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THE EU COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH
TO CONFLICT AND CRISES MECHANISM

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The Assessment EU Conflict Response in Afghanistan:

Assessing EUPOL Impact on Afghan Police Reform (2007 – 2016)

EUNPACK Working Paper¹

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1. Introduction

This working paper is the second publication for the EUNPACK conducted by Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), which examines the implementation process and impact of the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL). The paper has used a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative research. It has used survey findings, conducted by AREU for the first phase of this project from July to August 2017, as well as in-depth interviews with key national and international informants, including former Afghan officials who were involved in the EUPOL project, former international EUPOL staff and senior civil society activists. It also conducted an extensive literature review including EUPOL official documents and other reports and articles to comprehend the project management, structure and implementation processes.

This working paper begins with outlining the European Union's (EU) involvements in the Afghan Police reform post-2001, examining the approach employed by the German Police Project mission and how the initial shortcomings of the approach led to the launch of the EUPOL as its comprehensive civilian police mission to respond to the police reform crisis. It then evaluates the EUPOL's mission against its goals and objectives, implementation processes and expected impacts.

The EUPOL had a minor though important and sustainable impact, especially through the construction and building of the new Police Staff College in Kabul for the Afghan National Police (ANP). The EUPOL commitment for the promotion of policewomen and inclusion of human rights in Afghan police training and procedures is another important achievement of the project. While Afghanistan had around 180 policewomen prior to EUPOL, today it has 3,200 policewomen officers and a special directorate to support the strengthening of female police in the Afghan National Police. Furthermore, EUPOL was an important player in the field of civilian policing, police-justice cooperation, and inclusion of human rights in police manuals at the time of ongoing conflict.

However, EUPOL mandates were ambiguous, and none of its mandates included clear and measurable objectives. In light of this, it is difficult to clearly measure the EUPOL's impact on Afghan police reform. Moreover, the EUPOL was, considering its staff and budget compared to NATO and the United States, a minor player in Afghan police reform and had therefore a minor impact on the overall status of Afghan police reform.

EUPOL provided a 'civilian surge' complementing the US/NATO military deployment. With over half of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) troops coming from the EU member states, and with the launch of European Union Police Mission (EUPOL), the operation was a substantial one for the EU. The EU expected two major benefits out of this engagement. The first was that it provided the EU with an opportunity to expand its role as a global actor especially in areas covered by the CFSP/ESDP. Second, this engagement would promote the European Comprehensive Approach to post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building.

Compared to NATO and the US, the EUPOL seemed at a first glance like a minor player. After a closer look the strict focus on different aspects of civilian policing like police-justice linkages, intelligence-lead policing, gender balance, upper management training, enhancement of Ministry of Interior Affairs planning as well as coordination with the ANP and within the International Community, EUPOL had a real impact on the civilian aspects of Afghan police reform.

The EUPOL short-term training and short-term advisory missions for mentoring the Afghan Police meant that the Afghan Police was not exposed adequately to these programs. Many EUPOL trainees expressed that had the EUPOL training programs lasted longer, it would have had a greater impact.

2. EU Member States' Involvement in Police Reform

The EU and its Member States (MS) have been the second largest donor to post-Taliban Afghanistan and have contributed 3.218 billion Euro from 2002 to 2016 to the country.³ The EU and its MS have also committed 5 billion Euro for the period of 2016 – 2020 at the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan in October 2016. EU has been engaged in different sectors including fighting corruption, improving oversight, enabling economic growth, reducing poverty and strengthening democratic institutions.⁴ One of the key commitment of the EU and its MS has been the training and reform of the Afghan National Police (ANP) through the Security Sector Reform (SSR) approach.

Reforming the Afghan police has been one of the most important challenges for stabilizing and securing post-Taliban Afghanistan.⁵ Afghanistan has never had a strong or effective civilian police force.⁶ Though during the 1960s and 1970s, Germany provided some assistance and training for Afghan police, the four decades of civil war from the 1970s had destroyed all civilian policing structure. Thus, the Afghan police needed to be rebuilt from scratch.

With the sudden collapse of the Taliban regime in December 2001, at the Bonn Conference, the international community agreed to help the “new Afghan authorities in the establishment and training of new Afghan security and armed forces”.⁷ The agreement, however, did not specify the number, composition and mission of the Afghan security forces. The agreement

³ EEAS, ‘EU-Afghanistan Relations, Factsheet - European External Action Service’, *European Union External Action*, 2017 <https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/10740/EU-Afghanistan-relations-factsheet> [accessed 20 December 2017].

⁴ EEAS.

⁵ C S Chivvis, *EU Civilian Crisis Management: The Record So Far*, 2010.

⁶ Andrew Wilder, ‘Cops or Robbers? The Struggle to Reform the Afghan National Police’, *Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit*, 2007, 94.

⁷ Agreement on Provincial Arrangement in Afghanistan Pending the Re-Establishment of Permanent Government Institutions, 2001, <<http://www.un.org/News/dh/latest/afghan/afghan-agree.htm>> [accessed 11 November 2017].

also did not indicate the division of labour among the nations for the establishment of the new Afghan security forces.

2.1. The Nation Led Approach to SSR

In April 2002, the donor community for Afghanistan decided on the division of labour for establishing and training Afghan security forces at the G8 conference in Geneva. Based on this conference agreement, five pillars of the SSR were defined and a nation was assigned to lead the pillar programs. Among EU's the Member States, the United Kingdom was assigned to combating drugs and training Afghan counter-narcotics forces; Italy was consigned to the emendation of the justice system and prosecution process; and considering Germany's experience in Afghan police training during the 1960s, Afghanistan's Interim Authority requested that Germany should take the lead in the police reform sector.⁸ Therefore, Germany was assigned to train the Afghan Police forces. Japan was assigned to the process of demilitarization, disarmament, and reintegration and the United States was committed to building the Afghan National Army.⁹ For the purpose of this paper, only the police reform and training pillar will be discussed.

