funding instruments (EFIs) into a single one: the NDICI-GE. The NDICI-GE merges a number of existing instruments, including Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), European Development Fund (EDF), European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). It has a budget of €70.8 billion for 2021-27. The NDICI-GE is divided into four parts: geographic programmes, thematic programmes, rapid response actions, and unallocated funds serving as 'emerging challenges and priorities cushion'. For more

The EEAS is jointly responsible for the following components of the NDICI-GE:

- Geographic Programmes (GPs) (together with the Directorate-General for Enlargement and the Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST), the Directorate-General for the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf (DG MENA) or the Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA))
- Thematic Programmes (TPs) (together with the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI) or DG INTPA)
- Rapid Response Actions (RRAs) (together with FPI, DG INTPA, DG MENA or DG ENEST)

The EEAS is also jointly responsible (together with DG ENEST) for the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance III (IPA III), a mechanism that provides financial and technical assistance to accession countries with a current budget of €14.162 billion (2021-27).

The EEAS works with the relevant EC DG or service throughout the whole cycle of programming, planning and implementation of the NDICI-GE, including on establishing country and regional funding allocations, and providing input into national and regional indicative programmes.⁵

Structure

The HR/VP is supported by a **cabinet**, composed of [9 members](#) (plus administrative assistants), each responsible for a different area of EEAS responsibility.

Most of the daily work at the EEAS headquarters is overseen by the **Secretary-General (SG)**, assisted by the deputy SGs.

The EEAS is divided into departments, headed by a **Managing Director (MD)**. There are six **geographical departments**, a department covering the **Global Agenda and Multilateral Relations**, one on **Peace, Security and Defence**, and one for the **Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability**.

Departments are divided into specific **directorates** and **divisions**.

EEAS structures relevant to CPPB

- Within the department on Peace, Security and Defence:
 - Directorate for '[Peace, Partnership and Crisis Management](#)' (PCM), formerly known as the 'Integrated approach for Security and Peace' (ISP) Directorate, is directed by Cosmin Dobran and composed of four divisions:
 - Division on Integrated Approach for Peace and Security (**PCM.1**): covers the operationalisation of the integrated approach, knowledge management, evaluations, and the Partnership for Security and Stability in the Sahel (P3S).

information about the NDICI-GE, please refer to: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_21_1267.

⁵ The EEAS' role in programming is set out in Article 9 of the Council Decision of 26 July 2010 establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32010D0427&from=EN>. For more information about the role of the EC, please consult the section about the EC in this document, page 17.

- Division on Peace, Security and Defence Partnerships (**PCM.2**): covers conflict prevention, mediation, and the NATO Task Force.
 - Division on Strategic Planning for Crisis Management (**PCM.3**): covers the strategic reviews of CSDP missions.
 - Division on the European Peace Facility (EPF) (**PCM.4**): covers horizontal issues relating to the EPF (financial instrument established in 2021 allowing the supply of military and defence-related equipment, infrastructure and technical support to partner countries.⁶), assistance measures, and compliance, safeguards and monitoring.
- Directorate for **Security and Defence Policy (SECDEFPOL)**: is responsible for co-ordinating the EEAS' overall contribution to addressing external security threats in the area of security and defence working on strategic issues and policy areas organised in six divisions: Strategy, Coordination and Policy (SECDEFPOL.1), Hybrid Threats and Cyber (SECDEFPOL.2), Counter Terrorism (SECDEFPOL.3), Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Arms Export Control (SECDEFPOL.4), Space (SECDEFPOL.5), and Maritime security (SECDEFPOL.6). It is also responsible for fostering partnerships on security and defence with third countries and international and regional organisations.⁷
- Within the department on the Global Agenda and Multilateral Relations:
 - Directorate for **Values and Multilateral Relations (GLOBAL.VMR)**: is responsible for *inter alia* coordinating the EEAS' co-operation with international organisations and fora (GLOBAL.VMR.1), the EEAS' activities on democracy support and electoral observation (GLOBAL.VMR.2), and support for human rights, including gender equality (GLOBAL.VMR.3).
 - Directorate for **Global Issues (GLOBAL.GI)**: is responsible for *inter alia* the EEAS' activities on issues relating to economic issues and global health (GLOBAL.GI.1), connectivity and digital transition (GLOBAL.GI.2), green transition (GLOBAL.GI.3), migration and human security (GLOBAL.GI.4), and financing instruments and international cooperation (GLOBAL.GI.5).
 - Within the geographical departments:
 - The EEAS divides the world into six regions and hence six different departments that take the lead in developing geographic strategies and policies related to specific regions or individual countries: **Africa; the Americas; Asia and the Pacific; Europe; Eastern Europe and Central Asia; and the Middle East and North Africa.**
 - **EU Ambassador for Gender and Diversity (AGD)**: reporting directly to the SG, the AGD promotes gender equality and diversity within the EEAS and worldwide, through diplomacy and policy decisions, as well as in political dialogues bilaterally, regionally and in multilateral contexts. The current AGD is Stella Ronner-Grubačić.

