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A New European Security Architecture?

EU neighbourhood policies for security, defence and conflict prevention: Any added value in working with diversified local actors?

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to analyse if the cooperation with diversified local actors, in primis civil society organisations (CSOs), can provide any added value to the EU neighbourhood policies for security, defence and conflict prevention. Firstly, it will consider if and how the EU has recognised within documents and declarations the relevance of engaging with civil societies during situations of potential or ongoing violent conflict, crisis and diverse range of threats especially in the eastern Balkans and Caucasus. It also examines how local actors can concretely support the European security and defence policy and if the European civilian missions are cooperating with some of them. Particular attention will be paid to the mission in Moldova and Georgia. Finally, some criteria in order to determine the effectiveness of these policies and how can be evaluated and measured will be considered.
EUROPE AS A CIVILIAN ACTOR FOR PEACE AND SECURITY

The EU grand strategy is still in the making (Vennesson, 2010). However, the ‘civilian power grand strategy’ is probably the main component of the European Union mixed approach to foreign and security policy.

The EU scope of action and engagement – united together by a periodic review of a grand strategy document, the European Security Strategy (ESS, 2003; Davì 2009) – is more and more involving civilian capabilities. As a matter of fact, the EU has recognised the relevance of engaging with civilian means in situations of potential or ongoing violent conflict, crisis and diverse range of threats.

The Lisbon Treaty clearly states that the EU aims ‘to promote peace’ (Title I, Article 3-1) and that its role in the world would reflect the principles that have inspired its creation, development and enlargement (Title V, Article 21). Furthermore, the Union has considered conflict prevention, crisis management and peacebuilding as key tools of its foreign policy. The Lisbon Treaty recognizes the contribution to peace, the prevention of conflict and the strengthening of international security amongst its core foreign policy priorities (Title V, Article 2c).

The EU’s idea of peace is also tied to ‘democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law’ (Lisbon Treaty, Article 10° c1). Therefore, the EU is trying to ensure peace and stability through a ‘dense web of multilateral and regional institutions’ (Vennesson, 2010: 72) and through the promotion of democratic norms.

The Treaty is the last step of a long route where the EU is growing as a global actor with special attention to civilian means. Since 2000 particular attention was paid to four priority areas of civilian action defined by the Feira European Council in June 2000: police; strengthening the rule of law; strengthening civilian administration; and civil protection. ‘The initial targets in the four priority areas have been reached and even exceeded. Member states voluntary commitments as expressed at the December 2004 civilian capability commitment conference are reflected below’. (Council of the European Union 2008a: 2). Moreover, the December 2004 European Council also identified monitoring as a ‘generic tool for conflict prevention/resolution and/or crisis

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1 Vennesson defines Grand strategy ‘as a polity’s conception of its security’s goals and of the ways it plans to ensure its security’ (2010: 59).
management and/or peace-building’. An important function of monitoring missions is to contribute to ‘prevention/deterrence by presence and they also enhance EU visibility on the ground, demonstrating EU engagement and commitment to a crisis or region’ (Council of the European Union 2008a: 2).

Since 2003 the civilian missions are a significant reality of EU foreign policy. Notably, the mission are improving in quality and tasks, but, at the same time, many challenges are facing them: the civilian know-how and institutional memory often disappears after the end of a mission; harmonising skills and knowledge, plus improving expertise; common training and lessons learned need to be built and followed-up. Various issues are still problematic: division of labour; partnerships; collective work; common training and exercises for personnel (Gya 2009). Sometimes – for instance deploying the mission in Georgia – the human dimension has also been almost sacrificed – for the need to be on the ground quickly. It means that some missions have not given ample time to provide harmonisation and proper contextual pre-deployment training for personnel (Gya 2009). It appears clear that the deployment of civilian missions are the most demanding, although the military ones are often considered as more challenging, because currently civilian experts are hardly fully prepared in short time.
THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY (ENP)

Neighbouring countries are the first place where the EU may be engaged for peace and stability. These new European borders are characterised by a clash between minorities’ aspirations to achieve statehood and the existing States’ determination to preserve the existing boarders. There is no clear-cut solution under international law for resolving these conflicts due to the clash between the principles of the inviolability of state borders and of the right for self-determination of people (Mirimanova 2010).