Germany started organizing Afghan police reform efforts before being officially assigned as the lead nation in this pillar. In February 2002, Germany organized a meeting of 18 donor countries and 11 international organizations to coordinate and discuss international support for Afghan police in Berlin.¹⁰ After being officially designated as the lead nation, Germany launched a plan for Afghan police reform on 13 March 2002. In the plan, five areas were prioritized: advising on the structure and organization of police; the rehabilitation of the Kabul Police Academy; the reconstruction of police buildings and institutions; the provision of equipment such as vehicles; and the coordination of all other donor activities related to police.¹¹ On 3 April 2002, the project's office commenced work in Kabul and on 12 March 2002, the German cabinet approved 17 police advisers for the project.¹²

The focus of the Germany Police Program Office (GPPO) was the Kabul Police Academy (KPA). The rationale for such a top-down approach was the belief that only with professional and well-trained senior officers would the police reform be effective. The then-German Special Representative for Police Sector Reform justified the approach by telling the International Crisis Group (ICG) that the goal was "to start with the backbone; that is why we started with

⁸ Tonita Murray, 'Police-Building in Afghanistan: A Case Study of Civil Security Reform', *International Peacekeeping*, 14.1 (2007), 108–26 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/13533310601114327>>.

⁹ Chona R. Echavez and Qayoom Surosh, 'Policy Brief Summarizing Perception Studies in Afghanistan', *EUNPACK*, 6, September (2017), 10 <<http://www.eunpack.eu/publications/policy-brief-summarizing-perception-studies-afghanistan>>.

¹⁰ Olga Oliker Terrence K. Kelly, Nora Bensahel, *Security Force Assistance in Afghanistan Identifying* (Washington DC: RAND, 2011) <<https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG1066.html>>.

¹¹ Echavez and Surosh.

¹² Auswärtiges Amt, 'Assistance for Rebuilding the Police Force in Afghanistan', 2006, 1–17.

the leaders.”¹³ The KPA was reopened in August 2002 and by December 2006, the KPA had graduated 868 commissioned police officers (saranman) with three-year course and 2,636 non-commissioned police officers (satanman) from its nine-month course.¹⁴

2.2. Challenges for Nation Led Approach

In early 2002, Afghanistan had 50,000 to 70,000 armed men who were serving at the police level,¹⁵ many of whom were Mujahidin fighters, particularly from Northern Alliance, who rarely had any professional training including those who were serving at senior police positions. It was estimated that 70 to 90 percent of those serving as Afghan police were illiterate¹⁶ and the police reform was “a poor second to the army in international security sector priorities”.¹⁷ These challenges and lack of the international community’s devotion to police reform had hampered Germany police reform efforts.

On the other hand, the United States was not satisfied with the German approach to police reform and assigned DynCorp, a private contractor, to build and provide instruction programs at the Central Training Center (CTC) for the Kabul police, which was completed in May 2003, and at seven Regional Training centres (RTC), which were completed in 2004.¹⁸ Since the Kabul Police Academy was only providing long-term training programs for the ANP officer, these centers were providing four to eight weeks basic police procedure training – depending on the level of the trainee's education for existing patrolmen and new recruits. By 2006, around 60,000 police recruits and serving patrolmen were trained by the CTC and RTCs.¹⁹

However, there was no coordination between Germany police reform programs and the United States program implemented by DynCorp.²⁰ While the GPPO was focused on training civilian police, the United States training programs were mainly focused on the military aspect of policing. In other words, while the main concern for the United States was the rapid building of anti-insurgency forces, the GPPO wanted to build a force that could undertake conventional policing in the long term.²¹ So while “the Germans are creating high quality – but too few ... The US churn out a conveyor belt where quality is not an issue... there is nothing in the middle.”²²

¹³ ICG, *Reforming Afghanistan’s Police*, 2007, p.7.

¹⁴ Wilder.

¹⁵ Terrence K. Kelly, Nora Bensahel.

¹⁶ Terrence K. Kelly, Nora Bensahel.

¹⁷ ICG, p. 1.

¹⁸ GAO, ‘AFGHANISTAN SECURITY Efforts to Establish Army and Police Have Made Progress but Future Plans Need to Be Better Defined’, 2005.

¹⁹ Wilder.

²⁰ Terrence K. Kelly, Nora Bensahel.

²¹ House of Lords, ‘The EU’s Afghan Police Mission: Report with Evidence’, 2011.

²² ICG, p. 8.

In 2006, with the deteriorating security situation in the country, there was an urgent need for the police forces to engage in compacts. Hence, with pressure from the United States, the end-strength goal (tashkil) of ANP increased to 82,000 while the Afghan government, based on the GPPO suggestion, had authorized an end-strength goal of 62,000.²³ Moreover, the ANP budget increased from 837.9 million USD in 2005 to 2.7 billion USD in 2007.²⁴ With such huge amounts of assistance, in practice, the United States replaced Germany as the official lead nation for police reform in June 2007 and shifted the focus of the ANP training toward paramilitary capacities in order to use it as a an active counter-insurgency force

The GPPO, as a nation-led approach program, faced serious challenges in the context of Afghanistan: first, while Germany aimed to reform Afghan police, in reality, there was not much to reform; rather everything had to be rebuilt. Second, a vast majority of the Afghan police, including some high-ranking officers, either did not have any professional training or were illiterate and, thus, significantly limited the potential impact of a top-down approach. Third, the focus on the Kabul Police Academy meant that a majority of police personnel were not receiving any training.²⁵ By the end of 2006, there was a consensus on the need to have a comprehensive SSR strategy to reform and rebuild ANA, ANP and justice sectors in Afghanistan.²⁶ Such a consensus was one of the main drivers of the EU comprehensive police mission in Afghanistan.

²³ Wilder.

²⁴ Terrence K. Kelly, Nora Bensahel.

²⁵ Terrence K. Kelly, Nora Bensahel.

²⁶ ICG.