⁶ For more information on the latest assistance measures provided under the EPF, please visit <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/european-peace-facility/timeline-european-peace-facility/>

⁷ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/csdp-structure-instruments-and-agencies_en#11595

Challenges and opportunities for advocacy towards the EEAS

- Programming of geographic and thematic instruments: the EEAS plays an important role in designing the different foreign policy instruments. Advocacy on thematic issues can be carried out towards the PCM directorate, while specific peacebuilding recommendations relating to individual countries or regions can be provided to the relevant geographic directorates. Conflict analyses and policy recommendations can be effective if they are submitted to the relevant units in the early stages of the programming cycle.
- Revision and development of EU foreign policy: EEAS officials, especially in the PCM and SECDEFPOL directorates, are usually the penholders of EU strategic documents on foreign policy, which are normally drafted by the EEAS and later negotiated and approved by EU MS. Recommendations on topics to include or language to use in these documents should therefore be addressed to these directorates. The EEAS is also responsible for developing norms and guidance on implementation, as well as drafting the text of FAC decisions.
- Human resources: the number of conflict experts in the EEAS is rather limited compared to other themes. Their ability to integrate CPPB into the work of geographic divisions therefore remains a challenge. In addition, many conflict experts are seconded by EU MS or contracted externally, which means that they will only work for the EEAS for a limited period of time. Staff rotation makes it difficult to ensure effective knowledge management and build institutional memory on CPPB good practices.
- Lack of conceptual clarity: there has been a lack of conceptual clarity when it comes to the difference between crisis response, conflict prevention, peacebuilding, stabilisation and resilience-building – and how they translate differently in practice – which can cause confusion for staff working within the EEAS, as well as for other organisations and (EU and non-EU) institutions that are engaging with it.
- Hierarchy: while EEAS policy officers are generally easily reachable and open to receiving input from civil society, access to more senior officials (e.g. directors) with more decision-making responsibilities is more difficult.

Useful links

- [EEAS website](#)
- [EEAS organisation chart](#)
- [EU Who is Who Website - Official Directory of the EU](#)

EU Delegations

The EU is represented through ~144 EUDs and offices around the world.

Heads of EUDs (HoDs) receive instructions from the HR/VP or the relevant Commissioner in areas where the EC exercises power. 2,800+ EEAS staff and 3,250+ EC staff currently work in EUDs under the authority of the HoDs.⁸

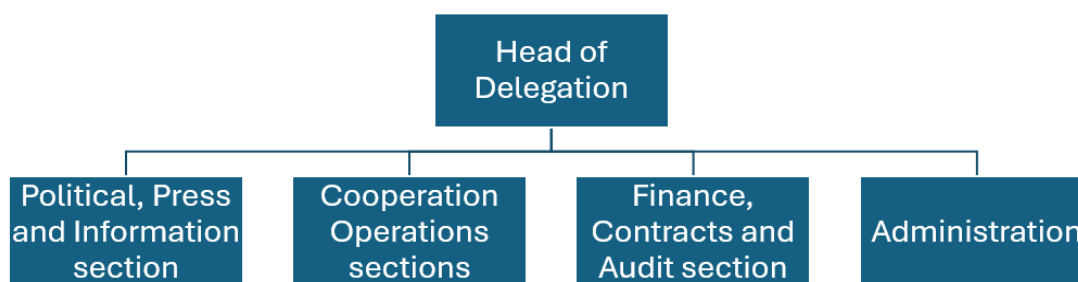
⁸ EEAS (by the end of 2023) 2023 Annual Activity Report, consulted on 05/03/2025 at https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/eeas-human-resources-reports-0_en

Typically, an EUD is organised into:

- A **political section** (EEAS staff): monitors and analyses political developments, reforms, human rights, etc., and maintains contacts with domestic political actors and civil society.
- **Operations sections** (ENEST, MENA, INTPA, FPI staff): administer and implement EU aid, coordinate with national authorities and the international community on operations, engage with implementing partners, etc.

Each EUD also has a civil society, gender equality, and human rights and democracy focal point.⁹

Structure of EUDs:



At EUD level, country-specific conflict expertise is valued, although in order to be effective, advocacy should also target the relevant geographic and thematic divisions and units in Brussels. Civil society organisations (CSOs) tend to be predominantly in touch with the operations sections of EUDs, through the implementation of EU-funded projects.

Useful links

- [EEAS webpage on EUDs](#)

EU Special Representatives and EU Special Envoys

EU Special Representatives (EUSRs) promote the EU's policies and interests in specific countries and regions, focusing on specific issues connected with conflict prevention. They provide the EU with an active political presence in key countries and regions, acting as a 'voice' and 'face' of the EU. Depending on the context, EUSRs might be involved in shuttle diplomacy, mediation efforts and other peacebuilding initiatives.

EUSRs are appointed by the Council of the EU on a proposal from the HR/VP. They are supported by a team of advisers based in Brussels or in the relevant region, who are usually the first contact point for civil society.

There are currently ten EUSRs:

- EUSR in Bosnia and Herzegovina

⁹ In some EUDs the same person may be the focal point on several issues, whereas in other EUDs, there may be several focal points.

- EUSR for Central Asia
- EUSR for the Gulf Region
- EUSR for the Horn of Africa
- EUSR for Human Rights
- EUSR for Kosovo
- EUSR for the Middle East Peace Process
- EUSR for the Sahel
- EUSR for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia
- EUSR for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue and other Western Balkan regional issues

EU Special Envoys¹⁰ are senior experts appointed by the HR/VP or the EC President. Differently from EUSRs, no formal approval from the Council of the EU is required for their nomination, which reduces the level of oversight by EU MS and can make their appointment faster. While EUSRs are allocated a specific budget by the Council to support their work, EU Special Envoys do not benefit from similar resources.

