

Mapping of actors: The EU and peacebuilding after Lisbon¹

Objectives:

- To analyse the roles and responsibilities of EU policymakers insofar as they relate to conflict;
- 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 training seminar on the EU and peacebuilding.

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¹ This document has been prepared as a resource for civil society organisations working on peacebuilding. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the position of EPLO or its member organisations. The document is based on information available as of 27 August 2019.

Abbreviations

ACP countries	African, Caribbean and Pacific countries
AFET	Committee on Foreign Affairs in the European Parliament
BITs	Bilateral Investment Treaties
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CIVCOM	Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management
CMPD	Crisis Management Planning Directorate (EEAS)
COREPER	Permanent Representatives Committee
CPCC	Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DG DEVCO	Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development – EuropeAid in the European Commission
DEVE	Committee on Development in the European Parliament
DROI	Subcommittee on Human Rights in the European Parliament
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EC	European Commission
ECA	European Court of Auditors
ECJ	European Court of Justice
EDA	European Defence Agency
EDF	European Development Fund
EEAS	European External Action Service
EIB	European Investment Bank
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EP	European Parliament
EPSC	European Political Strategy Centre
EUISS	EU Institute for Security Studies
EUSR	EU Special Representative
FAC	Foreign Affairs Council (one configuration of the Council of the EU)
FEMM	Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality in the European Parliament
FPI	Service for Foreign Policy Instruments in the European Commission
GAC	General Affairs Council (one configuration of the Council of the EU)
HR/VP	High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission
IcSP	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
JAES	Joint Africa-EU Strategy
MFF	Multiannual Financial Framework
PAG	Principal Adviser on Gender and the implementation of UNSCR 1325
DG NEAR	DG Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations
OCT	Overseas Countries and Territories
PSC	Political and Security Committee
SEDE	Subcommittee on Security and Defence in the European Parliament
UNSCR 1325	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security

European Council

Description:

The [European Council](#) is made up of heads of governments or states, the President of the European Commission and the President of the European Council, who chairs the meetings. The President of the European Council (currently Donald Tusk) is elected by qualified majority from EU Member States for a two and a half year term which is renewable once. He currently serves his second term.

The High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP, currently Federica Mogherini) takes part in the work of the European Council because he/she implements what is decided by the European Council regarding foreign affairs.

The European Council is charged with defining the general policy direction and priorities for the EU. Concretely, this takes the form of decisions. It meets at least twice every six months. Decisions are usually taken by consensus, except where the Treaties provide otherwise. The President of the European Commission and the President of the Council of the EU do not have a vote. The European Council does not exercise legislative functions.

To see an example of European Council Conclusions, please click [here](#) to view the Conclusions of 22 March 2019. For a background brief of this same European Council meeting, please click [here](#).

Powers as set out in the Treaties:

With the Lisbon Treaty, the European Council became an EU institution.² It is the only institution which provides overall political leadership in EU affairs. It has decision-making power in 30 cases, including the election of President of the European Council, the set-up of the European Parliament (EP), the modification of the number of Commissioners. It is not a legislative body.

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

The European Council 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 European Council prepares the ground for policy developments in CFSP by adopting general and strategic lines. It does so by adopting decisions taken by consensus.

The European Council issues two types of policy documents. European Council Decisions, which are the common positions and European Council Conclusions, which are statements of intent. Both are adopted at European Council meetings.

Advocacy opportunities:

- 1) Putting conflict prevention and peacebuilding on the agenda of European Council meetings;
- 2) Influencing European Council Decisions and Conclusions.

² Following the Lisbon Treaty changes, there are 7 EU institutions: European Parliament, European Council, Council of the EU, European Commission, Court of Auditors, Court of Justice and European Central Bank.

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):

1) Focus:

In the past four years, migration and counter-terrorism have become the new focus of attention on foreign policy issues.

With the United Kingdom in the process of leaving the EU, informal meetings of the 27 heads of state or government (without the UK) are organised aside from the usual European Council meetings.

2) Ideological differences and undue influence of the defence sector

When foreign and security policy is discussed in the European Council, the agenda and preparation of these meetings tend to focus on deepening European defence integration and support to the defence industry. This is due to the interest of certain Member States that are very influential regarding the European Council agenda and the undue influence the defence sector has in some Member States and in EU institutions.

3) Implementation Gap: The Nature of European Council Decisions:

The European Council provides overall policy guidance in its decisions and is not concerned with implementation of policies. As the EU already has strong policy commitments on conflict prevention and peacebuilding, there is no need to adopt more norms; the problem lies with implementation.

4) Resources Gap:

The European Council has a long tradition of making decisions and adopting conclusions but then not providing the resources or the support to implement them.

5) Access

Since the European Council gathers the highest level of political leadership (heads of state/government), it is usually quite difficult to get access to decision-makers, even if it can vary from country to country.

Council of the EU

Description:

The [Council of the EU](#) is the institution that represents Member States in the EU. The Council functions as legislative body, budgetary authority (shared with the European Parliament) and as controlling body of EU foreign policy. The Council meets in ten configurations bringing together Ministers from the Member States and the European Commissioners responsible for the policy areas concerned. The two configurations with specific relevance for conflict prevention and peacebuilding are:

- Foreign Affairs Council (FAC), made up of Foreign Affairs Ministers, chaired by the High Representative of Foreign Affairs and Security Policy;
- General Affairs Council (GAC), made up of Ministers of Foreign and/or European Affairs of the Member States, chaired by the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU.

Council decisions are prepared by more than 150 working parties and committees comprising delegates from the Permanent Representations of the Member States to the EU. They resolve technical issues and forward the dossier to the Permanent Representatives Committee (COREPER) and/or the Political and Security Committee (PSC), both of which are made up of the Member States' ambassadors to the EU. They discuss technical-political questions before submitting the dossier to the Council.

The Permanent Representations (often referred to as PermReps) are the Member States' diplomatic representations in Brussels. Member States send two Ambassadors to the EU: the main Ambassador (who sits on the COREPER II) and the PSC Ambassador focused on foreign affairs and security issues (who sits on the PSC).

Working groups/committees/parties with relevance to conflict prevention and peacebuilding are:

Thematic:

- Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM)
- Politico- Military Working Party (PMG)
- Working Party on Conventional Arms Export (COARM)
- Working Party on Global Disarmament and Arms Control (CODUN)
- Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM)
- Working Party on Development Co-operation (CODEV)
- United Nations Working Party (CONUN)

Regional:

- Working Party on Africa (COAFR)
- African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Working Group
- Working Party on Transatlantic Relations (COTRA)
- Working Party on the Western Balkans Region (COWEB)
- Mashreq/Maghreb Working Party (MaMa)
- Middle East/Gulf Working party (COMEM)
- Asia-Oceania Working Part (COASI)
- Working Group on Eastern Europe and Central Asia (COEST)
- Working Group on Latin America (COLAT)

Apart from COREPER, which is chaired by the representative of the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU, all these Working Parties are now chaired by a representative of the European External Action Service (EEAS).

Powers as set out in the Treaties:

For policy areas that are under Community competence (development policy, issues related to the customs union, competition policy, internal market, agriculture and fisheries policy etc.):

The Council is co-legislator in the EU legislative process along with the European Parliament (EP). Decisions are made using the “ordinary decision-making procedure” (previously referred to as co-decision procedure), which grants equal power to the Council and to the EP. Please click [here](#) for a flowchart of the ordinary decision-making procedure.

For policy areas under Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP):

In foreign policy, the EU does not develop legislation and the Council is the main decision-maker. The European Parliament is informed of the decisions or has to consent to them.

In many cases, Council decisions require unanimity, for example on relationships with neighbouring countries, Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and all decisions with military or defence implications. In some cases, the Council may vote with a qualified majority (e.g. appointment of Special Representatives) or may allow Members to abstain from the vote.

The procedure is set out in the Treaties. For a link to the Treaties, please click [here](#).

Responsibilities regarding the EU’s response to conflict:

The Council configuration with most responsibility for the EU’s response to conflict is the FAC. It covers the following policy areas: humanitarian assistance, development, neighbourhood and enlargement negotiations, trade and defence policy as well as CFSP. For all areas under Community competence, the FAC acts as a co-legislator. This means that the FAC adopts decisions regarding legislative proposals. Before the decision is taken in front of the FAC, it is prepared by the relevant working party/committee/group

In CFSP matters, the FAC elaborates the EU’s external action based on the strategic guidelines that were defined by the European Council. CFSP includes joint statements on current affairs, common positions in international organisations, political and economic sanctions, regular political dialogue with third countries, participation in peace talks, etc.

Advocacy opportunities:

- 1) To place issues of relevance to conflict prevention and peacebuilding on the FAC agenda;
- 2) To influence ongoing negotiations at working party/committee/group level;
- 3) To provide briefings to different working parties/committees/groups (thematic or regional).

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):

1) Transparency

To be able to influence Council decision-making, it is important to provide input to the negotiations that are taking place at working group level. Since the minutes of working parties/committees/groups are not available on the [public register of the Council of the EU](#), and the agendas are not detailed, it is

difficult for civil society to know exactly what is being discussed.

2) Access

Especially with working parties/committees/groups that meet at ambassadorial level, it might be difficult to attain access to the individual Member State representatives attending the working parties/committees/groups.

3) Member States

Since most decisions related to CFSP have to be adopted unanimously, it is important to be able to mobilise a critical mass of Member States for an issue, so that in the continuous negotiations inside the Council, the issue is not 'traded off' for another possible gain. As the representatives of working parties/committees/groups receive guidance from national ministries and governments, it is vital to provide policy input both at Capital and Brussels level.

Key advocacy targets (structures and individuals):	Status and action points
General Affairs Council	<p>Ministers for Foreign and European Affairs.</p> <p>For a summary of the main results of the General Affairs Council on 21 May 2019, please click here).</p> <p>Influence through Ministry of Foreign Affairs or European Affairs at Member State level.</p>
Foreign Affairs Council	<p>Ministers for Foreign Affairs, sometimes also Ministers for Development, Defence or Trade (depending on the topic of the meeting).</p> <p>For a summary of the main results of the Foreign Affairs Council on 13 May 2019 (including Council Conclusions) please click here. During each Presidency of the Council of the EU, FAC meetings with a specific focus on respectively defence, trade and development are organised.</p> <p>Influence through Ministry of Foreign Affairs and/or also Ministry for Development, Defence or Trade.</p>
PSC Ambassadors and PSC permanent chair	<p>Ambassadors based at Permanent Representations of Member States to the EU.</p> <p>PSC monitors the international situation in the areas covered by CFSP by delivering opinions to the FAC and monitoring implementation of policies. It is also the body that exercises political control over and strategic direction of the Common Security and Defence Policy missions.</p> <p>The PSC chair coordinates the work of the Committee, drafts agendas and chairs the meetings; as part of the EEAS, the chair is responsible for ensuring coherence between the work of the Council and the EEAS.</p>

	<p>To provide input to discussions at PSC level it is best to provide country specific analysis and recommendations on the PSC's agenda to either the chair or one of the PSC Ambassadors.</p>
COREPER II	<p>Ambassadors based at Permanent Representations of Member States to the EU.</p> <p>COREPER II prepares decision to be taken by the European Council, the Foreign Affairs Council and the General Affairs Council.</p> <p>COREPER II is responsible for a large portfolio and deals with political aspects of the decision-making process.</p> <p>COREPER II will only deal in exceptional cases with aspects of relevance to peacebuilding. Best is to approach the rotating chair in the beginning of the presidency to find out whether issues pertinent to peacebuilding will be discussed.</p>
CIVCOM members and CIVCOM permanent chair	<p>Representatives from Permanent Representations of Member States to the EU;</p> <p>CIVCOM advises PSC and COREPER II on issues related to civilian crisis management³, the civilian aspects of CSDP missions and follows the development of civilian capabilities and operations.</p> <p>The CIVCOM chair co-ordinates the work of the Committee, drafts agendas and chairs the meetings; as part of the EEAS, the chair is responsible for ensuring coherence between the work of the Council and the EEAS.</p> <p>To provide input to CIVCOM discussions, it is best to provide country specific analysis and recommendations on CIVCOM's agenda to either the chair or one of the CIVCOM representatives.</p>
Nicolaidis group	<p>Representatives from Permanent Representations of Member States to the EU (often deputy representatives of PSC ambassadors)</p> <p>The Nicolaidis Group prepares the meetings of the PSC.</p>

³ Civilian crisis management is an EU term to describe non-military crisis management used in EU CSDP missions. The core functions of EU civilian crisis management are: Strengthening police, Rule of law and Civil administration in fragile and conflict settings; as well as Security Sector Reform (SSR) and monitoring tasks. In 2018 Member States added that EU civilian crisis management should emphasise stabilisation and prevention, and contribute to tackling security challenges linked to irregular migration, hybrid threats, cyber security, terrorism and radicalisation, organised crime, border management and maritime security, as well as preventing and countering violent extremism, and the need to preserve and protect cultural heritage.