3. EU Comprehensive Approach to Police Reform

On 23 April 2007, the EU Council decided to establish the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL). A year before, the London Conference on Afghanistan had already provided a new framework for cooperation between the Afghan government and international community. Prior to establishing the mission, the EU sent a joint assessment mission in Afghanistan to assess the “Afghan needs in the rule of law sector” in the fall of 2006.²⁷ The mission was followed by another fact-finding mission that suggested the EU should establish a mission to rebuild the Afghan National Police.²⁸

The first EUPOL mission was launched for three years and subjected to six monthly reviews. Article 3 of the Council Joint Action stated the below objectives for the mission:

*EUPOL AFGHANISTAN shall significantly contribute to the establishment under Afghan ownership of sustainable and effective civilian policing arrangements, which will ensure appropriate interaction with the wider criminal justice system, in keeping with the policy advice and institution building work of the Community, Member States and other international actors. Further, the Mission will support the reform process towards a trusted and efficient police service, which works in accordance with international standards, within the framework of the rule of law and respects human rights.*²⁹

Moreover, Article 4 of the mandate stated that EUPOL will be a non-executive mission and “shall carry out its task through, amongst other means, monitoring, mentoring, advising and training”.³⁰ The mandate tasked EUPOL to:

*(a) work on strategy development, while placing an emphasis on work towards a joint overall strategy of the international community in police reform, taking into account the Afghanistan Compact and the i-ANDS; (b) support the Government of Afghanistan in coherently implementing their strategy; (c) improve cohesion and coordination among international actors; and (d) support linkages between the police and the wider rule of law.*³¹

Furthermore, the mandate approved a 43.6 million Euro budget for the first year of the mission and indicated that EUPOL staff should be those seconded by the Member States or EU

²⁷ European Court of Auditors, *The EU Police Mission in Afghanistan: Mixed Results*, 2015 <<https://doi.org/10.2865/893461>>.

²⁸ EU, ‘COUNCIL JOINT ACTION 2007/369/CFSP’, *Official Journal of the European Communities*, L 269.September 2000 (2000), 1–15 <<https://doi.org/2004R0726> - v.7 of 05.06.2013>.

²⁹ EU, ‘COUNCIL JOINT ACTION 2007/369/CFSP’.

³⁰ EU, ‘COUNCIL JOINT ACTION 2007/369/CFSP’.

³¹ EU, ‘COUNCIL JOINT ACTION 2007/369/CFSP’.

institutions. The mission was mainly involved with Afghanistan's Ministry of Interior Affairs (MOI), Ministry of Justice and the Office of Attorney General. With such a mandate, EUPOL was welcomed by the Afghan government and the international community involved in Afghanistan.

The EUPOL mission was extended two more times: first, on 18 May 2010, the Council extended the mission from May 2010 to May 2013 and later in February 2014, the council decided to extend the EUPOL mission to December 2016. Each time, the council brought some amendments to the EUPOL mandate (as will later be discussed in greater detail).³² The EUPOL budget from 2007 to December 2015 was around 457 million euro.³³

EUPOL was to serve as a "potent symbol for the EU's stated ambition to become a global security provider"³⁴ and was aimed to be a comprehensive civilian approach. Therefore, the European Commission prevented several times the donation of equipment which could have dual use, for instance walkie-talkies.³⁵ EUPOL was designed for "formation of viable, sustainable and effective civilian policing arrangements, under Afghan ownership that would guarantee proper interaction with the wider criminal justice system".³⁶ To assess the impact of EUPOL, this paper briefly evaluates its design and inception phases and the focuses on its implementation phase as the main period of measuring the EUPOL impact on police reform.

3.1. EUPOL Design Phase

A Security Sector Reform (SSR) model assumes certain preconditions at the domestic level to be effective. These preconditions are security and stability, some level of cooperation and coordination, and a high level of elite consensus on the structure, content and direction of the reform process. Post-Taliban Afghanistan, however, did not meet many of these preconditions.³⁷ Additionally, the Afghan police were suffering from high levels of illiteracy, corruption and drug addiction among its members. Therefore, from the beginning of the EUPOL mission, it was clear that the mission would have to tackle serious challenges in the context of Afghanistan.

In this context, the EUPOL needed to plan and set objectives for the Afghan police reform that were realistic and achievable. However, the EUPOL suffered from ambiguous and inconsistent

³² European Union, 'COUNCIL DECISION 2014/922/CFSP', *Official Journal of the European Union*, 2.L (2014), 17–18.

³³ European Court of Auditors.

³⁴ Nicolas Fescharek, 'Forward Procrastination? Afghanistan's Lessons about Europe's Role as a Security Provider', *International Spectator*, 50.3 (2015), 43–59 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/03932729.2015.1055449>>.

³⁵ Fescharek.

³⁶ Echavez and Suroush.

³⁷ For more on this preconditions for SSR see Mark Sedra, 'Diagnosing the Failings of Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan', *Sicherheit Und Frieden (S+F) / Security and Peace* (Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH), 233–38 <<https://doi.org/10.2307/24232770>>.

mandates; the mandate changed four times in the span of just nine years (in 2008, 2010, 2013 and 2014). Moreover, it struggled to overcome the difficulties on the ground, and its objectives reminded unclear and unmeasurable. While the number of mandate changes could be seen as a sign of hesitation and lack of direction, the MS struggled for a long time with identifying the right approach to civilian policing in midst of an open conflict. Depending on one's perspective, Afghanistan needed either a more effective fighting force or rather a civilian approach to policing. This is why the Member States reacted to the difficulties on the ground with constant mandate evolution and adjustments to the US/NATO preferences. Further this has become a somewhat normal procedure within the 30 + EU CSDP (Common Security and Defence Policy) missions around the world as Missions often respond to an acute need within a changing conflict scenario.

The initial EUPOL mandate in June 2007 made no reference to what would become the mission flagship: The promotion of policewomen, fighting corruption and countering narcotics were not mentioned a single time in the initial EUPOL mandate.

Comparing the EUPOL mandates also shows that after 2010, the EUPOL's main focus was assisting the Afghan government in implementing anti-corruption, capacity building and training strategies and helping them to establish such strategies instead of trying to be an umbrella for all international community efforts in police reform. From the inception of the Mission, coordination with other international actors was a key challenge and objective. Following the premise of the Comprehensive Approach to synchronize the timing and application of available EU instruments, a well-functioning International Police Coordination Board (IPCB) secretariat provided the forum where all international actors could discuss policies and synchronize planning. While the US/NATO had a strict counterinsurgency (COIN) approach until the NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan (NTM-A) was in place, a closer coordination with EUPOL also brought the Afghans on board. The MS and The Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability/The Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CPCC/CMPD) decision to set up the IPCB and finance the secretariat staff should be seen as a constructive step consistent with the Comprehensive Approach. Due to the Afghan lack of interest once the leadership was handed over to the MoI the IPCB ceased to exist.