There are currently twelve EU Special Envoys:

- Special Envoy for Digital Diplomacy
- Special Envoy for Climate and Environmental Diplomacy
- Special Envoy for Small Island Development States (SIDS)
- Special Envoy for Energy Diplomacy
- Special Envoy for the Peace Process in Columbia
- Special Envoy for Afghanistan
- Special Envoy for Indo-Pacific
- Special Envoy for the Arctic
- Special Envoy for Eastern Partnership
- Special Envoy for Non-Proliferation
- Special Envoy for Space
- Special Envoy for Counterterrorism

Useful links

- [EEAS webpage on EUSRs](#)
- [EEAS organisational chart](#) (including EU Special Envoys)

Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions

The CSDP provides the EU with an operational capacity to deploy civilian and military missions and operations abroad. These missions and operations support efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts and crises by carrying out diverse tasks ranging from crisis management, post-conflict stabilisation and support to security sector reform (SSR), to advice, capacity building and monitoring.

There are currently 12 civilian CSDP missions, and 8 military CSDP missions and operations, one civilian and military initiative in the Gulf of Guinea and one Regional Advisory and Coordination

¹⁰ Also sometimes referred to as 'Principal Advisers'.

Cell in the Sahel with personnel deployed from EU MS and third countries. The decision to deploy a CSDP mission or operation is taken by EU MS upon request of partner countries.

The PSC exercises political control and strategic direction of the missions and operations. The operational headquarters of civilian CSDP missions is within the EEAS in the **Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC)**, and the command of non-executive military missions is in the **Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC)**. The CPCC and the MPCC are responsible for planning the missions and operations and operationalising deployment and conduct.

Within the PCM directorate, the division on **Strategic Planning for Crisis Management (PCM.3)** is responsible for the design and review of the mandates of CSDP missions. However, final decisions are taken by the PSC.

All CSDP missions and operations have a gender focal point, and some also have a human rights and civil society focal point. Similarly, human rights and gender focal points are present within both the CPCC and the MPCC. As there is not a long history of civil society engagement on CSDP-related policies, policy advice and recommendations should be clear and concise.

Useful links

- [Ongoing CSDP missions and operations](#)
- [EEAS Factsheet on CSDP](#) (last updated March 2024)

European Commission

The [European Commission](#) (EC) is the institution that **promotes the general interest of the Union** and **ensure the application of the Treaties**.

It operates as a cabinet government composed of the [College of Commissioners](#) (27 Commissioners, one per EU MS) and headed by a President, who is proposed by the European Council and then elected by the EP. The current EC President is Ursula von der Leyen, now serving her second term, having been re-elected in 2024. She previously served in the German federal government.

The EC is composed of 34 directorate-generals (DGs), 12 service departments and 5 executive agencies¹¹. Each DG addresses a specific policy area and is headed by a director-general who reports to a Commissioner. The portfolio of a Commissioner can be supported by several DGs and service departments.

As of October 2024, the EC has an administrative body composed of about 32,000 civil servants (permanent and contract employees) employed in and outside Europe.¹²

Powers and competences

The EC holds **executive, legislative, enforcement, and representation** responsibilities ([Art. 17 TEU](#)).

The EC is the only EU institution that can make formal proposals for legislation, upon its own initiative or request from the Council or the EP. However, no legislative act is allowed in the field of the CFSP.

The EC has the duty to ensure that EU legislation and treaties are implemented, including through taking EU MS or other institution to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in a dispute. The EC is also responsible for implementing the EU budget and represents the EU externally in several international bodies such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Role in EU foreign policy

The following DGs and service departments are particularly relevant for CPPB issues:

- International Partnerships (DG INTPA)
- Enlargement and the Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST)
- Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf (DG MENA)
- Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI)

Their role and responsibilities will be detailed further in later sections of this document.

Other DGs also play a relevant role in peace and security issues due to the potential impacts of the implementation of EU policies in conflict-affected countries and regions. These DGs include:

¹¹ The complete list of DGs, service departments and executive agencies of the EC can be found at https://commission.europa.eu/about/departments-and-executive-agencies_en

¹² The last statistical report from the EC Human Resources at the time of writing is from October 2024, available at https://commission.europa.eu/about/organisation/commission-staff_en

- Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (DG ECHO)
- Climate Action (DG CLIMA)
- Defence Industry and Space (DG DEFIS)
- Trade and Economic Security (DG TRADE)

Useful links:

- [European Commission website](#)
- [EC Who is Who Official Directory of the EU](#)

Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA)

DG INTPA is responsible for developing and implementing EU development policies, programmes and projects. Its mission is to contribute to sustainable development, the eradication of poverty, peace and the protection of human rights, through international partnerships that uphold and promote European values and interest'.¹³

DG INTPA is led by the Commissioner for International Partnerships, currently Jozef Síkela (Czech Republic).

As of 2024, DG INTPA has 2,950+ staff members, including officials in Brussels and in EUDs.¹⁴

Role in EU foreign policy

DG INTPA has several responsibilities relating to the **programming of the NDICI-GE**, including:

- GPs covering Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific; the Americas and the Caribbean (jointly responsible with the EEAS)
- TPs covering Human Rights and Democracy; Civil Society Organisations, and Global Challenges (jointly responsible with the EEAS)
- The 'Strengthening resilience and linking humanitarian aid and development action' component of the NDICI-GE RRAs pillar (jointly responsible with the EEAS, DG ENEST and DG MENA)

Regarding NDICI-GE GPs, DG INTPA co-operates with the EEAS in preparing country and regional funding allocation schemes; **country and regional strategy papers**; and **national and regional indicative programmes**.