The 2003 Security Strategy pointed out that ‘it is in the European interest that countries on our borders are well-governed. Neighbours who are engaged in violent conflict, weak states where organised crime flourishes, dysfunctional societies or exploding population growth on its borders all pose problems for Europe’. And: ‘It is not in our interest that enlargement should create new dividing lines in Europe. We need to extend the benefits of economic and political cooperation to our neighbours in the East while tackling political problems there’ (Council of the European Union, 2003: 7-8). The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), therefore, was designed in 2003 as a ‘soft power’ foreign policy approach that in essence means to ‘get others to want what you want’ (Nye 2004: 256; Tocci 2008).

The Lisbon Treaty expressively makes clear that the Union ‘shall develop a special relationship with neighbouring Countries, aiming to establish an area of prosperity and good neighbourliness, founded on the values of the Union’ (Title I, Article 8).

Furthermore, ENP Action Plans are firstly about the EU security that can be ensured through cooperation between the EU and the selected partners in the neighbourhood (Mirimanova 2010). In addition, commitment to the promotion of conflict prevention and resolution is expressed in the general ENP declarations (Commission 2004). Neighbours’ problems risk to produce major spillovers for the EU, such as criminality, illegal immigration or environmental troubles. According to Mirimanova (2010), the Union is supporting International non-governmental organizations (INGOs) working on initiatives in conflict zones from the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) and since 2006 from the Instrument for Stability (IfS), but not from the ENPI. Consequently, INGOs play an important role in mediation and cross-conflict activities. Funds for local CSOs, with the exception of the Israeli and Palestinian CSOs, are short-term and small-scale.
EU AND LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETIES

There has been a growing interest in the contribution of civil society\(^2\) to peace since the end of the Cold War. CSOs can play a crucial role going beyond negotiating interests to meet all sides’ basic needs because they often have better access to the parties involved in a conflict (Mikhelidze, Pirozzi 2008), and they can work for a lasting peace or for the reconciliation process. CSOs also have direct connections with the many groups and individuals on the ground, and they may prepare strong conflict assessment and analysis. Therefore, they may have a relevant role in all different stages of the conflict. CSOs are also relevant to limit the impact of criminal organisations that are often fuelling insecurity and ethnic conflicts (Strazzari 2003). However, their intervention is considered more effective in the efforts and activities at conflict prevention stage, and in post-settlement reconciliation and peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding strategies supported by CSOs are usually medium and long-term activities. Early warning systems, violence prevention, peace education, or the establishment of peace zones are examples of conflict prevention activities, while truth and reconciliation commissions, facilitation of dialogue among conflict groups, or reintegration of ex military and paramilitary groups are common cases of post-conflict activities.

Tracks 2 and 3 diplomacy may also support – but not substitute – the official diplomacy. In context of intractable conflicts, these two parallel tracks may enable the whole European diplomacy to achieve peace and stability. Notably, Bell and Rourke (2007) analysed 389 peace agreements (addressing 48 intra-state conflicts) and they noticed that only five intra-state processes did not mention civil society in any of their peace agreements.

In general, CSOs may improve the link between individual and societal dynamics, between personal and political change; and they might take the role of moderate political actors where the parties are absent and politics is radicalised. Many CSOs have an innovative and cutting edge approach to conflict resolution and peacebuilding (Mirimanova 2010) and they can deeply improve the link with development and security policies.

The EU has frequently acknowledged the role of civil society organisations and other local actors in its activities within the field of peacebuilding and conflict prevention, including the Common (formerly European) Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

\(^2\) A remarkable definition of civil society is ‘the arena, outside of the family, the state and the market where people associate to advance common interests’ (Fioramonti, Heinrich, 2007: 8).
Since the late 1990s, the EU has established regular contact with CSOs through the Human Rights Contact Group, the Civil Society Contact Group, the Common Foreign and Security Policy Contact Group and the Arms Transfer Contact Group (Tocci, 2008). Furthermore, a platform of CSOs— the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO)³ — established in 2002 an office in Brussels in order to improve civil society access to EU institutions and policy-making in the peace sector.

