



EUNPACK

A CONFLICT SENSITIVE UNPACKING OF
THE EU COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH
TO CONFLICT AND CRISES MECHANISM

Newsletter #5

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Welcome to the redesigned newsletter of the Horizon 2020 EUNPACK project - a conflict-sensitive unpacking of the EU comprehensive approach to conflict and crises.

The Effect of Migration on the EU's Crisis Response: Europe First?

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The migration and refugee crisis that manifested itself three years ago represents a turning point in the history of the EU. The Union failed to respond adequately and the concurrence with several terrorist attacks on European soil led to a political debate on migrants and refugees that became heated and polarized the political landscape. This is evident in a number of important EU member states such as Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Hungary. For European leaders to find a joint policy on migration has therefore been an extremely difficult task, but eventually this led to an increased focus on fighting terror and stopping migration. This involved a bolstering of Europe's frontiers

through measures such as the controversial EU-Turkey deal. Co-operation with Libyan militias to prevent people from crossing the Mediterranean, and further south in the Sahel in countries such as Mali and Niger ‘improved border management’ became the main focus of EU’s Civilian Capacity-building programmes. What this suggests is that the EU’s crisis response in countries where migrants and refugees come from or are important transit countries has become increasingly security-driven.

A major problem in this regard is that the current focus on fighting terror and stopping migration only scratches the surface of a much larger challenge. Indeed, the EU’s hardened policy on migration led to a decrease in the number of arrivals. However, in 2018, 68,5 million people were displaced, nearly 3 million more than the year before. Closing the borders has forced people to take refuge in countries with varying degrees of fragility and weak state capacity, leading to increased pressure on systems that are already struggling to stay afloat. This has been the case both in the Middle East and the Sahel region. Furthermore, the increased security orientation of EU crisis response has come been at the expense of development, even though locals in these areas are experiencing deteriorating living conditions. As result, there is an imbalance between the priorities of external actors and the needs of local stakeholders. This is highly problematic. Without prioritising the root causes of local grievances in countries that are facing the collapse of statehood, there is likely to be more poverty, conflict, and radicalisation, and eventually, more violence and refugees.

In other words, the EU’s current approach might be more damaging than effective. Building a ‘Fortress Europe’ is unarguably a short-term solution rather than a long-term one, and crisis response in the EU’s wider neighbourhood is at the core of finding a new and sustainable approach. It should be recognised that the current refugee and migration crisis is not just a local or European problem – it is global. The EU’s crisis response in the Middle East and Sahel region should involve investing in peace, reconciliation and development, not exclusively European security and political stability. This implies that the EU’s crisis response and migration policy at large must be shifted towards a more knowledge-based and conflict-sensitive approach. A start could be to look outwards, not inwards, to tackle the global challenges that force people to flee in the first place.

From our field research: Kosovo

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During the summer and autumn of 2017, researchers in work package 5 of the EUNPACK project carried out surveys among over 200 respondents in Kosovo (South and North of the Ibar river), and in-depth interviews with international representatives (including EU staff) and local staff employed by the EU in Kosovo, Serbia and Brussels, as well as with representatives from civil society in Kosovo. The researchers participating in this work were Jozef Batora (wp5-leader) and Matej Navratil, both from Comenius University (Slovakia); Sonja Stojanovic and her team from Belgrade Center for Security Policies (Serbia); Florian Qehaja, Shpend Kursani and their team from Kosovo Center for Security Studies (Kosovo); Mateja Peter from University of St. Andrews (Scotland) and NUPI; and Frida M. Kvamme and Kari M. Osland from NUPI (Norway). Based on this research, several articles, policy briefs and a report have been published or are being prepared.

One of the papers (Osland and Peter) focuses on the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), which is EU's largest Common Security and Defence Policy mission and the only mission where the EU is directly

implementing policies in a post-conflict territory. There, we examine the implementation of EULEX's mandate, asking how broader EU political objectives impact the mission's legal work. In the spirit of the practice turn, we explore how those immediately responsible for mandate execution (EU judges and prosecutors) and those directly affected by its outcomes (the local population) perceive EULEX. The perception of the mission gets construed through two gaps: (1) the intention–implementation gap (a gap between the stated policy/mandate and its implementation) and (2) the implementation–perception gap (a gap between what the mission is doing and how its work is perceived by locals). These gaps highlight the pitfalls of direct and ingrained political interference in mission's work. Direct interference, seen in EULEX corruption scandals, was underscored in local perceptions. Ingrained interference, seen as de-prioritisation of the rule of law among other EU objectives, was reported by both implementers and local representatives. Ingrained interference represents a more fundamental challenge for the concept of an independent judiciary, and an important lesson learned for the EU.