	<p>This group has also been increasingly used in the past two years as a <i>de facto</i> forum to consider thematic issues related to the political framework for conflict prevention and stabilisation (including the EU Integrated Approach to conflict and crises). Such discussions have at times been open to representatives of other Council working groups and to relevant experts from capitals, thereby constituting a “reinforced Nicolaidis Group meeting”, also called “Nico+ format”.</p>
<p>Other geographic and thematic working parties/committees/groups</p>	<p>In case of advocacy relating to a specific country or region as well as thematic issue, the respective geographic and thematic working parties/committees/groups will be tasked with preparing the decision before it goes to PSC and thereafter to the Foreign Affairs Council.</p> <p>The respective chair of the working parties/committees/groups is part of the EEAS staff and co-ordinates the work, drafts agenda and chairs the meeting, so s/he would serve as the first entry point to provide input.</p>

Presidency of the Council of the EU

Description:

Presidencies of the Council of the EU are held for six months by one Member State in the framework of trio-Presidencies which cover a period of eighteen months, in which three consecutive presidencies co-operate on the basis of an eighteen month programme.

Powers as set out in the Treaties:

Apart from the Foreign Affairs Council (which is chaired by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission - HR/VP), the Presidency chairs all Council configurations.

Each Presidency also organises and chairs one informal meeting of Foreign Ministers (also called 'Gymnich meeting'), which do not result in Council Conclusions.

Previously, holding the Presidency of the Council gave Member States significant power to set the EU agenda and to shape policy (e.g. by promoting policy initiatives and gathering support for and reaching decisions on pet projects); this power was greatly reduced after the coming into effect of the Lisbon Treaty; since then, presidencies are referred to as 'supporting presidencies'.

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

The Lisbon Treaty no longer provides for any role of the Presidency regarding external policy. However, foreign policy topics can be included in the eighteen month presidency programme, as for instance was the case regarding conflict prevention during the Hungarian Presidency in the first half of 2011.

Advocacy opportunities:

- 1) To bring conflict prevention and peacebuilding into the Presidency Programme;
- 2) To provide input for Council Conclusions (which are coordinated by the Presidency, apart from those adopted by the FAC which are coordinated by the EEAS).
- 3) To co-organise thematic events, conferences or workshops around conflict prevention and peacebuilding

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):

1) Relations with the EEAS

Initiatives on conflict developed by recent presidencies were blocked by the first HR/VP, notably Belgian EU Presidency proposals on the EU Action Plan for Situations of Fragility and Conflict and the Hungarian EU Presidency review of the Gothenburg Programme. This demonstrates that it is more difficult for Presidencies to contribute to foreign policy and can also act as a disincentive for them to do so.

2) Member State engagement

It is up to the respective Member State to put conflict prevention and peacebuilding on the Presidency agenda (by including it in the Trio programmes and by getting it onto the agenda for Council meetings).

General Secretariat of the Council of the EU

Description:

The General Secretariat of the Council (GSC) of the EU supports the European Council, the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU and the President of the Council of the EU. The GSC's organisational structure is available [here](#).

The GSC, which is currently headed by Jeppe Tranholm-Mikkelsen (DK), consists of the office of the Secretary-General, the Legal Services and seven Directorate-Generals.

Powers as set out in the Treaties, including changes after Lisbon:

The GSC supports the organisation, coordination and implementation of the eighteen-month presidency programme and is administering the budget of the Council of the EU as well as the European Council. It plays an important role in organising intergovernmental conferences of the European Union which are convened to develop amendments to the treaties of the European Union.

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

Most parts of the General Secretariat of the Council with responsibility for conflict were transferred to the EEAS. There is however one Directorate General for "Foreign Affairs, Enlargement and Civil Protection". It provides support to the Foreign Affairs Council and is composed of the following units: Trade, Development, Horizontal Issues, Enlargement, Security, and Civil Protection.

Counter-terrorism coordination is directly attached to the office of the Secretary-General. Gilles de Kerchove has been the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator since 2007.

Advocacy opportunities:

1) Place conflict prevention and peacebuilding on the agenda of the European Council and FAC
Especially for the European Council meetings, the GSC has an important role in preparing and coordinating the agenda.

2) Provide peacebuilding responses to violent extremism as an alternative to counter-terrorism responses

The counter-terrorism coordinator is responsible for developing policy responses that do not fall in areas of Member State competence or where joint EU action is considered useful, such as in addressing the issue of radicalised fighters returning to the EU.

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):

1) Access

Advocacy targets are limited to the Secretary-General and his office.

2) Member States

The influence of Member States on GSC is very high, which, depending on the Member State, might be in contradiction to a peacebuilding policy agenda as was the case for the December 2013 European Council Summit on CSDP.

3) Relations with the EEAS

It is not clear how much influence the GSC has compared to the EEAS in the preparation of the FAC and whether there is a rivalry between the two.

European External Action Service (EEAS)

Description:

The EEAS was established with the Lisbon Treaty and is the EU's diplomatic service. It is made up of EU officials who formerly worked in the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU (Policy Unit, DG E) and in the European Commission (DG RELEX, DG Dev) as well as staff seconded from the diplomatic service of EU Member States which makes up roughly one third of the EEAS. The EEAS assists the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP) (currently Federica Mogherini) in fulfilling his/her mandate to conduct Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and to ensure the consistency of the EU's external action.

The EEAS also supports the HR/VP in his/her capacity as President of the FAC and Vice-President of the Commission, without prejudice to the General Secretariat of the Council and the Commission services with responsibilities for external relations.

The EEAS consists of officials in Brussels and at EU delegations in third countries and to international organisations. The EEAS comprises 4,067 staff divided between Headquarters (1,990) and EU Delegations (2,077).⁴ Please click [here](#) for a detailed organisation chart of the Service and [here](#) for the website of the EEAS.

Powers as set out in the Treaties:

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 Member States 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. EU delegations in third countries take instructions and report to either the HR/VP and/or the Commissioner responsible for the country concerned (e.g. the EU Delegation in Belgrade reports to the Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement negotiations, copying the relevant EEAS staff).

As the HR/VP is responsible for European Defence Agency (EDA), European Union Satellite Centre (EU SatCen), European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), and the European Security and Defence College (ESDC), the EEAS also provides institutional support to these organisations.

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

In designing EU external policy and implementing it at Brussels and Delegation level, the EEAS is one of the main actors responsible for the EU's response to conflict.

The EEAS contributes to the programming and management cycle of the following instruments:⁵

⁴ EEAS (July 2018) 2017 Annual Activity Report consulted on 24/05/2019 at https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/annual_activity_report_2017.pdf

Furthermore 3,616 staff members of the European Commission are employed in Delegations.

⁵ In EU terminology, instruments are the programmes that define EU policy for a specific region or topic. They also set out the amount of money that is available to implement the policy. For instance, the European

- Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) (€19.7 billion for 2014 - 2020)
- European Development Fund (EDF) (€30.5 billion for 2014 – 2020)
- European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) (€15.4 billion for 2014 – 2020)
- European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) (€1.249 billion for 2014 – 2020)
- Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) (€ 2.34 billion for 2014- 2020), regarding assistance provided for in Article 4 (Assistance for conflict prevention, peacebuilding and crisis preparedness) and Article 5 (Assistance in addressing global and trans-regional threats and emerging threats) which are the only part of the IcSP that is formally programmed

Regarding the abovementioned geographic instruments (DCI, EDF, ENI), the EEAS is responsible, in cooperation with DEVCO, for the preparation of:

- 1) country and regional funding allocation to determine the global financial envelope
- 2) country strategy papers or a partner country's national strategy paper recognized by the Commission and the EEAS services or a joint programming document prepared by the EEAS and Commission services with Member States (see European Commission & EEAS: [Global Europe: A New Approach to financing EU external action](#)).
- 3) national and regional indicative programmes

For the abovementioned thematic instruments (EIDHR as well as thematic programmes under DCI), DEVCO has the leading role, including for programming, and the EEAS is consulted at each step of the process.

The EEAS works with the relevant Commission services (either DEVCO or FPI, see below) throughout the whole cycle of programming, planning and implementation of the abovementioned instruments. The annual action programmes are prepared by DEVCO with the EEAS providing input into the inter-service consultations and contributes through heads of delegation.

For the IcSP, the EEAS prepares the strategy paper and multi-annual programming for Article 4 and 5, in consultation with FPI and DEVCO. On the basis of the Strategy papers and multi-annual programming, DEVCO prepares the draft proposals for the annual action programmes for Article 5, keeping the EEAS informed. The annual action programmes for Article 4 are prepared by FPI in consultation with the EEAS. Ideas for measures to be financed under Article 3 (crisis response) which is not formally programmed are evaluated jointly by the EEAS and FPI (and other Commission services where relevant).

With regard to the Trust Funds established by the EU⁶, the EEAS is involved in their decision-making processes to different degrees depending on the specific rules of each Trust Fund.

Neighbourhood (ENI) is the programme that specifies the EU's Neighbourhood Policy. The programming of an instrument refers to the process of deciding how to spend the budget that has been allocated to it.

⁶ Trust funds are delivery mechanisms set up under EU's 2013 Financial Regulation to pool large resources from different donors, aiming to enable a swift, common, complimentary and flexible response in crisis or post-crisis situations. Since July 2014, four different Trust Funds have been established by the EU: a) the Trust Fund for Central African Republic (Békou Trust Fund), b) the EU Regional Trust Fund for Syria (Madad Fund), c) the EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (Africa Trust Fund), and d) the EU Trust Fund for Colombia.

Advocacy opportunities:

- 1) Programming of horizontal and thematic instruments;
- 2) Revision and development of EU foreign policy (development of norms and guidance on implementation);
- 3) Preparation of Council decisions (for instance, on deployment of a CSDP mission).

For more detailed information, please see section on key advocacy targets and action points below.

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):**1) Lack of human resources for conflict prevention**

The number of conflict experts and the time they can allocate to promoting conflict prevention within the rest of the EEAS is proving a challenge as priority is often given to crisis response. The question for thematic divisions is to what extent they will be able to integrate conflict prevention and peacebuilding into the work of the geographic directorates. Many conflict experts are seconded by Member States or contracted externally, which means that they can only stay in the EEAS for a limited period of time. The rotation of EU officials every three years makes it also difficult to build and sustain institutional memory on prevention and peacebuilding good practice.

2) 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 other organisations and institutions that are engaging with the EEAS.