In its 2001 Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, the EU commits to making use of civil society as valuable source of information, while in the 2004 Action Plan for Civilian Aspects of the European Security and Defence Policy the European Council recommends regular exchanges of information with representatives from CSOs (Palm, 2010). Guidelines for co-operation with civil society are further developed by the Commission (2006a and 2006b) who suggested to enhance civil society participation in the ENP by encouraging neighbourhood governments to seek civil society involvement in governance (Tocci 2008). The document Recommendations for enhancing cooperation with NGOs and CSOs in the framework of EU Civilian Crisis Management and Conflict Prevention includes recommendations for the establishment of CSOs liaison functions and measures for routine information exchange and feedback from local populations as a part of evaluation processes (Palm, 2010).

Finally, the implementation of the Civilian Headline Goal 2010 (CHG) – the ‘work to review illustrative scenarios, assess required capabilities and survey civilian capabilities’ (Council of The European Union, 2007: 6) – is concluding its process at the end of 2010. This document is highlighting the role played by CSOs and other local actors: ‘The CHG 2010 should identify and exploit possible synergies with other actors in civilian crisis management, which include International Organisations, Regional Organisations and other major actors, e.g. non-EU States and civil society through Non-governmental Organisations and Civil Society Organisations, in line with agreed principles and in full respect of the EU’s autonomous decision-making’.

However, civil society is composed of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ organisations: CSOs may reject fundamental principles on which the state is organised. This cleavage is accentuated in conflict areas in which civil society may be divided along the lines of the conflict, and in which both state and non-state actors use violence to further their aims (Bell, O’Rourke, 2007). ‘Uncivil society’ may

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³ EPLO includes 27 national or transnational European NGOs, think tanks and networks.
be a reflection of the conflict and support conflict escalation. Yet even in these cases, civil society remains a force to be reckoned with (Tocci 2008). Plus, the ability of ‘civil’ society to constructively engage with ‘uncivil’ society in the dialogue, cross-conflict initiatives, and conflict sensitive development is an indicator of their maturity as peacebuilding agents (Mirimanova 2010). In situations of violent conflict, local civil society actors can provide the rationale and moral justification for violence, support violent actions, or contribute through discourse to the overall securitisation.

Another relevant distinction is the one between international NGOs and local CSOs. Local organisations may often look rather different from European ones: in many cases they are less organised, less professional, with a strong turnover and with fewer financial resources than their EU counterparts. However, their strengths are legitimacy and a better understanding of social dynamics. As part of society, local CSOs can recognise and understand the underlying root causes of greed and grievance underpinning conflicts. Local civil society at times promotes the civic values and practices necessary to improve peace and security, while at other times contributes – directly or indirectly – to the causes of conflict and instability.

Many aspects of the EU security strategy may be improved, for instance the skills to work on brief early warning analysis. A limit of the EU approach is to facilitate dialogue in conflict situation, by supporting its own vision with no impartiality and not facilitating that the two or more parties find the best agreement for them. According to Natalia Mirimanova (2010: 25), ‘a clear preference for the two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is expressed in the two respective Action Plans, a reference to the principle of self-determination of people is made in Armenia Action plan, but not in the Azerbaijan Action plan, while in the Action plans for Moldova and Georgia the principle of territorial integrity is stated as the basis for the resolution of the Transnistria and Abkhazia and South Ossetia conflicts, respectively’. An exception was the EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) that was set up in 2005 after the Moldovan-Ukrainian request to assist with the customs procedures at the border between Ukraine and Transnistria.

Partnership with civil society organisations (CSOs) remains crucial for the Union. But which CSOs does the EU engage with in the neighbourhood? Does the ENP succeed in raising the effectiveness of CSO peacebuilding activities, or instead does it weaken inadvertently the impact of these activities? In many EU documents involvement of local civil society in peacebuilding is considered as essential. However, in practise, there is lack
of recognition that conflict prevention and peacebuilding in cooperation with CSOs requires a specific supporting structure and may not be only supported by narrow project-based approach (Mirimanova 2010).

The Peacebuilding Partnership (PbP) – established under the crisis-preparedness component of the Instrument for Stability – is a considerable breakthrough in the direction of a more stable and long-term partnership with key local actors beyond conventional project-based or activity-based planning. The EU, therefore, considering that ‘civil society organisations […] constitute an invaluable source of expertise in this area, either in providing policy-makers with reliable and timely information or analysis of incipient conflict, or in dealing with its consequences in the field’ is starting to regularly recognise specialised competence in peacebuilding of CSOs’.