Units relevant to CPPB

- The Unit for **Resilience, Peace and Security (G.5)** is responsible for integrating concerns related to peace and security into EU development assistance. Within DG INTPA, CPPB work will be primarily addressed under this unit.
- **Thematic units** are responsible for providing input on thematic issues in programming, as well as contributing to the preparation of thematic policies. For example, the Unit for **Gender Equality, Human Rights and Democratic Governance (G.1)** was the

¹³ https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies_en

¹⁴ https://commission.europa.eu/about/organisation/commission-staff_en (retrieved on 5 March 2025)

penholder of the third EU Gender Action Plan (GAP III), which incorporates the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda as a thematic area.

- **Geographic units** lead on the programming of regional and country strategies and are therefore responsible for integrating context-specific elements into them. These include INTPA.A (Africa), INTPA.B (Latin America & the Caribbean; Relations with Overseas Countries & Territories), and INTPA.C (Asia & Pacific).

Useful links

- [DG INTPA website](#)
- [DG INTPA organisation chart](#)

Directorate-General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST)

DG ENEST (successor of DG NEAR¹⁵) is responsible for the EU enlargement process and the Eastern Neighbourhood policies.

DG ENEST reports to the Commissioner for Enlargement, currently Marta Kos (Slovenia).

As of 2024, the former DG NEAR had over 1,450+ staff members¹⁶.

Role in EU foreign policy

DG ENEST's assistance actions focus on the Eastern Neighbourhood¹⁷, which include countries and regions affected by protracted conflicts or countries marked by political instability and high incidence of violence. Within the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), DG ENEST's mission includes supporting 'reform and democratic consolidation', and 'strengthening the prosperity and security around Europe'.

In the enlargement area, DG ENEST's mission focuses on assisting 'those countries with a perspective to join the EU in meeting the criteria defined by TEU and the European Council'. For this, it monitors the progress on *inter alia* rule of law, economic governance and public administration reform, and manages bilateral relations with candidate¹⁸ and potential candidate¹⁹ countries.

DG ENEST also has several responsibilities relating the EU's financial and technical assistance to the Eastern Neighbourhood and enlargement countries, including:

¹⁵ DG NEAR was operational until 1 February 2025. Following an institutional restructuring, DG MENA (Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf) and DG ENEST (Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood) have taken over its responsibilities.

¹⁶ https://commission.europa.eu/about/organisation/commission-staff_en (retrieved on 5 March 2025). At the moment of writing, no more information is available on the changes of number of staff of the new DG or its restructure.

¹⁷ In EU policy, the Eastern Neighbourhood includes Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

¹⁸ Candidate countries are negotiating or waiting to start negotiations on EU membership. These include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye and Ukraine.

¹⁹ Potential candidate countries are promised the prospect of joining the EU when they are ready. This includes Kosovo.

- IPA III (jointly responsible with the EEAS)
- The NDICI-GE GP covering the European Neighbourhood (jointly responsible with the EEAS)
- The ‘Strengthening resilience and linking humanitarian aid and development action’ component of the NDICI-GE RRAs pillar (jointly responsible with the EEAS and DG INTPA)

Units relevant to CPPB

- **Units for regional programmes** cover issues with a regional dimension, including Western Balkans (ENEST.B), Neighbourhood East & Türkiye (ENEST.C) and Ukraine Service (ENEST.D). In addition of the supervision from the director-general and its deputy, these are coordinated by ENEST.01 (Strategic Coordination & Communication).
- **Units for country and geographical coordination** lead on the development of country reports and work as link between EUDs and Brussels. They also exchange regularly with the officials in the EEAS who work on the relevant countries. Each unit includes one or two candidate/potential candidate countries (e.g. ENEST.B.2 Serbia, Kosovo; ENEST.C.2 Moldova, etc).

Useful links

- [DG ENEST website](#)
- [DG ENEST organisation chart](#)

Directorate-General for the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf (DG MENA)²⁰

DG MENA is responsible for the EU’s relations with the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf region.

DG MENA reports to the Commissioner for the Mediterranean, currently Dubravka Šuica (Croatia).

DG MENA was set up following the institutional restructuring after the European Elections in 2024. The new DG has been operational since 1 February 2025 and has taken over tasks relating to the region with staff transferred from DGs NEAR and INTPA²¹.

DG MENA also has several responsibilities relating to the EU’s financial and technical assistance to the European Neighbourhood through NDICI-GE, including:

- GP covering the European Neighbourhood (jointly responsible with the EEAS)
- The ‘Strengthening resilience and linking humanitarian aid and development action’ component of the NDICI-GE RRAs pillar (jointly responsible with the EEAS and DG INTPA)

²⁰ At the time of writing, information regarding the new DG’s mandate, organisational structure, and staff numbers was still limited (last updated: 12 March 2025).