Key advocacy targets (structures and individuals):	Status and action points
HR/VP and Cabinet	<p>The HR/VP is supported by a Cabinet (eleven members) who are covering all areas for which the EEAS is responsible as well as additional advisors in the communications department.</p> <p>One member of the cabinet is responsible for, <i>inter alia</i>, security and conflict prevention, and another one for relations with civil society.</p>
Secretary General	<p>The Secretary General of the EEAS is in charge of the EEAS management. In addition to a six people team, the Secretary General's work is directly supported by the General Affairs directorate (including Strategic Communications and Policy Coordination), the Principal Adviser on Gender (PAG), and the division for Strategic Planning.</p> <p>The current Secretary General is Helga Schmid.</p>
Deputy Secretary Generals	<p>Three Deputy Secretary Generals oversee the work of the different Managing Directorates and Directorates.</p>

	<p>The Deputy Secretary General for CSDP and crisis response, Pedro Serrano, oversees the work of the thematic Directorates linked to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), i.e. the directorate for an Integrated Approach to Security and Peace (ISP), the directorate for Security and Defence Policy (SECDEFPOL) and the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC). This Deputy General also coordinates with the EU Military Staff and is the EEAS conflict prevention focal point.</p>
<p>Directorate for an Integrated Approach to Security and Peace (ISP)</p>	<p>The ISP directorate was established in March 2019 following the dismantling of the Division for the Prevention of conflicts, Rule of law/SSR, Integrated Approach, Stabilisation and Mediation (PRISM) and of the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD).</p> <p>The new ISP directorate includes 4 divisions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Concepts, Knowledge Management and Programmes, 2) Conflict Prevention and Mediation Support, 3) Integrated Strategic Planning for CSDP and Stabilisation, and 4) Consular Affairs. <p>The ISP.1 Division on Concepts, Knowledge Management and Programmes contributes to the programming and management cycle of IcSP (Article 4) and includes PRISM's former Security Sector Reform and Rule of Law Team. This new Division could potentially contribute to stimulating a more preventive culture in the EEAS. It remains to be seen how much of its resources will be dedicated to building and sustaining institutional memory on prevention and peacebuilding good practices.</p> <p>The ISP.2 Division on Conflict Prevention and Mediation Support manages the EU Early Warning System and provides support to geographic divisions and EU Delegations on conflict analysis as well as on peace mediation and dialogue.</p> <p>To influence the work of the division it is important to develop concrete policy recommendations as to how conflict prevention and peacebuilding can be integrated into regional and thematic strategies. These should also be presented to the relevant regional and thematic directorates directly.</p> <p>The ISP.3 Division on Integrated Strategic Planning for CSDP and Stabilisation mostly include former CMPD staff. They are in charge of the planning and strategic reviews of CSDP missions (both civilian and military).</p>

	<p>Evaluation of CSDP missions' impact and recommendations regarding their performance should therefore be submitted to ISP.3.</p> <p>As ISP.3 planners are preparing different scenarios regarding EU response to crisis situations, it is useful to provide them with concise conflict analysis and policy recommendations even when a crisis is not yet imminent.</p>
<p>Directorate for Security and Defence Policy (SECDEFPOL)</p>	<p>This Directorate consists of the Division for Disarmament, non-proliferation and arms export control, the Division for Counter-Terrorism, the Division for Security and Defence Policy and the Division for Partnerships and Agreements.</p> <p>The Division for Security Policy and Defence Policy (SECDEFPOL1) is programming Article 5 of the IcSP. Some are of the opinion that civil society has little to contribute to these 'hard security' issues, which is why to approach this division, detailed analysis of a conflict context, implications of measures supported by IcSP Article 5 as well as recommendations on involvement of civil society have to be prepared.</p>
<p>Directorate for Human Rights, Global and Multilateral issues (GLOBAL)</p>	<p>This Directorate includes six Divisions: 1) the Division for Human Rights, 2) the Division for Economic and global issues, 3) the Division for Democracy and Electoral Observation. 4) the Division for Migration and human security, 5) the Division for Development Cooperation Coordination and 6) the Division for Multilateral Relations</p> <p>The GLOBAL.1 Division leads on gender equality and the integration of gender in human rights policies. It liaises with the Multilateral Relations division (GLOBAL.6) for Women, Peace and Security and UNSCR 1325 related issues. The Multilateral Relations division is in charge of the cooperation with other regional/international fora and organisations (e.g. UN Women among others), and co-chairs the work of the EU Informal Task force on UNSCR 1325 together with the EEAS Principal Advisor on Gender (see below)⁷.</p> <p>Considering the small number of EU officials working on women, peace and security, it will be difficult for the</p>

⁷ The **EU Informal Task Force on UNSCR 1325 (the Task Force)** was set up in 2009 as an EU inter-institutional coordination mechanism, to promote and ensure a coherent approach to gender-related issues. It brings together EU officials (from the EEAS and Commission services) and EU Member States representatives (either based in Brussels or in capitals) working on both gender equality and security issues. Civil society organisations and international organisations based in Brussels are also regularly invited to the Task Force meetings.

The Task Force meets four times a year, (including once at strategic level) to discuss and exchange good practices on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 by EU Member States; the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) policy developments at the EU level; and thematic issues linked to WPS.

	<p>EEAS to ensure gender equality and the WPS agenda is integrated into the development of regional or thematic policies. To support the mainstreaming process, concrete policy recommendations as to how women, peace and security can be integrated into regional or thematic strategies are helpful and should be presented to the relevant regional or thematic directorates, in addition to the chair(s) of the EU Informal Task force on UNSCR 1325 and the PAG.</p> <p>The Division for development cooperation coordination (GLOBAL.5) provides guidance on development issues and programming of development assistance. They are also the lead for the Sustainable Development Goals inside the EEAS.</p> <p>GLOBAL.6 also works on EU-UN relations, including UN Peace Support Operations.</p>
Regional directorates	<p>The regional directorates take the lead in programming policies for regions and individual countries.</p> <p>The regional directorates are better staffed than the thematic directorates, but their expertise and commitment to conflict prevention and peacebuilding might vary.</p> <p>It is therefore important to provide them with evidence as to why conflict matters in the respective country or region and to provide concrete recommendations as to how peacebuilding can be integrated into EU policies.</p> <p>Within the regional directorates, regional coordinators are assigned to provide a cross-border monitoring capacity; they might be of specific relevance regarding conflicts that have a cross-border dimension.</p>
Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC)	<p>The CPCC is responsible for the planning, deployment, conduct, and review of civilian crisis management.⁸</p> <p>Policy advice and recommendations regarding civilian CSDP missions should be clear and concise.</p>
Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC)	<p>The MPCC was established in June 2017. It is located within the EU Military Staff and it is responsible for the operational planning and conduct of the EU's non-</p>

⁸ Civilian crisis management is an EU term to describe non-military crisis management used in EU CSDP missions. The core functions of EU civilian crisis management are: Strengthening police, Rule of law and Civil administration in fragile and conflict settings; as well as Security Sector Reform (SSR) and monitoring tasks. In 2018 Member States added that EU civilian crisis management should emphasise stabilisation and prevention, and contribute to tackling security challenges linked to irregular migration, hybrid threats, cyber security, terrorism and radicalisation, organised crime, border management and maritime security, as well as preventing and countering violent extremism, and the need to preserve and protect cultural heritage.

	<p>executive military missions (i.e. currently the EU Training Missions in Somalia, Central African Republic and Mali).</p> <p>Policy advice and recommendations regarding military training CSDP missions should be clear and concise.</p>
Strategic Policy Planning Division	<p>The Strategic Policy Planning division is responsible for long term strategic planning of the EEAS. For example, the Strategic Policy Planning division was leading the drafting of the EU Global Strategy and the subsequent Joint Communication on a Strategic Approach to Resilience.</p>
EU Delegations	<p>The EU is represented through 140 EU Delegations and Offices around the world.</p> <p>Heads of delegation receive instructions from the HR/VP. In areas where the Commission exercises powers, the respective Commissioner may also issue instructions to the Delegation.</p> <p>2,077 EEAS staff work in EU Delegations. In addition, 3,616 Commission staff work in Delegations under the authority of the Head of Delegation.⁹</p> <p>Heads of delegation are political appointees who represent the EU in the country where the delegation is accredited.</p> <p>At delegation level, country-specific conflict expertise is valued. To ensure that information submitted at delegation level is also received in Brussels, it should be sent to the relevant geographic divisions/units in the EEAS and in DG DEVCO as well as to the ISP.2 division in the EEAS.</p> <p>CSOs tend to be predominantly in touch with the operational sections of EU delegations, through the implementation of EU-funded projects. However it can be useful to also provide country-specific conflict expertise to the political section of the delegation.</p>
EU Special Representatives	<p>EU special representatives (EUSRs) are appointed by the Council of the EU on a proposal from the HR/VP to whom they report directly. EUSRs are a way for the EU to increase its presence in a specific country or region as they act as a 'face' of the EU.</p> <p>At the moment, the EU has eight EUSRs covering different countries and regions. There is only one thematic mandate which is human rights. For a list of</p>

⁹ EEAS (July 2018) 2017 Annual Activity Report consulted on 24/05/2019 at https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/aar2016_final_final.pdf

	<p>EUSRs, please click here.</p> <p>Depending on the context in which they operate, EUSRs might be involved in shuttle diplomacy, mediation efforts and other peacebuilding initiatives. EUSRs are supported by a team of advisors who are, in general, the first contact point for civil society. Some of them are based in Brussels, others in the mandate country or region.</p>
<p>EU Special Envoys</p>	<p>EU Special Envoys can be appointed by the HR/VP or by the President of the European Commission. Contrary to the EUSRs, no formal approval from the Council of the EU is required for their nomination, which reduces the level of oversight by Member States and can make their appointment faster.</p> <p>Another difference relates to the human and financial means at their disposal. EUSRs are allocated a specific budget by the Council to support their work, whereas EU Special Envoys do not benefit from similar resources.</p> <p>There are currently four EU Special Envoys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Special Envoy for Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, - the Special Envoy for Space, - the Special Envoy for Afghanistan, and - the Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU. <p>While the first two Special Envoys are integrated in the EEAS structure and report to the EEAS Secretary General, the Special Envoy for Afghanistan reports directly to the HR/VP. The fourth Special Envoy reports to the EU Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development.</p>
<p>Principal Advisor on Gender and on the implementation of the United Nation Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (PAG)</p>	<p>The position of Principal Advisor on Gender and on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (PAG) was created in Summer 2015, following Sweden's initiative (joined by 22 EU member states). This position is currently assumed by Mara Marinaki who reports directly to the EEAS Secretary General. She is regularly requested by PSC ambassadors to report on her work and priorities.</p> <p>According to press releases and official EU documents, the PAG's role is to: (1) ensure exchanges and coordination of the EU with other international, regional and national actors on policy and action related to gender and UNSCR 1325; (2) contribute to the EU's internal coordination on gender and UNSCR 1325 matters, to their enhanced visibility and to their prioritisation in the EU's external action. A Swedish gender advisor has been</p>

seconded to support her mandate. The PAG co-chairs the EU informal Task Force on UNSCR 1325, together with a representative of the Multilateral Relations Division (GLOBAL.6).

Meetings with local CSOs can be organised with the PAG's team in Brussels or during her visits to EU delegations or CSDP missions.

European Commission – General

Description:

The European Commission (EC) has administrative, executive, legislative and representative responsibilities. The EC refers to both the College of Commissioners, made of up one representative per Member State and the administrative body. It is headed by the President of the Commission (currently Jean-Claude Juncker), who oversees the work of the College. Each Commissioner is responsible for a policy area and decisions are adopted by the College with majority voting. The Commission is comprised of 31 directorate generals (DGs) and 16 service departments. Out of the 31 DGs, five deal with external relations: Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement negotiations (DG NEAR), International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO), the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) and Trade. The total number of European Commission staff (in and outside the EU) is 32 399.¹⁰

The EC promotes the general interest of the Union and ensures the application of the treaties. It is often referred to as the guardian of the treaties. This means that the EC monitors the application of EU law and, if necessary, refers cases where Member States are in default of their obligations to the European Court of Justice.