However, the mandates did not specify any output of these activities and so "EUPOL's mission documents read like an activity-based job description that describes in what field EUPOL intends to be active; but they are not outcome-oriented."³⁸ Moreover, these official documents provide no baseline or numerical goals, which is a usual practice, probably "for the fear of being measured".³⁹

In sum, since the mission's operational plan and its monitoring reports are not publicly available, this research paper has based its analysis on EUPOL mandates.

³⁸ Fescharek, p. 51.

³⁹ Fescharek, p. 51.

are ambiguous and did not specify any measurable goal, neither did they detail how the mission should deal with challenges and obstacles to police reform in the context of Afghanistan.

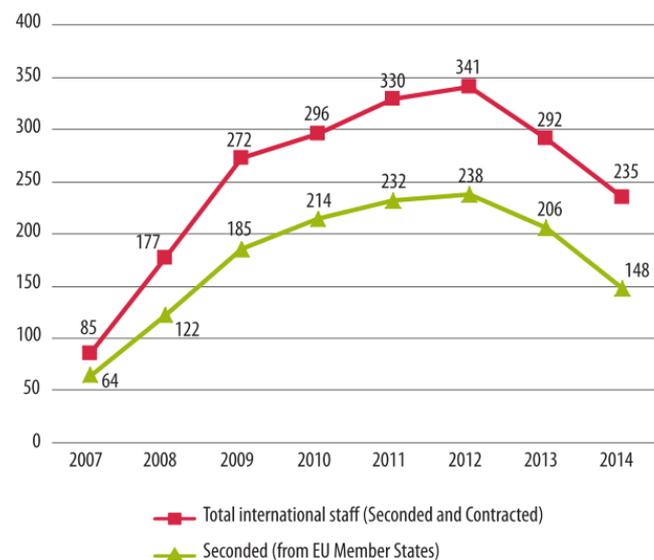
3.2. Inception and Staffing Phase

EUPOL’s inception and staffing was not the mission’s strength; for several months EUPOL mission had only a few staff; the head of the mission changed three times within 18 months and the mission was suffering from logistics and staffing problems.⁴⁰ While the council acknowledged that the mission should have 400 international staff, it was never achieved. At its very best, the EUPOL had 341 staff in 2012 and then declined (See figure 1). However, as the House of Lords of the United Kingdom argued, even the planned size of the EUPOL 400 staff was “always too small to make a major difference in civilian outcomes in Afghanistan”.⁴¹

There were several reasons behind having limited staff at EUPOL: first, considering the Afghan security situation and that all staff in the civilian missions were volunteers,⁴² it was hard to find staff willing to join the mission, as EUPOL had to compete with other CSDP missions; second, certain positions at EUPOL required legal and rule of law expertise that were difficult to find.⁴³ Third, as the mandate of the mission indicated, staff had to be seconded from the Member States, but as many of the member states had their own mission and other bilateral engagement in Afghanistan, they were slow in assigning their staff for EUPOL.⁴⁴ Therefore, the then head of NTM-A raised doubt about the EUPOL ability to “play a more serious role”.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, by 2012 EUPOL and NTM-A found a good modus operandi by dividing the respective spheres of activities. In particular, EUPOLs focus on the MoI and training of the upper management ranks of the ANP were welcomed.

Figure 1 (Source: EU Court of Auditors)

Total international (seconded and contracted) and EU seconded staff in EUPOL on 31 December of each year from 2007 to 2014



⁴⁰ ‘Government Response to House of Lords Select Committee’, 2010.

⁴¹ House of Lords.

⁴² Chivvis.

⁴³ European Court of Auditors.

⁴⁴ Author online interview with an ex-EUPOL staff, Kabul, 7 December 2017.

⁴⁵ House of Lords.

EUPOL's mandate declared that the mission should work on police reform at central, regional and provincial levels. At its peak, EUPOL had offices in 16 provinces of Afghanistan in 2009. However, only two of these provincial offices (Herat and Balkh) had more than 10 staff. Most of the other offices were poorly managed and by 2013, the EUPOL provincial offices decreased to two.⁴⁶

The main reason for EUPOL's limited provincial offices was that the so-called "Berlin Plus Agreement" was not effective for EUPOL staff. The Berlin Plus Agreement allows the EU to use NATO assets for CSDP missions, but it was "effectively blocked due to a dispute between Cyprus (EU member) and Turkey (NATO member), who both enjoy a veto right to the activation of Berlin Plus."⁴⁷ However, considering the country security situation, the EUPOL could only operate outside Kabul if they could use Provincial Reconstruction Teams and other NATO military bases. Therefore, the EU Council Director for External and Politico-Military Affairs requested NATO to accord EUPOL staff to the benefits of force protection, airlift, medical treatment and information sharing.⁴⁸ Despite many attempts, such an agreement was never officially researched and EUPOL had to reach an individual memorandum of understanding with each Provincial Reconstruction Teams for protection of its staff. But even this approach did not work for all, as Turkey and the United States did not have the technical agreement with EUPOL which would allow the EUPOL to use their facilities.⁴⁹

To conclude, since the EUPOL could not reach even its small target of staffing, and since EUPOL could not use NATO's provincial bases due to disagreement among NATO members, the mission's impacts on Afghan police reform were limited and EUPOL itself remained a minor player. This was further exacerbated by the lacking of infrastructure and the often dire security situation in the field. All of this clearly limited the impact of the EUPOL Mission. However, it is also clear that at the central MoI level and in particular with regard to the mentoring and training of strategic level ranks EUPOL had an impact on the ANP.

3.3. Implementation Phase

Compared to its design and inception phases, the EUPOL's implementation phase, considering the Afghan context, was the mission more successful phase. In Afghanistan, the entire notion of a civilian police, who are professional, a-political and responsible for law enforcement, was a new concept. Based on our research, we suggest this will have a long-lasting impact on the concept and culture of policing in the country. Needless to mention, such civilian approaches also largely balanced the paramilitary approach of United States to the Afghan National Police.