However, the EU civilian missions are barely cooperating with local CSOs. For instance, EUBAM is not having relevant contacts with CSOs and opinion polls demonstrate that the mission is still quite unknown and far from the local people. In Georgia, EUMM demonstrates an open unwillingness to cooperate with local CSOs and to use the information provided by civilians. The cooperation is dependent on the will of individuals working within the mission. Not only the mandate, but also the specific background and training of the personnel engaged in the missions are influencing the cooperation. EUMM, as other civilian missions, is for the most part run by military personnel (or former personnel), often not well prepared on, for instance, human rights or the implementation of the Security Council Resolution 1325 and often with disbelief in civilians. According to former EUMM personnel, on several occasions important information regarding the security situation was disregarded because it came from a civilian source: the leadership within the mission would oppose cooperation with such organisations and ignore any information not coming from a military/police source.

Pools and local sources are confirming that a lot of times civilian missions are perceived as a military mission and it might give a generic idea of the level of interaction with the local community. Therefore, there is a lack of official strategy during missions on how to cooperate with CSOs, and, at the same time, a need for more professionals with civilian background.
EU AND OTHER LOCAL ACTORS

Which other local actors operating to avoid domestic instability may cooperate with the EU for peace and security? Which typologies of European civilian missions are mostly working with them and how?

Diamond and McDonald's (1996) presented a multi-track diplomacy model composed by eight different types of actors. The authors were thinking of actors directly or indirectly engaged in conflict resolution processes. Diamond and McDonald's identify a first list of local partners which may cooperate in order to prevent instability and support peace and security. Beyond ‘track 1’ composed by the official diplomacy, others are professional NGOs specialised on peace and conflict; business sector; private citizens; research, training and education; activists/lobbyists; spiritual and religious communities; foundations and individual philanthropists; media. All these tracks may improve the EU security policy and therefore they deserve attention.

In the eastern neighbouring countries the religious aspect, for instance, is very significant. The Orthodox Church, largely present in the eastern Balkans and in Caucasus, is theologically unified, but nationally distinct. For instance, in Moldova both the Orthodox Church of Russia and of Romania are present and very active. It is evident how they can exacerbate this cleavage raising social and political effects, or they can instead mitigate it. Diplomatic and peacebuilding activities may take advantage by bearing in mind this capability.

In Moldova, it is also possible to analyse a case of interaction between the purpose of the ‘European Border Assistance Mission’ (EUBAM) and the business sector. As a consequence of the agreement between Ukraine and Moldova, Transnistrian companies are pushed to register in Chişinău and in this way the economic power of the region is more transparent and less dependent from the Transnistrian political power. Trade is a cornerstone for Transnistria and it was demonstrated by the two Transnistrian Investment Forums organised in April 2009 and in September 2010.

EU policy and EUBAM on the field can also support those farmers unable to harvest their crops, like in Doroţcaia, a village situated on the eastern bank of the river Nistru/Dniester, the river dividing Transnistria from the proper Moldova. On the eastern edge of Doroţcaia passes the strategic road linking Tiraspol and Ribniţa and Transnistrian authorities want to control this road. 85% of Doroţcaia’s farmland is across the road and the farmers had problems with Tiraspol authorities in order to access their land. Many farms are day-by-
day working together on the two banks of the river beyond any identity and the EU presence can improve the agricultural sector.

Not only in Transnistria, but also in other self proclaimed republics in the Caucasus, such as South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Nagorno Karabakh the enterprises day-to-day contacts have provided for continuity in pre-war relations while national-level discourses in the political sphere continued to fuel the conflict (Mirimanova 2006). The self proclaimed republics, or some areas of them, were often flourishing economic or agricultural districts. This is the case of Transnistria, but also of Gal/i in Abkhazia, an area with a developed agricultural sector. Plus, because of Gal/i’s geographical position, the EU may support new connections between Abkhazia and Georgia. EUMM staff is monitoring the Administrative Boundary Line of the breakaway region and improving safety and security for the local residents. At the same time, the Mission wants, at least in theory, contribute to create conditions whereby civilians can cross the Administrative Boundary Lines of Abkhazia without fear and obstacles, thus reducing the detrimental effects of dividing lines. Region-to-region business cooperation may be a constructive and efficient approach to move on in this direction: if a Georgian starts a business, it stirs suspicion among his Abkhaz neighbours and the authorities. A joint business initiative between a Gal/i Georgian and an Abkhaz from Sukhum/i, for example, would be better received (Mirimanova 2006).