The EC's legislative powers include the right to initiate legislation (it is the only EU institution with this power) which is then discussed and amended by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU. The EC is also involved throughout the whole legislative process (click [here](#) for more information on the ordinary legislative procedure). It executes EU policy in communitarised areas and is responsible for implementing and managing the EU's budget as well as for programming the work of the EU.

The EC is a bureaucratic body, meaning that it deals with the details of EU policy-making which are mainly technical. As a consequence, civil society advocacy has to be sufficiently detailed and technical for EC officials to be able to use it.

Click [here](#) to access the website of the European Commission.

¹⁰ EC staff statistics available here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/european-commission-hr-key-figures_2019_en.pdf (last retrieved in May 2019). This number includes temporary agents, local staff and special advisers.

European Commission – Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI)

Description:

The Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI) was created at the same time as the EEAS and is comprised of Commission officials from the former Directorate-General for External Relations (RELEX), among them the crisis response planners. It is *inter alia* responsible for the planning and financial administration of the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP).

The FPI is the only Commission institution that reports directly to the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP) in her role as Vice-President of the Commission.

It consists of 206 people working in Brussels and in the EU delegations.¹¹ Click [here](#) to access the website of FPI.

Powers as set out in the Treaties:

The Lisbon Treaty did not foresee the establishment of a new Commission directorate; the FPI is the outcome of an institutional struggle between the EEAS and the Commission on who would manage funding instruments related to the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

Within FPI, the Unit for the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) is FPI.2. The Unit in charge of Common Foreign and Security Policy operations, FPI.3, manages funds for the common costs of civilian CSDP missions, support to non-proliferation and disarmament actions, as well as the budgets of EU Special Representatives.

The Unit FPI.2 is involved in the management of the IcSP. For the IcSP, the EEAS prepares the strategy paper and multi-annual programming for Articles 4 and 5 in consultation with FPI.2 and DEVCO. On the basis of the Strategy papers and multi-annual programming, DEVCO prepares the draft proposals for the annual action programmes for Article 5, keeping the EEAS informed. The annual action programmes for Article 4 are prepared by FPI.2 in consultation with the EEAS. Ideas for measures to be financed under Article 3 which is not formally programmed are evaluated jointly by the EEAS and FPI.2 (and other Commission services where relevant).

Crisis response planners inside FPI.2 have either regional or thematic conflict policy expertise. In addition to the Brussels based staff, there are regional crisis response planning officers, which are based in delegations. They collect and analyse information on conflicts that in turn inform IcSP funding priorities.

¹¹ EC staff statistics available here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/european-commission-hr-key-figures_2019_en.pdf (last retrieved in May 2019).

Advocacy opportunities:

- 1) Programming of IcSP Articles 4 and 5 (together with the EEAS)¹²;
- 2) Decisions regarding the use of IcSP funds (Article 3).

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):**1) Relations with the EEAS**

There has been improvement in the degree of co-operation which exists between FPI and the EEAS. However, as conflict policy expertise is still separated between the EEAS and the Commission, it is important to target both institutions.

2) Capacity

Overseeing the IcSP takes up the majority of the time of FPI.2 staff leaving comparatively little room to absorb outside input. This challenge can be observed both in Brussels headquarters and in EU delegations.

¹² In EU terminology, instruments are the programmes that define EU policy for a specific region or topic. They also set out the amount of money that is available to implement the policy. For instance, the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) is the programme that funds the implementation of the EU's Neighbourhood Policy. The programming of an instrument refers to the process of deciding how to spend the budget that has been allocated to it.

European Commission – Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO)

Description:

DG DEVCO is the Commission Directorate-General in charge of developing and implementing EU development policies through programmes and projects. It merged what used to be DG Development and the EuropeAid Cooperation Office.

DG DEVCO reports to the Commissioner for Development (currently Neven Mimica, CRO).

DG DEVCO has a staff of 3227 and includes officials in Brussels and in EU delegations.¹³ Click [here](#) for a detailed organisation chart of DG DEVCO, [here](#) for its mission statement and [here](#) to go to DG DEVCO's website.

Powers as set out in the Treaties:

DG DEVCO is involved in the programming of and is responsible for the implementation of the following financial instruments¹⁴:

- Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) (€19.7 billion for 2014 - 2020)
- European Development Fund (EDF) (€30.5 billion for 2014 – 2020)
- European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) (€1.3 billion for 2014 – 2020)

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

The bulk of EU external funding is spent on development assistance through the EDF and DCI. To ensure that the EU's development assistance contributes to peacebuilding, it is important that peacebuilding and conflict prevention are integrated as eligible uses of its financial instruments and that these instruments are programmed in a conflict and gender-sensitive way.

Regarding the abovementioned geographic instruments (DCI, EDF), DG DEVCO is cooperating with the EEAS who is in the lead for preparing:

- 1) country and regional funding allocation to determine the global financial envelope;
- 2) regional strategy papers;
- 3) country strategy papers or a partner country's national strategy paper recognised by the Commission and the EEAS services or a joint programming document prepared by the EEAS and Commission services with Member States (see European Commission & EEAS: [Global Europe: A New Approach to financing EU external action](#)).
- 4) national and regional indicative programmes

¹³ EC staff statistics available here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/european-commission-hr-key-figures_2019_en.pdf (last retrieved in May 2019).

¹⁴ In EU terminology, instruments are the programmes that define EU policy for a specific region or topic. They also set out the amount of money that is available to implement the policy. For instance, the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) is the programme that specifies the EU's Neighbourhood Policy. The programming of an instrument refers to the process of deciding how to spend the budget that has been allocated to it.

For the abovementioned thematic instrument (EIDHR as well as thematic programmes under DCI), DG DEVCO has the leading role, including for programming, and the EEAS is consulted at each step of the process.

The annual action programmes for the different instruments are prepared by DG DEVCO with the EEAS providing input into the inter-service consultations and contributes through heads of delegation.

Advocacy opportunities:

Encourage the EU institutions to make use of the possibility to support conflict prevention and peacebuilding through the external action instruments. Click [here](#) for an EPLO briefing paper that provides an overview of the support for conflict prevention and peacebuilding in EU external action instruments (2014 – 2020)

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):

1) Ideological

A difficulty has been that there are policy-makers working on development – both at the European Parliament and in the Commission who do not recognise the political nature of development assistance. In addition, there are those who are working on and trying to influence EU development policy who are not aware of or do not agree with findings and new thinking on development assistance. Thus, there has been hostility towards integrating peacebuilding and development.

On the other side of the ideological spectrum, there are also some EU policy-makers – in the Commission, at the European Parliament and among Member States – who want to expand the use of the EU budget, including development assistance, for Train & Equip-type activities with security actors in partner countries, including the military. EPLO’s view is that the current EU budget rules already allow for support to a wide range of civilian conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities and an expansion is neither necessary nor desirable at this stage/would have problematic implications.

2) Transparency

Trust funds are delivery mechanisms set up under EU’s 2013 Financial Regulation to pool large resources from different donors, aiming to enable a swift, common, complimentary and flexible response in crisis or post-crisis situations. Since July 2014, four different Trust Funds have been established by the EU: a) the Trust Fund for Central African Republic (Bêkou Trust Fund), b) the EU Regional Trust Fund for Syria (Madad Fund), c) the EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (Africa Trust Fund), and d) the EU Trust Fund for Colombia. The Africa Trust Fund in particular has been criticised by civil society for the lack of transparency in its decision-making processes and the lack of clarity with regard to the possibilities for CSOs to apply for these funds.

Key advocacy targets (structures and individuals):

Status and action points

Commissioner and his Cabinet

Neven Mimica is the current Commissioner. Meetings with civil society are sometimes organised by and with his team. There seems to be a lack of conceptual clarity when it comes to the difference between conflict prevention, crisis response, peace enforcement and peacebuilding, as the Commissioner publicly referred to

	<p>the African Union mission in Somalia (AMISOM) as a peacebuilding mission.</p>
<p>Unit for Resilience and Fragility (B.2)</p>	<p>Responsible for integrating concerns related to fragility into EU development assistance. The Unit is involved in programming the DCI, EDF and ENI as well as overseeing implementation. In addition, it wants to play a political role in bringing issues related to development assistance in fragile contexts higher on the political agenda within DG DEVCO.</p> <p>To ensure that conflict is adequately integrated in the programming of the instruments, conflict analysis and policy recommendations should be submitted to the Unit in advance of the programming cycle.</p>
<p>Thematic units (such as Gender Equality, Human Rights and Democratic Governance or Migration & Employment etc.)</p>	<p>Provide input on thematic issues in programming. The thematic units are involved in the programming of the DCI and the EDF as well as overseeing the implementation.</p> <p>To ensure that conflict and gender are adequately integrated in the programming of the instruments, conflict analysis and policy recommendations should be submitted to the Unit in advance of the programming cycle.</p>
<p>Geographic units</p>	<p>Lead on programming of regional and country strategies.</p> <p>Need to provide evidence as to why conflict affects the effectiveness of EU development assistance and how EU programmes and projects can be made conflict-sensitive.</p>

European Commission – DG Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations – DG NEAR

Description:

DG Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (NEAR) is the Directorate General in charge of EU enlargement and neighbourhood policies. It is responsible for taking forward the EU's neighbourhood and enlargement policies.

DG NEAR reports to the Commissioner responsible for Enlargement Negotiations and European Neighbourhood Policy (currently Johannes Hahn, AUS).

DG NEAR has a staff of 1591.¹⁵ Click [here](#) for a detailed organigramme of DG NEAR and [here](#) for DG NEAR's website.

Powers as set out in the Treaties:

On 1 January 2015, DG Enlargement (ELARG) became NEAR, with the integration of staff previously working within DG DEVCO on neighbourhood policies.

DG NEAR's mission reads as follows:

- By implementing assistance actions in Europe's eastern and southern neighbourhood¹⁶, DG NEAR supports reform and democratic consolidation, and aims at strengthening the prosperity, stability and security around Europe. DG NEAR helps to promote EU values, policies and interests in this region, and to contribute to developing the special relationship of the EU with its neighbouring countries.
- In the enlargement area, DG NEAR assists those countries with a perspective to join the EU in meeting the criteria defined by the Treaty of European Union and the European Council. DG NEAR closely monitors the progress of enlargement countries towards the EU and supports accession negotiations as required by the Council. The DG manages the bilateral relations of the Union with candidate¹⁷ and potential¹⁸ candidate countries on their path to the EU, frontloading reforms on rule of law, economic governance and public administration reform. Concerning the Western Balkans, the DG develops and implements the stabilisation and association policy of the European Union as defined by the European Council.

¹⁵ EC staff statistics available here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/european-commission-hr-key-figures_2019_en.pdf (last retrieved in May 2019).

¹⁶ In EU policy, European Neighbourhood covers Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine.

¹⁷ Candidate countries are still negotiating or waiting to start negotiations. This includes: Albania, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey.

¹⁸ Potential candidates are countries who were promised the prospect of joining when they are ready. This includes: Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo.

DG NEAR also manages the bulk of the Union's financial and technical assistance to the neighbourhood and enlargement countries. It is involved in the programming of and is responsible for the implementation of the following financial instruments¹⁹:

- European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) (€15.4 billion for 2014 – 2020)
- Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance II (IPA II) (€11.7 billion for 2014 – 2020)

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

Most of the countries in the Western Balkans that are currently in the accession process have recently experienced conflict, meaning that the enlargement process deals with post-conflict societies.