⁴⁶ European Court of Auditors.

⁴⁷ Fescharek, p. 52.

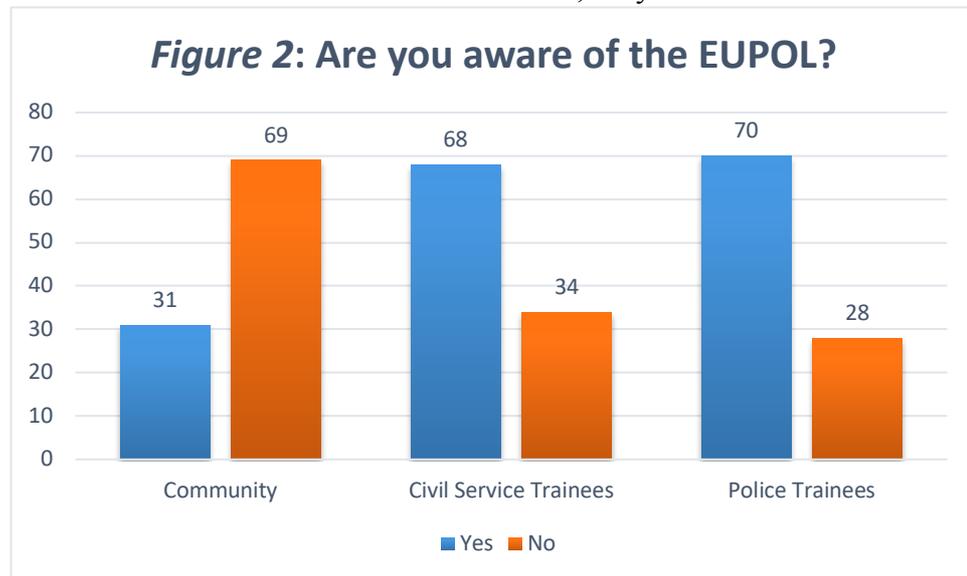
⁴⁸ Wikileaks, 'EU Request For Support To EU Police Mission In Afghanistan', 2007
<https://www.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/07USEUBRUSSELS2603_a.html> [accessed 14 December 2017].

⁴⁹ European Court of Auditors.

Interestingly, despite almost a decade of the EUPOL mission in Afghanistan, a large number of the community where EUPOL had trained its police were not aware of EUPOL. Based on the survey carried during the first phase of the project, 69 percent of respondents at the community level did not know about the EUPOL.⁵⁰ Moreover, only around two-thirds of the

staff at ministries and police officers that were trained by the EUPOL, remember EUPOL projects and their training.

This reflects the reality of most CSDP Mission and Commission



financed programs around the world. While the EU was arguably the key supporter/donor of the Afghan government, it never got the public recognition for it. In spite of over half of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) troops coming from the EU member states, the EU being the main contributor to Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA), and EUPOL being the main actor in the field of civilian policing, the perception that the EU was only a minor player persisted.

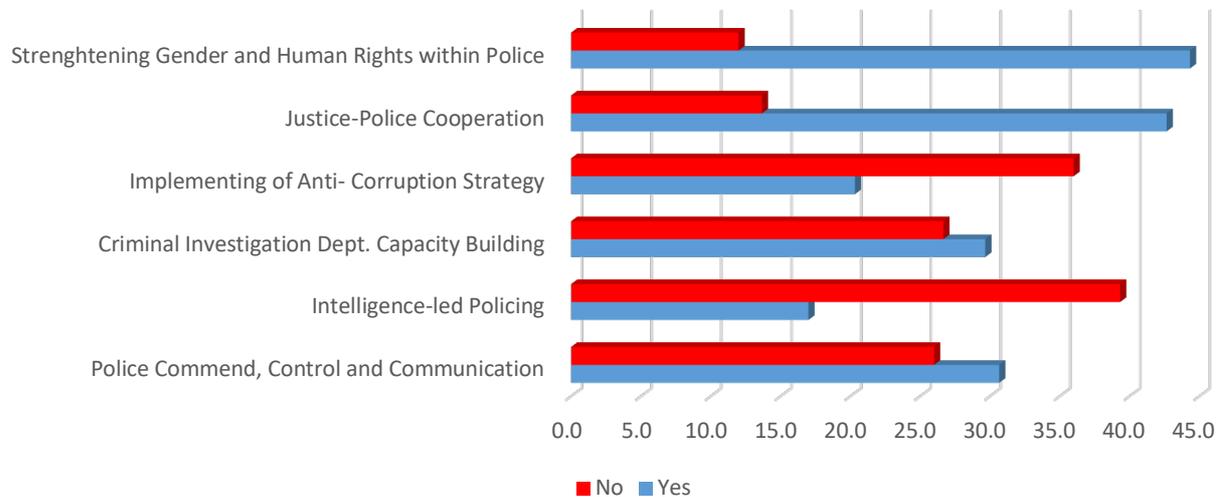
Practically, EUPOL's focus was on three areas: policing, rule of law and human rights. The EUPOL's objectives on policing included: (a) improving police command and communication; (b) introducing intelligence-led policing and (c) improving criminal investigations capacities. In the area of rule of law, the EUPOL objectives were: (a) fighting corruption and (b) improving cooperation between police and judiciary. Finally, on human rights areas, their focus was on developing human rights and gender structure policy for the police and MOI in general.⁵¹

The survey conducted for the first phase of the project reveals that the most well-known program of the mission among Afghans was strengthening the gender and human rights within the Afghan National Police. Justice and Police cooperation, police command, control and communication, and capacity building for criminal investigation department of Ministry of Interior Affairs follow the gender and human right programs (see Figure 2).

⁵⁰ For more information about this survey please see Chona R. Echavez and Qayoom Suroush (2017) *Policy Brief Summarizing Perceptions Studies in Afghanistan*, Brussels: EUNPACK.

⁵¹ Chivvis.

Figure 3: Are you aware of these EUPOL programs?