Recent developments in the Gal/i region also demonstrate the crucial role of women. Women have the advantage of being perceived as less threatening when violent episodes occur as well when there is a need to reach out to the other side to prevent further escalation4. In the South Caucasus, women have been at the forefront of public efforts at reconciliation. For example, women from Georgia were the first to cross the border over the Inguri bridge and speak to women in Abkhazia. In the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict, IDP women’s groups on the Georgian side, such as The Sukhumi Foundation based in Kutaisi, have been able to establish joint business partnerships with different women’s groups on the Abkhaz side, for example the Association of Women of Abkhazia (Matveeva 2007). The Union of Women Entrepreneurs was founded in April 2002 and is staffed by ethnic Abkhaz. However, it is committed across ethnic divisions. The head of the Union of Women Entrepreneurs was the driving force behind an initiative to involve Georgian

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4 Women’s participation at all levels of peace building was established in UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The document recommends regular meetings to be held with local and international women groups from civil society in the area of operation in order to identify
returnees in Gal/i, Ochamchira and Tkvarchel/i districts, where poverty levels and war devastation are the highest in Abkhazia (Mirimanova 2006).

These examples show how the EU may improve its security in the neighbourhood areas using different tracks, in primis civil society and business. For the economic sector, it is extremely relevant that this remains consistent with other EU policies.

issues of concern. Tools for mainstreaming human rights in CSDP missions are presented in Mainstreaming of Human Rights into ESDP (Palm 2010).
COHERENCE OF OTHER EUROPEAN POLICIES WITH SECURITY

The EU security policy can be largely limited if other policies are not coherent. The Commission adds that the Union has ‘a direct interest in working with partners to promote their resolution, because they undermine EU efforts to promote political reform and economic development in the neighbourhood and because they could affect the EU’s own security’. Therefore, the deployment of all available tools would increase EU influence and avoid the limitations of short-term crisis management (Commission 2007).

For instance, the Union has a broad approach to ‘peacebuilding’, which covers on the one side before, during and after the end of violent conflict, and, on the other side, it manages forms of violence, but also structural features, such as social injustice, unequal development and discrimination. On the 27th October, during the discussion of the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs, Catherine Ashton declared that conflict prevention and peacebuilding is ‘what the EU is about’, ‘this is what we do’, but that she would resist labelling a specific part of the EEAS, attempting instead to ensure that this focus was present throughout the structure: ‘the core business of everything we do in all Countries in which we are operating, not just a department’ (Sturm 2010)\(^5\).

The EU promotes these approaches also through its ‘constructive engagement’ with conflict parties (Commission 2001: 8-9). This engagement means different forms of cooperation, often put into action in contractual agreements with third parties (Tocci 2008). In the southern and eastern neighbours the contracts are the Neighbourhood Agreements (or Enhanced Agreements)\(^6\).

More specifically, the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI) – the financial instrument for European neighbourhood policy (ENP) offering co-funding for promoting good governance and equitable social and economic development process – supports cross-border and trans-regional cooperation as well as the gradual economic integration of recipient countries with the European Union (EU) beneficiary countries. The Commission (2006a; 2006b), which defines the funding and implementation of the ENP, however, does not make reference to support for conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the

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\(^5\) The general tendency to delegate peacebuilding activities to other actors (UN, OSCE, etc.). However, is also an indicator of the EU’s diffidence vis-à-vis protracted conflicts. Action Plans for Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory is a notable exception (Mirimanova 2010).

\(^6\) In other neighbour areas: Treaty of Accession they foresee Association Agreements for the southern Mediterranean countries, Partnership and Cooperation Agreements for the former Soviet countries, Stabilization and Association Agreements for the Western Balkan countries.
European Neighbourhood (Mirimanova 2010). The security issue is presented in generic expressions and with a non-specific promotion of domestic democratic reforms as a way to peace. Nevertheless, the democratic process is not a guarantee for conflict prevention and security.