There are conflicts across the EU's neighbourhood region, including active conflicts in some countries; a high risk of conflict in some parts of the Southern neighbourhood; the protracted conflicts of the Eastern neighbourhood, with high incidences of violence in some cases and the risk of violent conflict developing in others; and post-conflict transition taking place in other countries.

EU accession and neighbourhood policies can therefore contribute to peacebuilding if they are conflict-sensitive and include the promotion of peace as an objective.

Advocacy opportunities:

1) Annual progress reports that assess each candidate country's progress towards meeting the criteria set out in the Stabilisation and Accession Agreement and the *acquis communautaire*. Progress reports are compiled by the relevant country units in DG NEAR who receive input from various sources including civil society. Civil society organisations are also invited for a consultation process at delegation level and in Brussels where they can give their assessment of a country's progress regarding particular issues (democracy and rule of law, women's rights, protection of minorities etc.).

2) Similar European Neighbourhood Policy²⁰ (ENP) Progress reports are also published regularly. Building on existing legal agreements with the EU – partnership & co-operation agreements (PCAs) or association agreements (AAs) – partnership countries agree with the EU on 'ENP action plans' or 'association agendas' for Eastern partner countries. Implementation is monitored through committees set up by these agreements. Civil society organisations are also invited for a consultation process at delegation level and in Brussels where they can give their assessment of a country's progress regarding particular issues.

3) European or accession partnerships are being drafted for each candidate and potential candidate country and are reviewed periodically. They include the issues of concern in key, short-term and mid-term priorities. For an issue to receive funding under the IPA, it must fall into the partnership priorities.

¹⁹ In EU terminology, instruments are the programmes that define EU policy for a specific region or topic. They also set out the amount of money that is available to implement the policy. For instance, the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) is the programme that specifies the EU's Neighbourhood Policy. The programming of an instrument refers to the process of deciding how to spend the budget that has been allocated to it.

²⁰ According to the November 2015 [Joint Communication on the review of the ENP](#) and the following December 2015 [Council Conclusions](#), the progress reports will no longer be made annually and simultaneously; they will be drafted based on the goals and priorities set in each partnership between the EU and the partner country and will be issued when most appropriate 'to provide the basis for a political exchange of views in the relevant high-level meetings with partner countries.'

It is therefore very important to influence the drafting of the partnerships.	
Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):	
1) Political vs. technical	
The accession process and the measuring of countries' progress towards meeting the accession criteria is a technical process administrated by the European Commission. This means that political issues are represented as technical. As a consequence, civil society might have to present their advocacy slightly differently when it interacts with Commission representatives than when it talks to Members of the European Parliament or Member State representatives and make the link to the EU accession process.	
Key advocacy targets (structures and individuals):	Status and action points
Commissioner and his cabinet	Johannes Hahn is the current Commissioner. Meetings with civil society are sometimes organised by and with his team.
Director General	Christian Danielsson, who is the Director General for DG Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, is overseeing the overall functioning of DG NEAR. He has a principal advisor for civil society and media, currently Andris Kesteris.
Unit for Strategy, Policy, EEA/EFTA (A.1)	This unit deals with EU enlargement and neighbourhood policy at a strategic level. Therefore, bigger picture debate and issues of general relevance to the Enlargement process and the neighbourhood policy (i.e. not solely country specific) should be raised with this unit.
Units for Regional Programmes (B.2, C.2, D.5)	For issues of regional concern or with a regional dimension, this unit should be addressed.
Country and Geographical Coordination units (A.5, B.1, C.1, C.2, D.1, D.2, D.3, D.4)	<p>The country units lead on the development of country reports and some of the officials in the units travel to the respective country on a regular basis, meaning that they are the link between the EU presence at delegation level and Brussels. They also link up regularly with the officials inside the EEAS who work on the relevant countries.</p> <p>To input into their work, civil society should prepare detailed analysis and recommendations regarding the political situation in the country concerned; special reference to the stage in which the country is within the EU accession process is useful for enlargement countries.</p>
Unit for Institution Building, Taiex and Twinning (C.3)	Both Taiex and Twinning are capacity building programmes that aim to improve co-operation between the EU and third countries through approximation of standards. Taiex is funded through the ENI and therefore applies only to countries in the EU's neighbourhood, while Twinning programmes are developed both for accession and neighbourhood countries (financed

	<p>through IPA and ENI respectively).</p> <p>Civil society can provide comments on existing Twinning programmes as well as prepare suggestions regarding possible programmes focused on reconciliation and peacebuilding.</p>
Centres of thematic expertise (CoTE)	<p>Six centres of thematic expertise (CoTE) are present within DG NEAR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CoTE Rule of Law/Fundamental Rights & Democracy - CoTE Public Administration Reform - CoTE Crisis Reaction and Security Sector Reform - CoTE Migration - CoTE Civil Society Support - CoTE Connectivity/networks <p>These centres consist of one to four individual experts. They are administratively attached to specific units but their technical expertise can be mobilised by the different parts of DG NEAR for the development and the implementation of policies. CoTE experts often take part in civil society consultations.</p>

European Commission – DG Trade

Description:

DG Trade is the Commission Directorate General in charge of EU trade policy (meaning trade between the EU and third countries, not inside the EU).

DG Trade reports to the Commissioner responsible for Trade (currently Cecilia Malmström, SE).

DG Trade has a staff of 686.²¹ Please click [here](#) for a detailed organisation chart of DG Trade and [here](#) to visit DG Trade's website.

Powers as set out in the Treaties, including changes after Lisbon:

DG Trade is responsible for the common commercial policy (CCP), which includes foreign direct investment, trade in goods and services, and trade-related intellectual property rights as well as external trade. With the Lisbon Treaty, CCP is integrated into the field of EU external action and Art. 207 (1) requires that “the common commercial policy shall be conducted in the context of the principles and objectives of the Union's external action,” which among others is the promotion of peace.

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

DG Trade is developing the standards for EU trade and investment policy and is in charge of negotiating and preparing trade and investment agreements with third countries.

There is a risk that trade and investment have a negative impact on conflict dynamics in third countries, due to the unequal distribution of resources, the often unaccountable nature of foreign business actors and investors and the possibly negative social and environmental impacts of large scale investments. Therefore, the legislative framework applicable to trade and investment policy which is developed by DG Trade has to contain safeguards regarding conflict, human rights and environmental protection.

In addition, trade and investment has a potential to support peacebuilding, by incentivising interaction across the conflict divide and providing employment. In order for this to be the case, however, peacebuilding has to be a defined objective of trade and investment.

Advocacy opportunities:

1) Preparation of trade and investment agreements with third countries.

Before DG Trade can start negotiating a trade or investment agreement with a third country, it has to be authorised by the Council of the EU which provides DG Trade with a mandate for each of the agreements in which the objectives of the negotiation and the following agreement are detailed. The negotiation itself is not public.

2) Development and revisions of standards related to trade and international investment policy.

As foreign direct investment has become part of the common commercial policy with the coming into

²¹ EC staff statistics available here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/european-commission-hr-key-figures_2019_en.pdf (last retrieved in May 2019).

force of the Lisbon Treaty, DG Trade is responsible for developing standards which have to be included in all investment treaties that are adopted between the EU and third countries. At the same time, DG Trade is revising some of its normative standards regarding trade policy, for instance the human rights clause that is integrated in all trade agreements the EU has with third countries.

3) Administration of trade and investment agreements.
For instance, the EU's trade relations with developing countries are conducted in the form of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) which have been criticised for the negative impact they have on economic development and social justice in developing countries.

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):

1) Ideological position

Officials in DG Trade are often trained economists with little or no experience in assessing the non-economic impact of EU common commercial policy. In addition, they are resistant to acknowledge that trade policy should support other objectives of EU external action as laid out in the Lisbon Treaty, a position which is backed by many EU Member States.

2) Position of DG Trade

DG Trade is the most powerful of the external action DGs due to the powers that Member States have granted it by being able to negotiate agreements and because it represents the economic interest of Member States in external action. This means that other DGs that may support conflict prevention and peacebuilding do not have the same weight in internal Commission negotiations as DG Trade has. It is therefore very difficult to influence DG Trade as it rejects the role of the EEAS in coordinating overall EU external action and doesn't consider trade to be part of the EU's Integrated Approach to external conflict and crises.

Key advocacy targets (structures and individuals):	Status and action points
Commissioner and her cabinet	Cecilia Malström is the current Commissioner.
Directorate B Services and investment	Deals with general matters regarding services and investment. It is useful to provide concrete examples on how trade and/or investment impacts on conflict dynamics in respective country or region; also, it would be useful to demonstrate why conflict can be a risk to investment and trade.
Directorate C Asia and Latin America	Deals with general matters regarding EU trade with Far East, South and South East Asia, Australia, New Zealand, and Latin America. It is useful to provide concrete examples how trade and/or investment impacts on conflict dynamics in respective country or region; also, it would be useful to demonstrate why conflict can be a risk to investment and trade.
Directorate D Sustainable development and EPAs, ACP countries	Deals with the relation between trade and development, is responsible for EPAs, and manages general matters regarding EU trade with Africa-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP)

	<p>countries.</p> <p>It is useful to provide concrete examples on how trade and/or investment impacts on conflict dynamics in respective country or region; also, it would be useful to provide examples of the impact of EPAs on development objectives and recommendations as to how EPAs could be used to promote peace.</p>
<p>Directorate E Bilateral trade relations with Neighbouring countries, USA and Canada</p>	<p>Deals with general matters regarding EU trade with North America, South Mediterranean and Middle East, Russia, Common Wealth of Independent States (CIS), Ukraine, Western Balkans, European Free Trade Association (EFTA), European Economic Area (EEA) and Turkey.</p> <p>It is useful to provide concrete examples how trade and/or investment impacts on conflict dynamics in respective country or region; also, it would be useful to demonstrate why conflict can be a risk to investment and trade.</p>
<p>Directorate G Trade Strategy and Market Access</p>	<p>Deals with matters related to trade strategy, including the risks and opportunities associated with the opening of new markets. The Unit G3 in particular deals with energy and raw materials, including conflict minerals.</p> <p>It is useful to provide concrete examples how trade and/or investment impacts on conflict dynamics in respective country or region; also, it would be useful to demonstrate why conflict can be a risk to investment and trade.</p>

European Commission – Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO)

Description:

DG ECHO is the Commission Directorate-General in charge of overseas humanitarian aid and civil protection. The main mission of DG ECHO is to preserve lives, prevent and alleviate human suffering and safeguard the integrity and dignity of populations affected by natural disasters and man-made crises.

DG ECHO reports to the Commissioner responsible for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management (currently Christos Stylianides, CY)

DG ECHO has a staff of 784²². As of February 2019, 155 international humanitarian experts and 298 national staff members are employed in field offices in more than 40 countries and in 7 regional offices. Please click [here](#) for a detailed organisation chart of DG ECHO and [here](#) to visit DG ECHO's website.

²² EC staff statistics are available here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/european-commission-hr-key-figures_2019_en.pdf (last retrieved in May 2019).

Powers as set out in the Treaties:

The Treaty of Lisbon underpins the commitment of the EU to provide ad hoc assistance, relief and protection for people in third countries who are victims of natural or man-made disasters. The framework within which the EU's humanitarian aid operations are implemented is established by the European Parliament and the Council in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure.

In addition to humanitarian aid, DG ECHO also provides civil protection assistance within Europe in preparation for or in the immediate aftermath of a disaster when it overwhelms the country's ability to contain it.

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

Most of the countries in which DG ECHO operates are affected by conflicts or have recently experienced conflicts.

The EU's humanitarian aid operations are based on international humanitarian principles and its policy framework is outlined in the [European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid](#). DG ECHO does not implement assistance programmes itself, but funds programmes delivered in partnership with other actors, including NGOs, UN agencies, and other international organisations. Areas of intervention include: food, shelter, healthcare, water and sanitation, and education in emergencies.