²¹ The exact number of staff is unclear but at the time of writing the latest news from the DG pointed to “more than 500 staff, in the European headquarters and in the EU Delegations”. Information extracted from https://north-africa-middle-east-gulf.ec.europa.eu/news/one-sea-three-continents-new-directorate-general-strengthen-mediterranean-and-gulf-partnerships-2025-02-03_en

Units relevant to CPPB²²

- **Units for regional programmes**, divided in three areas: North Africa (MENA.A), Middle East (MENA.B) and the Gulf (MENA.C).
- **Units for country coordination** within each region that leads on the development of country reports and work, similarly as in ENEST, as link between EUDs and Brussels.
- **Principal Adviser for Reconstruction in Gaza** (MENA.PA01) coordinates the work in Gaza in cooperation with units within MENA.B, particularly the units on Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Iran (MENA.B.1) and Palestinian Territories, Israel and Eastern Mediterranean (MENA.B.2).

Useful links

- [DG MENA website](#)
- [DG MENA organisation chart](#)

Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI)

FPI was created at the same time as the EEAS and is responsible for the financial and operational components of EU foreign policy. Its mission is to put EU foreign policy into action, fast and flexibly, in a policy-driven and integrated approach²³. In practice, FPI is responsible for the operational and financial management of the budget for CFSP and for designing and managing actions under certain elements of the NDICI-GE.

FPI reports directly to the HR/VP in his role as Vice-President of the EC and is currently directed by Peter Wagner. As of 2024, FPI has ~260 staff members.²⁴

Role in EU foreign policy

FPI is responsible for the planning and financial administration of the following aspects of the NDICI-GE²⁵:

- The TP on Peace, Stability and Conflict Prevention (jointly responsible with the EEAS)
- The ‘Stability and conflict prevention in situations of urgency, emerging crisis, crisis, and post-crisis’, and ‘Foreign policy needs and priorities’ components of the RRAs.

Units relevant to CPPB

²² On the [Decision of the President of the European Commission of 1 December 2024 on the organisation of responsibilities of the Members of the Commission](#), it is stated that the new DG MENA will include units that seated in DG NEAR and DG INTPA previously, such as Deputy Director-General NEAR.DGA.2 (Southern Neighbourhood, Türkiye, Migration/Refugees and Security issues), NEAR.01 (Migration), INTPA.D.2 (Sustainable Development Policy & Global Partnerships with UN) or INTPA.F (Green Deal, Digital Agenda). However, as of 12 March 2025, these have not yet been included in DG MENA. In fact, the last two mentioned units continue present in DG INTPA at the moment of writing.

²³ https://fpi.ec.europa.eu/about-us_en

²⁴ https://commission.europa.eu/about/organisation/commission-staff_en

²⁵ For more info on the NDICI-GE, refer to footnote 4.

- The Unit for **Global and transregional threats and challenges (FPI.1)** manages the 'Assistance in addressing global, transregional and emerging threats' component of the NDICI-GE TP on Peace, Stability and Conflict Prevention.
- The **FPI.2** and **FPI.3** units manage the '**Stability and conflict prevention in situations of urgency, emerging crisis, crisis, and post-crisis**' component of the RRAs pillar and the '**Assistance for conflict prevention, peacebuilding and crisis preparedness**' component of the TP on Peace, Stability and Conflict Prevention and are divided geographically whereby FPI.2 covers Africa & Middle East and FPI.3 covers Europe, Asia & Americas.
- The **FPI.6** unit is responsible for **CFSP operations** and EOMs and manages funds for the common costs of civilian CSDP missions, support to non-proliferation and disarmament actions, and budgets for EUSRs and election observation.
- **FPI.7** and **FPI.8** focus on the administrative and financial management of the **EPF**.
- FPI also has **Regional Teams** based in a small number of EUDs²⁶ working at a regional level. They collect and analyse information on conflicts in order to inform NDICI-GE funding priorities.

Useful Links

- [FPI website](#)
- [FPI Organisation Chart](#)

Other relevant DGs

Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (DG ECHO)

DG ECHO is responsible for overseas humanitarian aid and civil protection and operates in line with the four principles grounded in international humanitarian law (i.e. humanity, neutrality, impartiality, independence).

It reports to the Commissioner for Preparedness and Crisis Management; Equality, currently Hadja Lahbib.

The work of DG ECHO is particularly relevant for CPPB because it operates in countries that are either currently affected by conflicts or that have recently experienced conflicts. In addition, the EU, other international actors, NGOs and academia are increasingly taking into consideration the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts. Specific contexts are starting to be approached through the lens of the HDP Nexus, which includes looking at how EU humanitarian aid policies may be more conflict-sensitive and how they may contribute to building sustainable peace.

- [DG ECHO website](#)
- [DG ECHO Organisation Chart](#)

²⁶ Currently, FPI has six regional teams in Washington, D.C. (Americas), Nairobi (Eastern and Southern Africa), Beirut (Middle East and North Africa), Dakar (Western and Central Africa), and Bangkok (Asia and Pacific).

Climate Action (DG CLIMA)

DG CLIMA leads the EC's efforts to fight climate change at the EU and international levels. Its main mission is to formulate and implement climate policies and strategies, including legislation to deliver the European Green Deal.²⁷

It reports to the Commissioner for Climate, Net Zero and Clean Growth, currently Wopke Hoekstra.

The work of DG CLIMA is relevant for CPPB not only because the consequences of climate change are increasingly considered as significant conflict drivers, but also because measures to address climate change can considerably affect conflict dynamics. Policies aimed at addressing climate change can have unintended and harmful consequences on livelihoods, social cohesion, and governance. However, international co-operation on climate issues and climate adaptation measures presents opportunities for contributing to peace through *inter alia* dialogue and mediation, natural resource management efforts, and early warning systems (EWS) integrating climate issues.