In preparation: Two comparative articles

Two articles comparing the findings in the different case studies are now being finalised within the framework of the EUNPACK project and are both in process of being published.

The first is entitled “Plugging the capability-expectations gap: Towards an effective, comprehensive and conflict sensitive EU crisis response?”. The aim of this article by Pernille Rieker (NUPI) and Steven Blockmans (CEPS), is twofold. First, by taking an EU-centric approach, the paper examines the structures, procedures and toolbox to assess how the Union pitches its conflict sensitivity and to what extent its capacities are in line with the established goals and objectives. Second, the paper gleans insights

New Deliverable: Crisis responders: comparing policy approaches of the EU, the UN, NATO and OSCE with experiences in the field

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The EU aims at being a prominent global crisis responder. But its member states act also through the UN, NATO, OSCE to achieve both short-term stabilisation by military and/or civilian means, as well as longer term conflict prevention and transformation. By comparing the policy approaches of these four multilateral organisations to conflicts and crises, this article shows how the broad principle of comprehensiveness has been

from empirical research carried out on the receiving end to gauge the extent to which the EU has managed to close the infamous 'capability-expectations gap' in crisis response.

The second article gives, as the title indicates, a systematic analysis of "The Potential and Limits of the EU's Crisis Response". The article is written by Pernille Rieker and Kristian Lundby Gjerde

(NUPI) and investigates the EU toolbox or repertoire as regards crisis response. Rather than focusing on the resources of the EU, or on how systemic features of world politics condition its responses, this study concentrates on the repertoire employed in recent crises in the EU's immediate and extended neighborhoods: in the EU enlargement area (Kosovo/Serbia conflict), the neighborhood area (east: Ukraine, south: Libya), and the extended neighborhood (Afghanistan, Iraq, Mali). While this paper draws on qualitative case studies within the EUNPACK project, it combines this insight with 'web scraping' and 'text mining' of EU documents and statements, to explore, systematically and from various angles, the EU's crisis-response repertoire.

developed to fit different institutional logics, thus leading to divergences in outreach. Distilling findings from empirical research conducted in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo, Libya, Mali and Ukraine, this article synthesises lessons about varying levels of the EU's conflict sensitivity and approach to effective multilateralism in theatre.

Keywords: conflict prevention; crisis response; peacebuilding; integrated approach; resilience

The EUNPACK dataset

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The EUNPACK Consortium has now prepared a complete dataset of six individual surveys that were conducted in July 2017. These surveys were carried out in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo, Libya, Mali, Serbia and Ukraine. These surveys do not claim national representability, but together they represent the first systematic dataset of public opinion to European Union (EU) crisis response policies in countries where such programming is implemented by the EU. The EUNPACK dataset can be used to conduct cross-sectional analysis of the perceptions of EU crisis response, and constitutes an important supplement to the policy briefs, working papers, articles and



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To enable the merger of individual datasets, some modifications were made in terms of re-coding variables and generalisation of categories. A tabulation report, including a description of the modifications that were made, will be posted on the EUNPACK website in March 2020 together with the complete dataset. Some preliminary results show that the total survey sample showed large awareness of EU crisis response in the focus countries (85 per cent). However, at the same time, it must be noted that 51 per cent of the entire survey sample responded that they were professionally or voluntarily involved in crisis response broadly defined in their respective countries. From the assessment of how satisfied the respondents were with EU support to crisis response Iraq, Kosovo and Mali and Kosovo reports the highest level of satisfaction in our sample. The lowest score is in the Serbia sample. It is also interesting to note that the EU's support for security sector reform is the least well known by all respondents. We also observe an uneven distribution of who benefited. For example, most of the survey respondents did benefit in Iraq, while in Ukraine nearly none did.



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