DG ECHO's budget amounts at roughly €1 billion per year (€7.1 billion for the period 2014-2020). In 2018, 42% of funding went to NGOs for implementation, while 48% was allocated to UN agencies.

Advocacy opportunities:

1) The humanitarian-development-peace nexus:

The EU and other international actors are increasingly taking into consideration the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts. They are starting to approach specific contexts through the lens of this humanitarian-development-peace nexus (or 'triple nexus'), which notably involves looking at how EU humanitarian aid policies may be more conflict-sensitive and how they may in some cases contribute to building sustainable peace.

2) Sexual and gender-based violence:

DG ECHO is running a pilot project on sexual and gender-based violence in humanitarian settings. The overall goal of the project is to produce recommendations and contribute to increasing the capacity of humanitarian actors to respond to sexual and gender-based violence in conflict and natural disaster settings.

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):

Securitisation concerns

Recent efforts by the EU institutions to step up their whole-of-government approach in external policy (e.g. the EU Integrated Approach to conflicts and crises, and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus) have raised concerns among some EU officials and CSOs who fear that the humanitarian principles of independence, neutrality and impartiality may be undermined and that EU humanitarian aid may risk becoming subordinated to a security agenda.

Key advocacy targets (structures and individuals):	Status and action points
Commissioner and his cabinet	Christos Stylianides is the current Commissioner.
Directorate B Disaster Preparedness and Prevention	<p>It deals with policy and general matters regarding disaster preparedness and prevention, including civil protection, and disaster risk prevention and management.</p> <p>It is useful to provide examples on how disasters impact conflict dynamics and vice versa.</p>
Directorate C Neighbourhood and Middle East	<p>It deals with general issues regarding humanitarian aid in the Western Balkans, the Eastern Neighbourhood, the Middle East, North Africa, and the Arabian Peninsula. It also deals with humanitarian aid thematic policies (Unit 1)</p> <p>It is useful to provide examples on the linkage between humanitarian needs and conflict dynamics in respective countries and regions, as well as in specific policy areas.</p>
Directorate D Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America and Pacific	<p>It deals with general issues regarding humanitarian aid in West and Central Africa, Easter and Southern Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific area. It also deals with the strategic partnerships with humanitarian organisations.</p> <p>It is useful to provide examples on the linkage between humanitarian needs and conflict dynamics in respective countries and regions.</p>
Directorate E General Affairs	<p>It deals with the general management and administration of the DG. Unit E2, specifically, deals with programming, control and reporting.</p> <p>Civil society organisations can advocate for conflict-related indicators to be integrated in internal evaluations and strategies for programming. It is also useful to provide examples of how to improve the conflict sensitivity of actions through better inter-institutional coordination.</p>

European Parliament

Description:

The European Parliament (EP) is the only directly elected body of the EU. The 751 Members of the European Parliament (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 EP president is currently David Maria Sassoli (S&D/Italy).

The Members of the European Parliament sit in political groups which are not organised by nationality, but by political affiliation. There are currently [7 political groups](#) in the European Parliament (listed according to group size):

- [Group of the European People's Party](#) (EPP)
- [Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament](#) (S&D)
- [Renew Europe Group](#) (RE)
- [Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance](#) (Greens/EFA)
- [Identity and Democracy Group](#) (ID)
- [European Conservatives and Reformists Group](#) (ECR)
- [Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left](#) (GUE/NGL)

Some MEPs ([54](#)) are not aligned with a group.

EP work is done through the committees. At the moment there are 20 standing committees and two sub-committees. A committee consists of between 25 and 73 MEPs, and has a chair and a secretariat. The political make-up of the committees reflects that of the plenary assembly.

Please click [here](#) for a list of committees.

MEPs coordinate their positions within the political groups with one or two group members acting as coordinators for a specific committee.

Please click [here](#) to access the European Parliament's website.

Powers as set out in the Treaties:

The EP has legislative, budgetary and supervisory powers.

The EP is the co-legislator, together with the Council. This means it can accept, amend or reject the content of European legislation and adopt European laws (directives, regulations etc.). Unlike national parliaments, the EP cannot initiate legislation, a prerogative which is limited to the European Commission. The EP can, however, ask the Commission to present a legislative proposal on a certain issue.

The powers of the EP to shape EU policy depend on the policy area. In most areas under Community competence (e.g. development policy, issues related to the customs union, competition policy, internal market, agriculture and fisheries policy etc.), decisions are made applying the ordinary decision-making procedure (previously referred to as co-decision procedure), granting equal rights to the Council and

the EP in the decision-making process. Please click [here](#) for more information on the ordinary decision-making procedure.

In areas related to Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) however, no legislative decisions are adopted and the Council is the main decision-maker, meaning that the European Parliament either only has to be informed or has to consent to the decision.

The EP has budgetary authority, as it co-decides on all expenditure. It can use its budgetary powers to influence decisions that do not normally fall within the remit of the EP's power (for instance, the discussion about the structure of the EEAS in the course of 2010).

The EP exercises its supervisory powers mainly through the submission of oral or written questions to Commissioners and High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP) and its public hearings with them. The EP formally elects the President of the Commission who is proposed to the EP by the European Council.

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

The co-decision procedure applies to the following policy areas with relevance to conflict:

- development policy;
- political framework for common commercial policy (meaning the policy framework that defines how common commercial policy should be implemented, not individual trade or investment agreements).

In the context of the EU's long-term budget (the Multiannual Financial Framework), the EP has co-legislative powers on the legislative texts which provide the legal basis for the EU's external funding instruments (EFIs). This includes the instruments which provide funding for peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

The EP has to consent to or be consulted in matters related to the conclusion of international agreements e.g. accession, trade or investment agreements.

Regarding CFSP, the EP only has to be consulted. The EP may put questions and make recommendations to the HR/VP and the Council. Twice a year, the HR/VP presents the Parliament with a consultative document on the main aspects and basic choices of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and their financial implications. The HR/VP regularly attends plenary debates on CFSP.

Through the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) and the Committee on Development (DEVE), the EP has regular contact with the HR/VP and senior EEAS staff as well as Commissioners. They can raise matters related to conflict in written or oral questions or during hearings with EEAS and Commission officials.

Advocacy opportunities:

- 1) Co-legislation process (in policy areas where this procedure is applied, in particular on the establishment of the EFIs);
- 2) Drafting of EP reports and resolutions (in the area of CFSP, these do not have legislative character);
- 3) Committee hearings (providing evidence on specific topics);
- 4) Written/oral questions of MEPs to HR/VP or Commissioners.

For more detailed information, please see section on key advocacy targets and action points below.

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):

1) Ideological positions

This depends on group affiliation and/or EP committees, with some MEPs either not being supportive of the EU playing a role in foreign policy and others not being supportive and or interested in peacebuilding.

2) Fragmentation

Following the 2019 European elections, the EP composition is more fragmented than during the previous EP term. It isn't possible for the two biggest political groups (EPP and S&D) to build another informal grand coalition. It remains to be seen whether this situation will make it easier or more difficult for conflict prevention and peacebuilding to be integrated into the EP's position.

3) Engagement

There is a discrepancy between MEPs that are very active and involved in various initiatives and policy areas, whereas others keep their activity to a minimum. MEPs interested in peacebuilding are more likely to belong to the first category which means that they might be thinly spread over a number of areas and have a busy schedule, making co-operation sometimes difficult.

4) Influence

While MEPs can be very useful in bringing and keeping items on the political agenda, their actual influence on Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is limited.

Key advocacy targets (structures and individuals):	Status and action points
Group of European People's Party (EPP)	Biggest political group in the EP, bringing together centre-right parties from EU Member States. The German CDU/CSU is the largest national delegation.
Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D)	Group of centre-left parties from EU Member States. The Spanish S&D is the largest national delegation.
Renew Europe Group (RE)	Previously called ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats), Renew Europe is the political group that has won most votes in the 2019 elections. Certain MEPs take a particular interest in foreign affairs in general and not necessarily peacebuilding specifically. French and UK parties form the biggest national delegations.
Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA)	Group with so far the biggest interest in issues related to peacebuilding and conflict prevention; open to co-operation with civil society. The German Green Party is the biggest national delegation.
Identity and Democracy Group (ID)	Group bringing together representatives from extreme right-wing parties with a strong euro-scepticism agenda. Certain civil society organisations do not interact with them due to racist ideology of some of their members. The Italian <i>Lega</i> and French <i>Rassemblement National</i> are the biggest national delegations.
European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR)	Group bringing together Eurosceptic/conservative parties from EU Member States. As peacebuilding effectiveness often depends on the EU finding a common approach and therefore more integration, they may not be primary targets. The Polish Law & Justice Party is the largest national delegation.
Group of the United Europe Left - Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL)	Open to co-operation with civil society. They have been strong supporters of a purist approach to development assistance. Their opposition to the EU developing military capabilities often makes it impossible for them to take a refined position regarding CFSP and CSDP in particular, which might have negative consequences for the

	<p>peacebuilding agenda. The German, French, Greek and Spanish delegations are the largest ones.</p>
Group coordinators	<p>Each political group nominates one or two MEPs as coordinators for a specific committee. They are responsible for finding a common position before committee or plenary voting and are therefore key advocacy targets</p>
Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET)	<p>EP Committee responsible for foreign affairs, they have a regular exchange with representatives from the EEAS and Commission bodies with responsibility to external affairs. The current AFET chair is David McAllister (EPP/Germany).</p> <p>As EP decision-making powers in relation to foreign affairs is limited, AFET is mainly monitoring and commenting on EU foreign policy (CFSP, CSDP, EU relations with third countries, EU relations with international bodies) and prepares EP positions on foreign policy issues in the format of reports and resolutions that are non-binding.</p> <p>The Committee also coordinates the work of joint parliamentary committees and parliamentary co-operation committees as well as that of the interparliamentary delegations, ad hoc delegations and election observation missions that fall within its remit.</p> <p>To influence the committee, briefings pertinent to AFET's agenda, suggestions for amendments on EP reports and proposals should be sent firstly to the committee chair, group coordinators and individual MEPs with responsibility regarding the file.</p> <p>Click here to access AFET's website.</p>
Sub-committee on Human Rights (DROI)	<p>Sub-committee of AFET concerned with human rights, the protection of minorities and the promotion of democratic values in third countries. The current DROI chair is Marie Arena (S&D/Belgium).</p> <p>To influence the committee, briefings pertinent to DROI's agenda, suggestions for amendments on EP reports and proposals should be sent firstly to the committee chair, group coordinators and individual MEPs with responsibility regarding the file.</p> <p>Click here to access DROI's website.</p>
Sub-committee on Security and Defence (SEDE)	<p>Sub-committee of AFET concerned with Common Foreign Security Policy and Common Security and Defence Policy. The current SEDE chair is Nathalie</p>

	<p>Loiseau (RE/France).</p> <p>So far this committee has predominantly focused on military CSDP and defence issues leaving little room to engage with it on issues related to conflict and wider security concerns not related to military equipment and the defence industry.</p> <p>Click here to access SEDE's website.</p>
<p>Committee on Development (DEVE)</p>	<p>Committee with responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of EU development policy, matters related to ACP-EU relations and election observation missions, as well as interparliamentary delegations and ad hoc delegations falling within its remit. The current DEVE chair is Tomas Tobé (EPP/SE).</p> <p>As the EP is co-legislator in development policy, DEVE prepares the EP's position before plenary votes on legislative proposals. Many DEVE members do not recognise the political nature of development and understand it as primarily technical support. Therefore, they are less open to arguments such as the integration of peacebuilding and development.</p> <p>To influence the Committee, briefings pertinent to DEVE's agenda, suggestions for amendments on EP reports and proposals should be sent firstly to the committee chair, group coordinators and individual MEPs with responsibility regarding the file.</p> <p>Click here to access DEVE's website</p>
<p>Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM)</p>	<p>FEMM is the committee responsible for promoting and monitoring women's rights and gender equality inside and outside the EU. Areas of work reach from equality between men and women with regard to labour market opportunities and follow-up and implementation of international agreements and conventions involving the rights of women. The current FEMM chair is Evelyn Regner (S&D/Austria).</p> <p>Depending on the policy area (i.e. inside or outside the EU) FEMM prepares the EP's position before plenary votes on legislative proposals.</p> <p>To influence the Committee, briefings pertinent to FEMM's agenda, suggestions for amendments on EP reports and proposals should be sent firstly to the committee chair, group coordinators and individual MEPs with responsibility regarding the file.</p> <p>Click here to access FEMM's website.</p>