- [DG CLIMA website](#)
- [DG CLIMA organisation chart](#)

Defence Industry and Space (DG DEFIS)

DG DEFIS was set up in 2024 and leads the European Commission's activities in the European defence industry and European space sectors. It has the mandate to ensure 'an innovative, and competitive defence industry'²⁸ and implements the Union's Space Programme.'

It reports to the Commissioner for Defence and Space, currently Andrius Kubilius.

The work of DG DEFIS is linked to CPPB insofar as defence and space capabilities affect the approach to and capacities for conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict reconstruction. As militarisation is increasing across the EU, some EU defence industry initiatives, including those related to cybersecurity and technological innovation, may however serve as entry points to enhance the EU's capacity to prevent conflicts and support stability in conflict-affected contexts. The EU Space Programme, which includes satellite-based monitoring and communication systems, may be used to support EWS and humanitarian operations in conflict-affected areas. However, the increasing militarisation of space and the potential dual-use nature of space technologies necessitate a conflict-sensitive approach to ensure they do not exacerbate tensions.

- [DG DEFIS website](#)
- [DG DEFIS organisation chart](#)

²⁷ The European Green Deal, introduced in 2019, is a set of policy initiatives by the EC with the overarching aim of making the EU climate neutral by 2050.

²⁸ In order to ensure such work, DG DEFIS is guided by the European Defence Industrial Strategy (EDIS) that was announced by the EC President von der Leyen during her 2023 State of the Union speech. The work on defence of the EU is, besides, supported by the European Defence Fund (EDF) that has a budget of nearly €7.3 billion for 2021-2027.

Trade and Economic Security (DG TRADE)

DG TRADE manages the EU's trade and investment relations with non-EU countries, including preparing trade and investment agreements. Its responsibilities cover trade in goods and services, the commercial aspects of intellectual property, public procurement and foreign direct investment.

It reports to the Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security; Interinstitutional Relations and Transparency, currently Maroš Šefčovič.

The work of DG TRADE is relevant for CPPB insofar as trade and investment can have significant impacts on conflict dynamics and peace drivers. Although trade and investment can have a negative impact on conflict dynamics due to the potential unequal distribution of resources, the frequently unaccountable nature of foreign business actors, and the possible negative social and environmental impacts of large-scale investments, they also have the potential to support peacebuilding by incentivising interaction across conflict divides and creating employment.

- [DG TRADE website](#)
- [DG TRADE organisation chart](#)

Challenges and opportunities for advocacy towards the EC

- Diverse expertise: being a very large administrative body, the EC can rely on diverse expertise. While this makes navigating the different DGs and units more complex, it also allows for more tailored advocacy and possibilities for exchanges on very specific topics.
- Geographic units: EC officials working on geographic files are generally interested in receiving specific analysis and recommendations regarding the political and security situation in their country or region of competence. However, in order to be helpful, civil society input should be tailored to the specific topic and focus of the relevant official's portfolio. For example, advocacy towards officials in geographic units at DG INTPA could focus on providing evidence as to why conflict in given contexts affects the effectiveness of EU development assistance and how EU programmes and projects can be made conflict-sensitive.
- Programming of external financing instruments (EFIs): the EC has a strong influence in allocating the resources of the EU's EFIs. Advocacy efforts to encourage the EU institutions to support CPPB through the NDICI-GE can therefore be directed toward the EC, including towards geographic units. Conflict analyses and policy recommendations can be effective if they are submitted to the relevant units in the early stages of the programming cycle.
- HDP Nexus: The integration of peacebuilding considerations into development and humanitarian actions remains a challenge. This could be due to EC officials not being aware of new findings and thinking in these sectors, or to their reluctance to recognise the political nature of these activities. However, continued discussions on the HDP Nexus and its operationalisation may help to reduce this gap.
- Recurring policy processes: Some EC policies require periodic review processes which occur regularly at fixed intervals. Specific deadlines on several policy processes allow

civil society to prepare tailored contributions within a clear timetable. For example, DG ENEST invites civil society for consultations to inform the annual reports that assess the candidate countries' progress towards meeting the criteria set out in the Stabilisation and Accession Agreement, as well as ENP progress reports for the neighbourhood countries.

- Technical focus: Several EC processes are predominantly of administrative and technical nature, which makes it more difficult to carry out advocacy on political issues. As a consequence, civil society should present advocacy points in a different form compared to when it interacts with EEAS or MS representatives.
- Relations with the EEAS: the EC and the EEAS share a lot of responsibilities, especially regarding EFIs. Given that conflict expertise is divided between FPI, DG INTPA and the EEAS, it is important for advocacy to target all relevant EU stakeholders even though co-operation exists between them.
- Capacity limitations: In the EC, the administrative component is larger than the policy component. Oversight of EU projects takes the majority of the time of administrators, especially in FPI. This leaves comparatively little room to absorb policy input from civil society.

European Parliament

The European Parliament (EP) is the only directly elected body of the EU and **represents the citizens of the EU**.

The 720 members of the EP (MEPs) are elected once every five years. The EP elects a president at the beginning of the term. In one legislative period, two presidents serve for a two-and-a-half-year term each, which is usually divided between the two biggest political party groups. The current EP president is Roberta Metsola (EPP), having been re-elected in 2024.