A specific and relevant point in ENP is the EU has real leverage that could influence states’ governments and main local actors toward security policy ‘in the absence of the membership “carrot”’ (Mirimanova 2010: 4). The case of the Republic of Cyprus, for instance, has shown little relevance of the EU in conflict settlement. All the political parties in Moldova are working for membership, but no evidence can be found that this carrot is tied to a solution of the Transnistrian conflict. Furthermore, this leverage cannot be used in the Caucasus.

Beyond the goal of achieving varying degrees of cooperation with neighbour countries, these contractual ties aim at fostering long-run structural change, stabilisations, security and conflict prevention. In this connection, the ‘human security’ concept – despite the huge debate on its political utility and effectiveness – is a valid theoretical framework for consistent of different policies. The EU has largely used it (Kaldor 2007). According to Gya (2010: 2), ‘human security can be used as an “organising concept” binding and explaining the core aim of a holistic EU’ approach. Furthermore, it ‘need to be integrated from pre-planning stage for mission success, as well as to foment local capacity building, so that the population feels “engaged” in sorting out their own backyard’.
EVALUATE EFFECTIVENESS

How can the involvement of local actors and their effectiveness in peace and security policy of the Union be measured? A criterion is to identify which local actors are mentioned in the EU official documents as well as in the policy-making of the different European Institutions which are involved. This step of analysis is a cornerstone, but, if the only one, the risk is to just have a ‘will-analysis’.

The EU views as critical indicators of conflict prevention and resolution issues such as human and minority rights, democracy, state legitimacy, dispute resolving mechanisms, rule of law, social solidarity, sustainable development and an active civil society (Kronenberger and Wouters 2005; Tocci 2008). These indicators, however, are not enough to grasp the whole picture.

Field research, therefore, is enormously relevant to verify how local actors are involved concretely. As discussed by Tocci (2008), however, problems of impact assessment for CSOs are finding ties between the involvement of a CSO and the impact on the conflict’s dynamics. Furthermore, the civil society’s impact is often unmeasurable and, finally, while it may be possible to determine the precise impact of one activity, relationships of this small-scale impact with the whole scenario are subjective and difficult to ascertain.

Qualitative researches and interviews seem to be a fruitful path. Interviews may be conducted with EU officers – especially in the civilian missions – and local actors collaborating with the EU, keeping in mind that impact analysis is often qualitative in nature and in part subjective.

While considering impact, also effectiveness of cooperation with CSOs or other local actors deserves attention. Tocci (2008) identifies five principal factors which determine the effectiveness of a particular local CSO activity in conflict: the rootedness and efficiency (organisational, financial and professional quality) of the CSO itself; its relations with other CSOs; its relations with the top-level and in particular the state and the mainstream media; its relations with the international community involved in conflict; time contingent shocks and events, specific to each and every conflict context. These five factors may also be helpful for the Union and for specific field missions to evaluate which CSOs can contribute to conflict prevention and security.
CONCLUSIONS

EU neighbourhood policies for security, defence and conflict prevention are occasionally interacting with local actors. The EU is often using a scheme of the Europeanisation of the politics and economies in the Neighbourhood rather than strategies for peacebuilding and security policy involving different sectors and actors. Furthermore, the EU conflict prevention strategy is mainly a crisis response. The cooperation with local CSOs may bring several advantages for the EU security policy.

The conflict resolution rhetoric can be found in many EU documents, but in practice the classic development and security agendas do not seem to be enriched with these approaches and strategies. The application of the ‘human security’ concept, the expansion of the notion of violence (direct, cultural and structural) and a broad peacebuilding approach can improve the effectiveness of EU defence and security policy.

Another possible approach in the Neighbourhood Policy can be represented by supra-state (regional) formats, like the Caucasus meetings with the representatives of all the regions⁷. Besides, sub-state (local-to-local) formats civilian-to-civilian approach can be pursued in the framework of a long-term comprehensive approach.

Rules and customs of the Common Security and Defence Policy are still in the making. The involvement of diversified local actors, in primis CSOs, seems to have remarkable advantages.

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⁷ Caucasus Business and Development Network includes three states and three unrecognised republics in the South Caucasus and Turkey. ‘This network turns the concept of an integrated South Caucasus economic space into reality through specific projects and brands (Caucasus Cheese, Caucasus Tea, Caucasus Wine) and advocacy for the legalisation of economic activities across the conflict frontiers’ (Mirimanova 2010).