<p>International Trade (INTA)</p>	<p>INTA is the committee following the EU's common commercial policy including financial, economic and trade relations with third countries and regional organisations and international organisations. The current INTA chair is Bernd Lange (S&D, Germany).</p> <p>INTA prepares the EP's position on consenting to investment or trade agreements.</p> <p>To influence the Committee, briefings pertinent to INTA's agenda, suggestions for amendments on EP reports and proposals should be sent firstly to the committee chair, group coordinators and individual MEPs with responsibility regarding the file.</p> <p>Click here to access INTA's website.</p>
<p>Committee secretariats</p>	<p>Each committee is supported by a secretariat which prepares agendas, minutes and supports the work of the Committee chairperson.</p> <p>The secretariat will also support the work of a rapporteur who is drafting a report on a specific issue.</p> <p>To obtain information about a Committee's work plan, issues to be discussed in the next meetings, etc. it is good to be in touch with the committee secretariats.</p>
<p>The EP secretariat's Directorate for Democracy Support</p>	<p>The Directorate for Democracy Support is composed of the following units: Democracy and Elections Actions, the Pre-Accession Actions Unit, the Human Rights Action Unit and the EP Mediation Support Unit.</p> <p>The EP Democracy and Elections actions Unit complements the work of EEAS Democracy and electoral observation unit (GLOBAL.3) in the identification, planning and follow up of EU Election Observation Missions (EU EOMs), which integrate MEPs.</p> <p>The EP Mediation Support Unit provides support and expertise to MEPs involved in parliamentary mediation and dialogue activities. These activities can include building inter-party dialogue and consensus in a partner country's parliament, the prevention of election-related violence, supporting conflict prevention and peace processes as well as the Parliament's Young Political Leaders Programme. Most of this work tends to focus on the EU's neighborhood.</p>
<p>Rapporteurs</p>	<p>For each legislative piece that is discussed in the EP, the lead committee dealing with the policy area concerned assigns a rapporteur who is responsible for collecting</p>

	<p>amendments from all parliamentary groups and for preparing the vote in the plenary.</p> <p>The remaining groups may appoint a shadow rapporteur who is following the legislative process on behalf of the group.</p> <p>In the past there have been standing rapporteurs for all the external action instruments (such as the IcSP) who were following the work of the Commission, prepared reports and represented the EP in the tripartite negotiations on the instrument. In the current legislative period, these positions have ceased to exist.</p> <p>To influence the legislative process, it is important to provide detailed recommendations on the legislative text and submit it to the rapporteur as well as to the shadow rapporteurs.</p>
Delegations	<p>The EP has various delegations with parliaments in European and non-European countries, as well as to parliamentary assemblies. They aim at maintaining and developing the EP's international contacts and are composed of MEPs with a specific interest in the respective country or region.</p> <p>For a list of EP delegations, please click here.</p>

Member States

Description:

Member States are represented in EU policy through the European Council and the Council of the European Union, which is the most powerful decision-making body in the EU. However, Member States also influence EU policy and its implementation by seconding staff to the EEAS, Commission or CSDP missions as well as making decisions in other European bodies such as the European Investment Bank (see below).

In March 2017, one Member State, the United Kingdom (UK), decided to leave the European Union and is currently negotiating the details of its withdrawal. The UK is currently still considered a full EU Member State and continues to take part in the formulation of EU policies. However its decision already affects the institutions and the relations of power between Member States. The so-called "Brexit" will have an impact on, *inter alia*, the EU budget (including for development and humanitarian aid), the staffing of the EU institutions, as well as the content of EU policies, including those related to peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

Powers as set out in the Treaties,:

Decisions under the Common Foreign Security Policy (CFSP). are made by the European Council and the Council alone, with limited (or no) influence from the European Parliament or the European Commission. Decisions taken under CFSP also do not fall under the jurisdiction of the European Court Of Justice.

As the transfer of power from national to European level has not been matched with increasing oversight at the level of the European Parliament, several national parliaments have established EU affairs committees and/or have put in place some rules that make the consultation and consent of national parliaments necessary. The Lisbon Treaty strengthened oversight by national parliaments by providing them with the right to preview legislative acts, access information etc. (Article 12 TEU and Protocol no 1 and 2).

In policy areas that are under Community competence (development policy, issues related to the customs union, competition policy, internal market, agriculture and fisheries policy etc.), Member States represented by the Council of the EU are co-legislators with the European Parliament.

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

As main decision makers in CFSP and co-decision makers in other policy areas, Member States define the key aspects of the EU's response to conflict.

Advocacy opportunities:

- 1) Preparation of Council Decisions and Council Conclusions;
- 2) Contribution to EU foreign policy in the Council working groups/parties/committees (development of e.g. policy guidance, regional strategies etc.);
- 3) Co-decision making process (e.g. Multi-annual financial framework).

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):

1) Ideological positions

Depending on the Member State and the respective government, there might be ideological obstacles to engagement at EU level and/or peacebuilding. Much of this has to do with the different approaches to security and the fact that while some Member States base their policies on a human security approach, others perceive security to be based on narrowly defined state security.

2) Transparency

Although the Lisbon Treaty has made it easier for national parliaments to obtain information as to what is currently been discussed, it is difficult for civil society organisations that are not based in Brussels to be aware of the negotiations and processes that are currently underway.

3) Lack of consistency

Member States might not be interested in increasing coherence between their own foreign policy and that of the EU because they do not want to be involved in a time-consuming process of co-ordination or they might benefit from a weak EU presence in a given context. Also, other Member States' policies might contradict what the EU is doing in external affairs. In addition domestic pressures might lead Member States to support damaging policies within the EU.

4) Staffing

Some Member States do not have sufficient numbers of diplomats and officials dedicated to EU affairs. In some cases, the calibre of representatives in Brussels is very low to the point that it has a seriously detrimental effect on EU policy-making (whereas, conversely, in other cases it is very high, with good people attracted to working on EU policies).

Key advocacy targets (structures and individuals):	Status and action points
National parliamentary committees on EU matters	<p>Set up to monitor national governments' activity at EU level. Success and quality of oversight mechanism will depend on the committee's ability to get involved in the legislative process early on, i.e. before the Council working groups/parties/committees have prepared a decision.</p> <p>To support national parliaments to exercise their accountability role, civil society should provide input on issues of relevance to peacebuilding discussed at EU level and highlight opportunities for national parliaments to be involved.</p>
Units/Directorates in Foreign Ministries dealing with EU issues	<p>They are liaising with the Member State's representatives in the Permanent Representations to the EU to ensure that the policies developed in Brussels are in agreement with the capitals.</p> <p>To provide input into EU decision-making, civil society should raise issues of relevance to peacebuilding discussed at EU level with the respective directorates and discuss the positions taken in Brussels.</p>

<p>Foreign Ministry</p>	<p>Member States' foreign ministries are in charge of instructing the national representatives taking part in Council working groups/parties/committees, PSC Ambassadors, and in preparing Foreign Affairs Council meetings. At the same time, they are responsible for ensuring that national foreign policy is in line with what has been agreed at EU level.</p> <p>To provide input into EU decision-making, civil society should raise issues of relevance to peacebuilding discussed at EU level with the respective directorates and discuss the positions taken in Brussels. Often, a follow up at the Permanent Representation in Brussels is useful to ensure that the recommendations reach the relevant people.</p>
<p>Chancellery, President's office etc.</p>	<p>Depending on the Member State, there may be other parts of government that contribute to EU foreign policy making, such as the Chancellery or the President's office that have to be targeted to influence a Member State's contribution at the EU level.</p>
<p>Development Ministry</p>	<p>Member States' development ministries are charged with following EU policy on development and liaising with the permanent representations of EU Member States on the issue, which has relevance for the working group charged with development co-operation as well as for geographic working groups and the FAC.</p> <p>To provide input into EU decision-making, civil society should raise issues of relevance to peacebuilding discussed at EU level with the respective directorates and discuss the positions taken in Brussels. Often, a follow up at the Permanent Representation in Brussels is useful to ensure that the recommendations reach the relevant people.</p>

European Investment Bank (EIB)

Description:

The 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 55.63bn in 2018). The EIB employs over 2,900 staff members. It is owned by EU Member States and raises money on capital markets by issuing bonds. The EIB's Board of Governors is made up of Finance Ministers of Member States who meet once a year. The Board of Directors, which oversees the EIB's projects and makes policy decisions, consists of representatives of Member States and the European Commission (DG ECFIN).

The EIB's loans are provided for projects that support EU policy objectives: more than 90% of EIB activity is focused on Europe and the remainder supports the EU's external and development policies. The EIB is currently lending to the enlargement countries, countries of the southern and eastern neighbourhood, Russia, African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, South Africa, Asia, Latin America and Central Asia.

Loans are guaranteed either in the form of projects or through intermediary lending to banks and financial institutions. For certain projects the EIB accepts more credit risk than a financial organisation operating commercially if this increases its added-value in supporting EU policies.

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

Powers as set out in the Treaties:

The EIB supports projects and measures that are submitted to them for consideration either by a project promoter (i.e. a company) or a Member State (in the case of projects planned inside the EU).

All project applications are submitted to the Commission which delivers its opinions within two months. The European Commission (DG ECFIN) coordinates the delivery of a Commission opinion and, thereafter, the EIB assesses the project's admissibility according to their financial, environmental and social criteria. Once the project has passed the screening process, it is forwarded to the Board of Directors who makes the final decision.

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

The EIB may fund measures necessary for the implementation of EU policy objectives. A European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruling from 2008 confirmed that outside the EU, the EIB should be guided by the EU's development objectives. In its funding outside the EU, the EIB acts within the framework of the respective EU policy, e.g. the European Neighbourhood Policy for countries in the EU's neighbourhood, or the Stabilisation and Association Process for candidate countries. This means that it is guided by the respective regional and country strategy papers that are in place for the country concerned.

The amount of the EIB's lending in third countries is comparable to what the EU spends on development assistance per annum. This being the case, it needs to be ensured that EIB funding contributes to peace and does not fuel conflict. This is especially important where the EIB is supporting large-scale infrastructure projects, such as the construction of roads, dams or electricity plants, which

potentially have a big social and environmental footprint.

In recent years, the EIB tried to increase its sensitivity to conflict, gender and climate change. Its approach to conflict sensitivity 'seeks to contribute to systematically: (i) flagging and mitigating conflict risks for EIB investments; (ii) avoiding doing harm or aggravating conflict, and (iii) whenever possible, contributing indirectly to conflict prevention, recovery and peacebuilding efforts through support for economic development'²³.

However, there is no mention of conflict sensitivity in the EIB group annual reports on Sustainability (published since 2014), its annual activity reports or the EIB's latest [operational plan \(2017-2019\)](#).

The EIB Group also adopted a [Strategy on Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment](#) in December 2016.