Powers and competences

The EP acts as a **co-legislator**: it shares the power to adopt and amend legislative proposals with the Council of the EU. It also co-decides on the **EU budget** and **supervises** the work of the other EU institutions. Unlike national parliaments, the EP cannot initiate legislation (a prerogative of the EC) but can ask the EC to present a proposal.

The powers of the EP to shape EU policy depend on the policy area. In policy areas in which the EU has exclusive competence ([Art. 3 TFEU](#)) or shared competence with EU MS ([Art. 4 TFEU](#)), the EP negotiates and adopts legislative acts together with the Council through the ordinary legislative procedure (also known as '[codecision](#)'). The CFSP is not part of the EU's exclusive or shared competences, so the EP does not have legislative powers over it.

The EP exercises its supervisory powers mainly through the submission of oral or written questions to Commissioners and the HR/VP. The EP formally elects the President of the Commission who is proposed by the European Council, and it approves the full College of Commissioners.

Structure

MEPs sit in political groups organised by political (rather than national) affiliation. There are currently [eight political groups](#):

- [Group of the European People's Party \(Christian Democrats\)](#) (EPP)
- [Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament](#) (S&D)
- [Group of Patriots for Europe Group](#) (PfE)
- [European Conservatives and Reformists Group](#) (ECR)
- [Renew Europe Groupe](#) (Renew)
- [Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance](#) (Greens/EFA)
- [The Left group in the European Parliament](#) (GUE/NGL)
- [Europe of Sovereign Nations](#) (ESN)

32 MEPs are not currently aligned with a group.

The EP's work is mainly carried out through its various **committees**. There are currently [22 standing committees, two sub-committees and two special committees](#). Each committee consists of between 25 and 90 MEPs and has a chair, vice-chairs and a secretariat. The political make-up of the committees reflects that of the plenary assembly.

MEPs coordinate their positions within the political groups with one or two group members acting as coordinators for a specific committee. For every legislative item, the relevant committee appoints a **rapporteur** who is responsible for drafting the text, collecting amendments, and preparing the vote in the plenary.

The legislative work and the organisation of plenary sittings and meetings is coordinated by the **EP Secretariat**, which also supports MEPs in the exercise of their mandates.

Role in EU foreign policy

The EP does not have any legislative powers on issues related to the CFSP, as they are not part of the EU's exclusive or shared competences. In this area the EP has only a **consultative role**, which it exercises by submitting questions and recommendations to the HR/VP and the Council. Twice a year, the HR/VP presents a consultative document to the EP on the main choices relating to the CFSP and the CSDP, and their financial implications.

The **ordinary legislative procedure** applies to some policy areas that are relevant to peace and security, including development policy, and common trade policy. In addition, the EP has co-legislative powers in the context of the EU's long-term budget (Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)), including on the texts that provide the legal basis for the EU's EFIs (e.g. the NDICI-GE).

The EP can also adopt general **resolutions** pertaining to foreign policy. Although not binding for other EU institutions, resolutions may call for action and increase the visibility and political weight of a specific issue.

Committees working on issues relevant for peace and security include:

- **Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET)**: it holds regular exchanges with EEAS and EC officials with foreign policy responsibilities, prepares resolutions on foreign policy issues, and monitors EU foreign policy (e.g., CFSP, CSDP and EU relations with third countries and international bodies).
- **Committee on Security and Defence (SEDE)**, previously Sub-Committee on Security and Defence: it focuses mostly on military and defence issues, including military CSDP, with a strong focus on hard security aspects.
- **Sub-committee on Human Rights (DROI)** (AFET sub-committee): oversees the respect for human rights in the EU's external policies and actions, ensuring that e.g. refugee protection, migration and trade remain aligned with the EU's human rights obligations and international human rights law.
- **Committee on Development (DEVE)**: it monitors the implementation of EU development policy, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and relations between the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and the EU.
- **Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM)**: it is responsible for promoting and monitoring women's rights and gender equality both inside and outside the EU.
- **Committee on International Trade (INTA)**: it follows the EU's common commercial policy, including financial, economic and trade relations with third countries and regional organisations, and prepares the EP's position on consenting trade agreements.

- **Committee on Budgets (BUDG):** it is responsible for overseeing and negotiating the EU's multiannual financial framework (MFF) and annual budget, and monitors its implementation, including the NDICI-GE, the EU's main financial instrument for supporting external policies.
- The work of the EP secretariat's [Directorate for Democracy Support](#) is also relevant to peace and security issues. It is composed of the Election Observation and Follow-up Unit, the Parliamentary Support and Capacity Building Unit, the Human Rights Action Unit, and the EP Mediation and Dialogue Support Unit. It has responsibilities in planning EU EOMs, as well as parliamentary mediation and dialogue activities, which can support efforts to prevent electoral violence and support peace processes in third countries (mostly neighbourhood).²⁹