It is not a coincidence that the gender and human rights program is the most well-known program of the EUPOL among Afghans. The number of policewomen in the spring of 2006, prior to the EUPOL mission, was around 180⁵² and today it has increased to 3,200. This is still only 2.13 percent of 150,000 Afghan police tashkil,⁵³ but in the Afghanistan context it is a considerable achievement. The MOI is aiming to raise policewomen portion to 10,000 within ten years. For reaching this goal, the MOI with the support of EUPOL has established the Human Rights, Gender and Children Directorate within MOI headed by policewomen. Though the Afghan policewomen are still facing serious cultural challenges and there are many reports of sexual harassment of female members of Afghan Security Forces,⁵⁴ one should also recognize that Afghanistan “never had this amount of women in police in its history” and, thus, it is a big achievement.⁵⁵

Furthermore, EUPOL had important achievements in institution building for the Afghan police. Its flagship is the establishment of the Police Staff College. The college was established to have “a platform for delivery of further training for the police officers at a strategic, operational and technical level”.⁵⁶ To build the college, EUPOL developed its training curriculum and courses. It was the EU delegation and Service for Foreign Policy Instrument that financed the project. The college was opened in January 2014 with a total cost of 7.3 million Euro. Though the then

⁵² Wilder.

⁵³ Zinab Perzad, ‘کارزار زنان در تأمین امنیت؛ چهره‌ی وزارت داخله تغییر می‌کند؟’, *Etilaat Roz Newspaper* (Kabul, 23 December 2017) <<http://www.etalatroz.com/55055>> [accessed 24 December 2017].

⁵⁴ For example see here: BBC Persian, ‘زنان افغان در نهادهای امنیتی “مورد آزار و اذیت جنسی” قرار می‌گیرند’ - BBC Persian’, *BBC Afghanistan*, 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/persian/afghanistan/2016/06/160614_k05_afghan_women_in_security_sector> [accessed 26 December 2017].

⁵⁵ Interview with a former Afghan minister, 7 December 2017, Kabul.

⁵⁶ European Court of Auditors.

Afghan police officials were expecting EUPOL to provide scholarships for Afghan police to study abroad,⁵⁷ EUPOL focused on hiring police experts from EU countries to train Afghan police in Afghanistan and establishing the staff college that could provide higher education for the police with much less cost and for many police officers compared to providing scholarships.

Currently, the college has six provincial offices along with its headquarters in Kabul. The college has 324 staff in Kabul that includes 192 professors and 132 administrative staff. The college also has 12 staff in each of its provincial centres. The college offers four different courses: an MA course (with 61 students), a BA course (with 468 students), a capacity building course (with 19 students) and a nine-month strategic leadership course.⁵⁸ Since last year when the college was entirely handed over to Afghans police officials, the college operates normally and has not faced major challenges. The only problem that its officials claimed they suffered from during a visit to the college, was a lack of financial resources for printings and publications of training material. The acting head of the Police Staff College said that during the last year, a delegation from the Resolute Support mission (RS) promised them to print around 30,000 copies of the college reading materials, but the promise was never met.⁵⁹

The Police Staff College is in the Afghan Police tashkil and therefore the college will receive its ordinary budget (which include salaries and vehicles fuel and other expenditures). The only concern of the college officials was the development budget, which, according to them, is about 6 million Afghani (around 86,000 USD) for this year and the Parliament recently approved the whole national budget. To conclude, the college is an important milestone of EUPOL for Afghan police, and will likely continue to train hundreds of the police officers each year. This of course will also depend on the conflict in Afghanistan on how serious it will become and to what extent the College will come under attack in the future.

Besides establishing the college, EUPOL has provided dozens of training, monitoring, advising and mentoring sessions at MOI, Ministry of Justice and the Office of Attorney General. EUPOL has developed a number of training material and policies for the MOI. For example, EUPOL produced a training package on children's rights and policing that consisted of a booklet and an educational video. Back in 2008, when there was a better security environment, EUPOL staff were providing on-the-job training for Kabul police officers and regularly visited checkpoints to provide advice.⁶⁰

While it is hard to measure the impact of such a training course in short-term, many EUPOL trainees that were interviewed stated that the training was too short without follow-ups. For example, the trainees at the Ministry of Justice said that the majority of them had only four

⁵⁷ Interview with a then Deputy Minister for MOI, 20 December 2017, Kabul.

⁵⁸ Interview with senior Police Staff College Officers, 17 December 2017, Kabul.

⁵⁹ Interview with Acting Director of Police Staff College Officers, 17 December 2017, Kabul.

⁶⁰ For example see the clip of EUPO staff visiting check points in Kabul city: European Court of Auditors.

one-day trainings and that there was not any follow-up programs from EUPOL.⁶¹ Moreover, the police officers at District 3 of Kabul city who were mentored through Kabul City Police Project in 2012 did not receive any follow-up training and were not checked to understand if they are doing better after the training. Additionally, a general problem with such training and mentoring was the high level of staff fluctuation inside ANP and EUPOL which prevented a more sustainable and focused mentoring and training programs.⁶²

In general, these trainings will have long lasting impacts only if the trainers have leadership and management skills while “most of those involved in police sector reform in Afghanistan have only operational experience. Operational knowledge and experience are essential for transferring policing techniques but on their own are not sufficient to achieve reform.”⁶³ Additionally, since a vast majority of EUPOL police trainers did not speak Dari or Pashto, the whole training session had to be interpreted by mostly unprofessional interpreters who were unaware of policing terminologies. All these barriers have limited the EUPOL training and monitoring’s impact.

3.4. Unachieved Objectives and Challenges

The EUPOL did not achieve some of its important objectives that led some researchers to conclude that “EUPOL is a textbook case of failure in application of the SSR model for a variety of reasons, including security concerns, weak domestic institutions, institutional cacophony within the EU and between Euro-Atlantic institutions, and lack of commitment to the EUPOL mission.”⁶⁴

An important EUPOL objective that was not met was to work as an umbrella for all police related reform programs of the international community. To achieve this objective, a program was supposed to establish the IPCB in 2007 to coordinate all police reform-related efforts of the international community. However, there was not much success in achieving this objective as “the international stakeholders have been unwilling to be coordinated and have perceived the IPCB as an ambitious effort on the part of EU to take the lead in policing sector.”⁶⁵ Until 2010 there were not even enough clarification on role of the EUPOL, the EU Special Representative and the EU delegation in coordination and locally policy-making. Furthermore, some of the EU Member States continued their own parallel individual efforts in police reform instead of seconding their staff to EUPOL.⁶⁶ While one of EUPOL’s main focus areas was

⁶¹ Authors interview with a EUPOL trainee at Ministry of Justice, 1 November 2017, Kabul.