Advocacy opportunities:

- 1) Targeted information on conflict sensitivity to EIB staff in Luxembourg headquarters and posted in EU delegations
- 2) Development or revision of sectorial policies
- 3) Annual meeting between civil society and EIB Board of Directors
- 4) Consideration of EIB's annual report by the Council of the EU and the European Parliament

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions):

1) Ideological position and expertise

Traditionally, most EIB staff assessing and monitoring projects are economists who judge the financial viability of a project but have no expertise or tools to go beyond this to assess the social and environmental impact or the conflict risks related to a project.

The Board of Directors, which brings together Member State representatives from Finance Ministries, is primarily concerned with economic characteristics of a project and has little or no consideration for other issues related to a loan.

2) Member States

As many beneficiaries of EIB loans are European companies, Member States may be disinclined to block certain projects, either because a national company is involved in executing the project or because they fear that by blocking a project that would benefit business in another Member State, they risk retaliation the next time a project is proposed by a promoter from their country.

²³ See the Commission Staff working document accompanying the document Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on 2015 EIB External Activity with EU Budgetary Guarantee available on <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/el/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52016SC0296>

European Court of Auditors (ECA)

Description:

The 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 28 members, one from each Member State. The members are appointed by the Council of the EU after consultation with the European Parliament for a renewable term of six years. The ECA is organised into five chambers, to which Members and audit staff are assigned. There are five chambers, each of them focusing on an EU policy-based theme (environmental, social, economic, external affairs and internal governance). An Audit Quality Control Committee oversees the audit quality management. The ECA has 853²⁴ staff members in audit, translation and administration.

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

Powers as set out in the Treaties:

The ECA audits the budget in terms of both revenue and spending. The results of the ECA's work are used by the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the Member States to oversee the management of the EU budget. It thus provides an important basis for the annual discharge, a procedure in which the Parliament decides, on the basis of a recommendation from the Council, whether the Commission has satisfactorily implemented the previous year's budget.

The ECA carries out the following audits:

- financial audits: on the reliability of accounts and the legality and regularity of transactions. Financial audits are generally required by legislation on an annual basis.
- compliance audits: assessment of whether transactions (income or spending) or systems of specific budgetary areas comply with the rules and regulations governing them.
- performance audits: on the soundness of financial management (including value for money) in specific management or budgetary topics, often covering a number of financial years.

Financial audits are generally required by legislation on an annual basis, performance and compliance audit topics are selected at the ECA's discretion on the basis of criteria such as risk of irregularity or poor performance, potential for improvement and public interest.

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

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](#), the ECA lists the different policy areas and issues it will examine. For 2019, the following EU activities will be covered:

²⁴ ECA staff statistics are available here:

https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/AAR18/AAR18_EN.pdf (last retrieved in May 2019).

- Relocation of migrants
- EU defence policy
- Border control

In the past, the ECA has produced very succinct and detailed accounts of the implementation of EU policies in third countries that provided useful evidence for advocacy on EU, conflict and peace. Examples include:

- [EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa: Flexible but lacking focus](#) (2018)
- [The African Peace and Security Architecture: need to refocus EU support](#) (2018)
- [Strengthening the capacity of the internal security forces in Niger and Mali: only limited and slow progress](#) (2018)

Advocacy opportunities:

- 1) Use ECA reports to highlight shortcomings in the EU's policies or activities in conflict-affected countries
- 2) Raise policy areas or activities that should be considered in a performance audit due to irregularities or inefficiencies with the ECA or actors that can propose issues to be considered by the ECA (Member States and MEP)

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):

Role of the ECA.

While the ECA supports the discussion and usage of its reports, it is very sensitive to how it is being perceived by other EU institutions. Officials from the ECA are therefore hesitant to engage in policy or advocacy discussions and do not want to be seen to be influenced by outside actors, such as civil society.

EU Agencies

European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS)

Description:

The EUISS is an agency of the EU which was set up by the [Council Joint Action of 20 July 2001](#) (since then revised by a [Council Decision of 10 February 2014](#)) and was inaugurated in January 2002. It operates under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The EUISS has approximately 35-40 staff members.

The Institute is funded by EU Member States, according to a GNP-based cost-sharing formula and is based in Paris.

The EUISS has an annual budget of ca € 5 million from the EU Member States and is governed by two administrative bodies:

- The Political and Security Committee (PSC) – exercises political supervision
- The Board (composed of one representative appointed by each Member State, one appointed by the Commission and chaired by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP) – lays down budgetary and administrative rules and approves the work programme

Powers as set out in the Treaties, including changes after Lisbon:

The mission of the EUISS is to 'contribute, in close cooperation with Member States, to the development of EU strategic thinking in the field of the Union's common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and common security and defence policy (CSDP), including conflict prevention and peace-building, as well as in the field of other external action of the Union, with a view to strengthening the EU's analysis, foresight and networking capacity in external action.'²⁵

The EUISS has close links with the Council of the EU (PSC exercises political supervision) but is supposed to work independently.

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

The EUISS researches security issues of relevance for the EU and provides a forum for debate around these issues. As an EU agency, it also offers analyses and forecasting to the HR/VP.

The EUISS issues a number of different publications, among them the [Chailot Papers](#) which deal with all subjects of current relevance to the Union's security, [Occasional Papers](#), [Reports](#) of EUISS research projects and events as well as [Policy Briefs](#), [Alerts](#) and [books](#).

Through the publications and events, the EUISS is shaping the debate around EU CFSP and thereby influences the EU's response to conflict. For example, in 2015-2016, the EUISS organised several consultation meetings with the EEAS for the preparation of the EU Global Strategy.

²⁵ [Council Decision 2014/75/CFSP on the European Institute for Security Studies](#), 10 February 2014

Advocacy opportunities:

The EUISS is not a policy-maker itself, but it influences the policy debate around issues of conflict and security. Therefore, increasing the peacebuilding approach in their research and analysis would impact on the policy discussions at EU level.

European Defence Agency (EDA)

Description:

The EDA was established in 2004 to support the EU MS (all except Denmark) and the Council in improving their defence capabilities within the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). It has approximately 150 staff and a general budget of € 33 million.

The High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP) is the head of the EDA and operates as a link between the agency and the MS. The Council, meeting at the level of defence ministers, should issue guidelines that inform the EDA's work. Since 1 February 2015, Jorge Domecq is the Chief Executive of the EDA.

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

Powers as set out in the Treaties:

The Agency shall identify operational requirements, shall promote measures to satisfy those requirements, shall contribute to identifying and, where appropriate, implementing any measure needed to strengthen the industrial and technological base of the defence sector, shall participate in defining a European capabilities and armaments policy, and shall assist the Council in evaluating the improvement of military capabilities.

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

The EDA is responsible for the military aspects of EU defence policy and is the lead agency tasked with co-ordinating the pooling and sharing initiative for military capabilities inside the EU.

In 2017, 25 Member States 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.

Advocacy opportunities:

While there are no advocacy opportunities at the EDA per se, the fact that there is an agency dedicated to increasing the EU's military capacity with a general budget of € 33 million in 2018 could be used to raise the issue of strengthening the EU's civilian capacity and highlight that the EU's comparative advantage lies in civilian and not military response to conflict.

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):

1) Ideological positions:

The EDA has had strong military focus. Although it is now headed by Jorge Domecq, a Spanish career diplomat who worked on multilateral affairs, including with NATO and the OSCE, the EDA's staff is mostly of military background and, to date, has not shown much interest in or awareness of

issues related to peacebuilding.

2) Proximity to defence companies

The EDA often represents the interests of European defence companies who are lobbying to attain more funding, for instance from EU funding for research and innovation, especially as EU Member States cut their defence budgets.

Other:

European Ombudsman

Description:

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

Emily O'Reilly is the current European Ombudsman. She has 83 staff members.

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

Powers as set out in the Treaties, including changes after Lisbon:

The European Ombudsman is an independent and impartial body that holds the EU administration to account by investigating complaints about maladministration in EU institutions, bodies, offices, and agencies. The Ombudsman may find maladministration if an institution fails to respect fundamental rights, legal rules or principles, or the principles of good administration. This covers administrative irregularities, unfairness, discrimination, abuse of power, failure to reply, refusal of information, and unnecessary delay, for example.

Of the 490 inquiries opened in 2018, 285 were directed at the European Commission, 23 at the EEAS, 30 at the European Parliament and the rest at EU agencies or other.

The European Ombudsman usually provides an opinion about a complaint and may provide recommendations to the EU institution or body concerned to correct the wrongdoing. Both of these are not binding, but the compliance rate is generally quite high. In 2017, 81% of the Ombudsman's proposals were complied with.

Responsibilities regarding the EU's response to conflict:

The European Ombudsman does not have any specific responsibility regarding the EU's response to conflict but is a tool to address maladministration in EU institutions, including the EEAS (EU Special Representatives, EU delegations, CSDP Missions), European Commission and the Council of the EU.

According to the European Ombudsman, maladministration means poor or failed administration. This occurs if an institution fails to act in accordance with the law, fails to respect the principles of good administration, or violates human rights.

Some examples are:

- administrative irregularities
- unfairness
- discrimination
- abuse of power
- failure to reply

- refusal of information
- unnecessary delay

Advocacy opportunities:

The European Ombudsman itself is not an advocacy target but submitting a complaint to the European Ombudsman may provide the opportunity to highlight certain grievances regarding activities and behaviour of EU officials and whole institutions.

The Ombudsman can also launch an own initiative inquiry, such as the investigation into the allegation of serious irregularities involving EULEX Kosovo.

Difficulties (e.g. lack of resources, ideological positions, etc.):

1) Proposals are not binding

Both the opinions and the proposals for reform issued by the European Ombudsman are not binding, meaning that there is no legal obligation for the respective institution or actor to comply with them.

2) Lack of legal expertise

To make full use of the European Ombudsman's inquiry function, it is necessary to fill in the initial complaint as complete and precise as possible, since it will form the basis and provide the parameters for the investigation. For civil society without prior experience with the European Ombudsman and lack of legal expertise, it may be more difficult to use to full potential of the European Ombudsman to affect lasting change in EU institutions.

European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC)

The EPSC (previously known as BEPA, the Bureau of European Policy Advisers) is the European Commission's (EC) own think tank and one of the EC's service departments. It provides the President of the EC, his College of Commissioners and the EC Directorates General with strategic thinking and policy advice at the early stage of the policy cycle. The President of the Commission also acts as EPSC President.

The EPSC is organised in six teams: an Economics Team, a Social Affairs Team, a Sustainable Development Team, a Foreign Policy Team, an Institutional Team and an Outreach and Communication Team. The Outreach and Communication Team already existed in the BEPA and aims to establish links between policy-makers and society on a European as well as a global level.

As it is very close to policy-makers, the EPSC is an influential think tank. So far, peacebuilding and conflict prevention have not been very present in the EPSC agenda. In May 2017 a former Romanian Defence Minister was appointed as Deputy Head of the EPSC to work on issues related to the European Commission's Security and Defence priorities.

To access the EPSC's website, please click [here](#). The EPSC organisation chart can be found [here](#).

Top ten EU policy documents

There is a plethora of EU policy documents that relate to EU activities in conflict-affected countries. Below you can find ten reference documents that provide a basic idea of the EU's policies and approach.

- [Council Conclusions on Women, Peace and Security](#) (2018)
- [Council conclusions on the EU's integrated approach to external conflicts and crises](#) (2018)
- [The New European Consensus on Development: our World, our Dignity, our Future](#) (2017)
- [A Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy for the EU \(EU Global Strategy\)](#) (2016)
- [Joint communication on the EU's Comprehensive Approach to External Conflicts and Crises](#) (2013)
- [European Council Conclusions on CSDP](#) (2013)
- [Council conclusions: 'Increasing the Impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change'](#) (2012)
- [Council conclusions on conflict prevention](#) (2011)
- [Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities](#) (2009)
- [EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflict \(Gothenburg Programme\)](#) (2001)