Challenges and opportunities for advocacy towards the EP

- Ordinary legislative procedure: civil society can engage with MEPs and the secretariats of political groups to push for specific issues to be included in legislative texts, as well as suggest amendments, in areas over which the EP exercises co-legislative powers.
- EP reports and resolutions: civil society can engage with MEPs to push for specific resolutions on foreign policy issues to be presented and voted at plenary sessions, and provide recommendations on the language to use, as well as specific amendments to include in texts.
- Committee hearings: Committees regularly hold hearings on peace- and security-related issues with external representatives from EU institutions, international organisations, EU MS, non-EU countries, academics, and experts. Civil society can engage with MEPs to suggest questions to ask or topics for interventions to contribute to the discussions.
- Written or oral questions: MEPs can submit written and oral questions which the HR/VP or the relevant Commissioner are obliged to answer. Civil society can engage with MEPs to propose questions.
- Ideological positions: depending on their political affiliation, MEPs might not be supportive of the EU playing a role in foreign policy or peacebuilding in general.
- Engagement: different MEPs have different levels of involvement in various initiatives and policy areas. MEPs interested in peace and security are usually involved in several other areas, which means that the time and effort that they are able to allocate to CPPB is often limited.
- Influence: while MEPs can be very helpful in bringing political attention to a certain topic, the EP does not exercise co-legislative powers on CFSP-related issues. Its influence on decision-making in this area is, therefore, very limited.

Useful links

- [EP website](#)

²⁹ <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/globaldemocracysupport/en/home/democracy-group>

Other EU institutions and bodies

European Investment Bank

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is the EU's public lending bank. It provides funds on favourable terms for projects in support of EU policy objectives (a total of EUR 63,4 billion in 2024). For 2025, the EIB has estimated its new issuance at EUR 60 billion.³⁰ The EIB raises money on capital markets by issuing bonds and is run by the Board of Directors, which consists of representatives of EU MS and the EC (Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN)).

In its funding outside the EU, the EIB acts within the framework of the respective EU policy (e.g. the [Global Gateway](#), ENP, the Stabilisation and Association Process, etc.). This means that it is guided by the respective regional and country strategy papers that are in place for the country concerned, including on commitments relating to development objectives, and sensitivity to conflict, gender and climate change.

Click [here](#) to visit the EIB's website.

European Court of Auditors

The European Court of Auditors (ECA) is the EU institution that audits the EU's finances. It checks that EU funds are correctly accounted for, are raised, and spent in accordance with the relevant rules and regulations and have achieved value for money.

It is made up of a college of 27 members, one from each EU MS. The members are appointed by the Council of the EU after consultation with the EP for a renewable term of six years. The ECA is organised into five chambers, to which members and audit staff are assigned. Each chamber focuses on an EU policy-based theme (i.e. environmental, social, external affairs, economic and internal governance).

The results of the ECA's work are used by the EC, the EP, the Council and EU MS to oversee the management of the EU budget. As part of its performance audits, the ECA assesses activities undertaken in EU external action which often relate to the EU's response to conflict. In its annual work programme,³¹ the ECA lists the different policy areas and issues it will examine. In the past, the ECA has produced accounts of the implementation of EU policies in third countries that provided useful evidence for advocacy towards the EU on issues related to peace and security.

Click [here](#) to visit ECA's website.

European Ombudsman

The European Ombudsman is an independent and impartial EU body that investigates complaints about maladministration in the EU's institutions and bodies. Any citizen or resident of the EU, or business, association, or other body with a registered office in the EU, can lodge a complaint with the Ombudsman.

³⁰ <https://www.eib.org/en/investor-relations/press/all/fi-2024-16-eib-funding-announcement-2025>
The full EIB operational plan for 2025-2027 can be found at: <https://www.eib.org/en/publications/20240364-eib-group-operational-plan-2025-2027>

³¹ ECA 2025 Work programme is available at: <https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/publications/WP-2025>

The Ombudsman may find maladministration if an EU institution or body fails to respect fundamental rights, legal rules or principles, or the principles of good administration. This includes administrative irregularities, unfairness, discrimination, abuse of power, failure to reply, refusal of information, and unnecessary delay. The Ombudsman does not have any specific responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict but, as a tool to address maladministration in EU institutions, it can potentially look into the EEAS (EUSRs, EUDs and CSDP missions and operations), the EC and the Council of the EU.

Click [here](#) to visit the European Ombudsman's website.

European Union Institute of Security Studies

The European Union Institute of Security Studies (EUISS) is an EU agency that analyses foreign, security and defence policy issues. Its core mission is to contribute – in close co-operation with EU MS, to the development of EU strategic thinking in the field of CFSP and CSDP, including CPPB, as well as in the field of other EU external action.

The EUISS researches security issues of relevance for the EU and provides a forum for debate. It issues a number of different publications, including the [Chaillot Papers](#), [occasional papers](#), [reports](#) of EUISS research projects and events, as well as [policy briefs](#), [alerts](#) and [books](#).

Click [here](#) to visit the EUISS' website.

European Defence Agency

The European Defence Agency (EDA) was established in 2004 to support EU MS and the Council in improving their defence capabilities within the CSDP. Its mission includes supporting the development of defence capabilities and military co-operation among EU MS, stimulating defence research and technology, and acting as a military interface to EU policies.

In 2017, 25 EU MS³² decided to participate in the [Permanent Structured Cooperation \(PESCO\)](#) and jointly develop capabilities, invest together, and enhance their armed forces' operational readiness. Together with the EEAS, the EDA acts as a secretariat to PESCO, and assesses the PESCO projects' proposals from a capability and operational perspective.

Click [here](#) to visit the EDA's website.

³² Malta has not opted in PESCO, while Denmark joined in May 2023 to make it 26 MS.