⁶² Online interview of a former EUPOL staff, 25 January 2018.

⁶³ EU Security and Defence, ‘Afghanistan: EUPOL at Work’, 2008
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kavxjiCVXoU>> [accessed 26 December 2017].

⁶⁴ EU, ‘Official Journal’, *Text*, 3.C (2010).

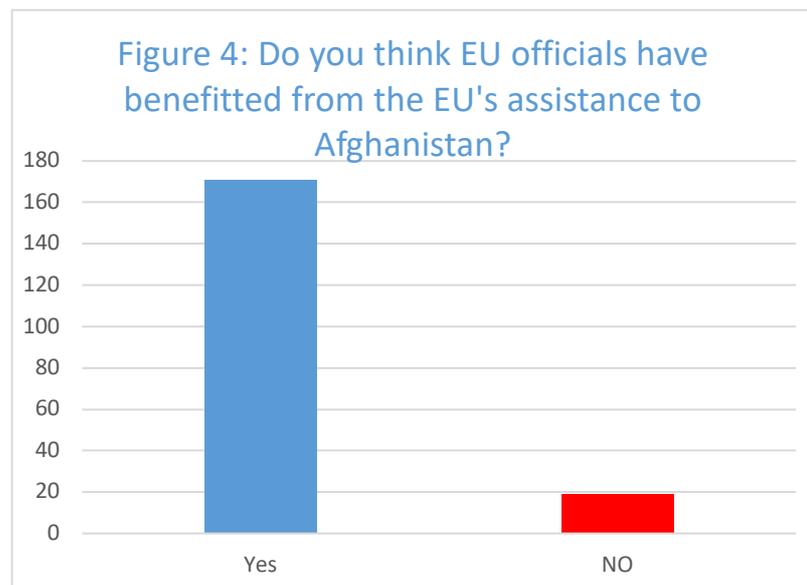
⁶⁵ European Court of Auditors.

⁶⁶ Murray.

mentoring, it was only in April 2013 that the mission developed a handbook of its own on mentoring that included concepts, methodology and best practices of EUPOL in Afghanistan.⁶⁷

At the local level, Afghan police officials were unhappy with the EUPOL’s “long and complicated procedures” of decision-making, which they think were timing-consuming and showed that EUPOL was “too much” reliant on every individual member state for decision-making.⁶⁸ Afghan police officials also stated that EUPOL’s strict security measures were an obstacle for their impact and outreach. A senior official insisted that “EUPOL was so restricted and they didn’t take any risk. Most of the time they blocked themselves and we had to go to their place.”⁶⁹

Lack of involvement of Afghan police officials in the implementation of the EUPOL Operational Plan was another important weakness of the project. Fact finding missions by CMPD consulted high level Afghan officials from the MoI and internal planning documents were kept confidential for security reasons. In a more relaxed security environment sharing



or even jointly benchmarking the implementation of the mandate would certainly have been preferable. On the other hand, CPCC and MS made an effort to fully involve key international and national stakeholders.

Different Afghan police officials stated that they did not know much about the EUPOL activities. For example, a then deputy minister for MOI told that when it came to the EUPOL operational plan, nothing was clear for Afghans. As an example, he said that “it was not clear to us that how much budget they had and how they were spending their budget.”⁷⁰ Additionally, a leading civil society activist criticized the EUPOL for not having any relationship with Afghan civil society organizations. He also added that the “civil society and Afghan police had no relationship and EU could not help these two organization to build a strong relationship and solve the main problem of Afghan police.”⁷¹ This resulted in the shaping of a perception that

⁶⁷ Maxime H A Larivé, ‘From Speeches to Actions: EU Involvement in the War in Afghanistan through the EUPOL Afghanistan Mission’, *European Security*, 21.2 (2012), 185–201 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2012.665883>>.

⁶⁸ Interview with a high-ranking police official, MOI, 13 December 2017.

⁶⁹ Interview with a police officer, MOI, 13 December 2017.

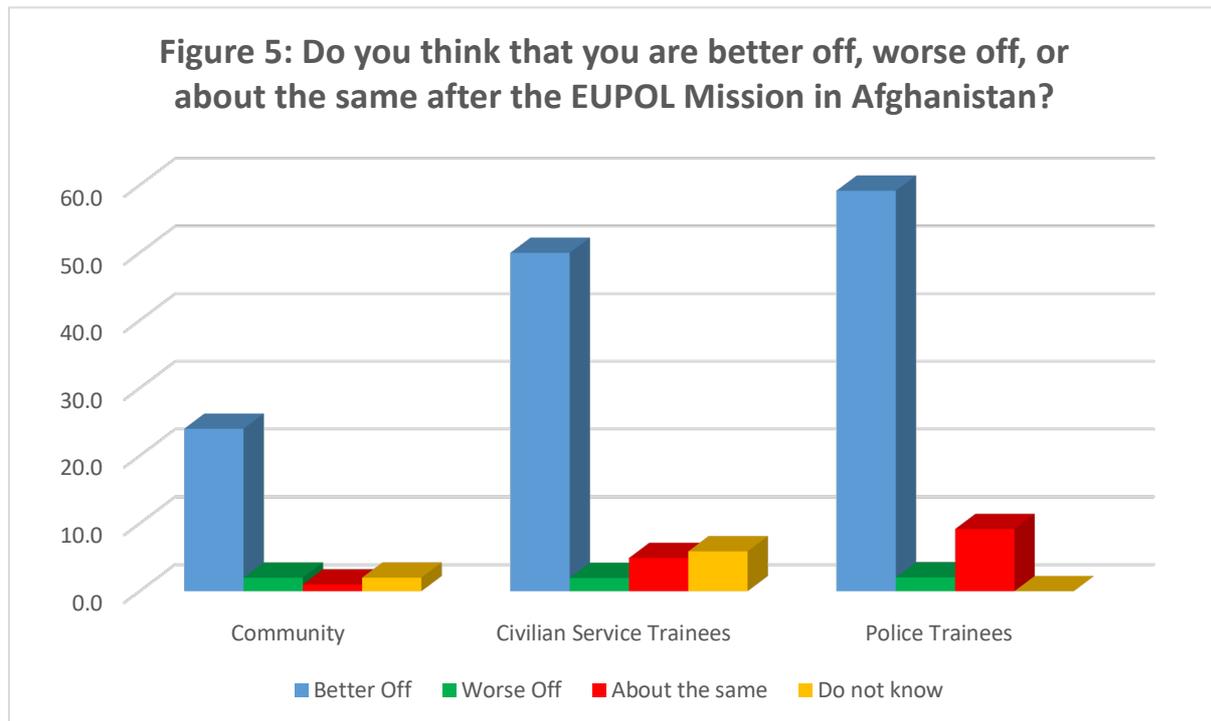
⁷⁰ Interview with a then Deputy Minister for MOI, 20 December 2017, Kabul.

⁷¹ Interview with the head a leading civil society organization, 18 November 2017



EU officials have benefited from the assistance to Afghanistan. In the survey, out of 190 individuals who answered the question of “Do you think EU officials have been benefited from the assistance to Afghanistan?” 171 of them said, “yes” (see Figure 4). There are different reasons for such misunderstanding. During interviews, a police officer said that “the EUPOL had a very large number of guards for themselves and they spent a vast amount of budget for their expenses.”⁷² Furthermore, according to the European Court of Auditors’ report, EUPOL had in 2015 146 armored vehicles in Afghanistan, of which only a few were regularly used. The total value of these armored vehicles was 25.2 million Euro (as the most important asset of the mission)⁷³ and more than half of their the first year budget. Finally, such a misconception also indicates that EU outreach to the local community was not efficient and fruitful. This finding may seem strange. However, it is not uncommon that people start to believe such things when they live in an almost permanent state of conflict where numerous external troops or peacekeepers are present year after year while the security situation does not change to the better.⁷⁴

In sum, while there were some shortcomings in the implementation of some objectives, EUPOL has left some minor, though important and sustainable impacts on Afghanistan police reform. Introducing the concept of civilian policing, the Police Staff College, strengthening of woman



police officers, the inclusion of human rights in police training, and cooperation of justice-

⁷² Interview with a police officer, MOI, 13 December 2017.

⁷³ European Court of Auditors.

⁷⁴ See Kathleen M. Jennings and Morten Bøås (eds) (2015) *Service, Sex and Security: Everyday Life in the Peacekeeping Economy* (Special Issue *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, vol. 9, no. 3.

police sector are some of the most important of EUPOL impacts. A vast majority of our respondents admit that they are “better off” after the EUPOL mission and the police trainees of EUPOL has the highest percentage of believing that the police better off after implementation of EUPOL (see Figure 5).

4. Policy Recommendations

1. Defining Clear Goal and Measurable Objectives:

Unpacking the impact of EUPOL was limited by mandates lacking clear and measurable objectives. It is possible that the lack of measurable objectives also hampered the performance of EUPOL itself.

Therefore, EU MS need to clearly define the Mission Mandate with mid-term and Exit benchmarks from the inception of the Mission while the Mission Operation Plan should have clearly defined Annexes on methodology (training, mentoring, advising and monitoring) and application of the Comprehensive Approach. Moreover, a more thorough examination of the reality on the ground and the context barriers for implementing a Security Sector Reform should inform mission mandates.

2. Inclusion of Afghan Officials in Planning and Implementation

Though the Afghan police may not have skilled and professional experts of an international standard, they could help in the planning of a conflict response project by helping to understand the local realities. Therefore, involving them will increase the chances of success for a project. Moreover, with such an approach, the EU can be confident that local priorities are reflected in the mission planning, and that the mission goal and objective is realistic. This will also increase the level of ownership among locals as they do not feel that the whole mission is a foreign project. Furthermore, the operational plan and any subsequent mandate reviews must be shared and consulted with key local stakeholders.

3. Investing in Public Relations:

An important part of police reform should be focused on gaining the trust of the community and civil society. While such trust is gained through regular and transparent public relationships and information sharing, the paper found out that there was not enough interaction with local communities and civil society organizations, evident from few people at the community level who were aware of EUPOL. As such, a mission like EUPOL should invest more in public outreach and preferably organize meetings with civil society activists, media outlets and elders of a community.

While public relations is a weak point for all EU structures, EUPOL for a long time survived in Afghanistan due to its low key presence and did not suffer any major attacks during its 10 years of operating in a hostile environment.

4. Maintaining the Support for Afghan Policewomen

The number of the Afghan policewomen have increased considerably during implementation of EUPOL. However, they still comprise only 2.13 percent of the Afghan National Police. The EU should keep up its support to further increase the number of policewomen and to increase their integration into the ANP. This objective is closely related to the EU commitment in protecting human rights and training Afghan police to respect human rights.

5. Providing Enough Resources and Budget

As discussed in the paper, the EUPOL's limited impact was in part due to a lack of resources and staff, which had to be second from the EU Member States. Additionally, while it is good that all civilian missions are voluntary, a mission in a context like Afghanistan should ideally have all its staff from the EU commission. As this may be unlikely, the EU MS should at least strive to, in difficult security environments as Afghanistan, to be fully staffed and have all the resources required to implement the Mission Mandate.

6. The Need for a Civilian Police

Afghanistan needs a professional and civilian police. However, having a civilian police has not been reached after 15 years of international support, and specifically 10 years of EUPOL Afghanistan. While the international support has had mixed results for a variety of reasons, part of it is the lack of Afghan ownership of the civilian aspects of SSR. In terms of sustainability and ownership, the closure of EUPOL did not mean the end of EU involvement as the EU Delegation continues to support a number of policing projects and finance LOTFA.

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