# Final Report on Regional Cooperation

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## EU-GRASP

Changing Multilateralism: the EU as a Global-regional Actor in Security and Peace, or EU-GRASP in short, is an EU funded FP7 Programme. EU-GRASP aims to contribute to the analysis and articulation of the current and future role of the EU as a global actor in multilateral security governance, in a context of challenged multilateralism, where the EU aims at "effective multilateralism". This project therefore examines the notion and practice of multilateralism in order to provide the required theoretical background for assessing the linkages between the EU's current security activities with multi-polarism, international law, regional integration processes and the United Nations system.

## Partners

EU-GRASP is coordinated by the United Nations University – Comparative regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS). The other partners of EU-GRASP are based worldwide and include: University of Warwick (UK), University of Gothenburg (Sweden), Florence Forum on the Problems of Peace and War (Italy), KULeuven (Belgium), Centre for International Governance Innovation (Canada), University of Peking (China), Institute for Security Studies (South Africa) and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (Israel).
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## Introduction

Six different security issues are distinguished within the EU-GRASP project: (i) regional conflict, (ii) terrorism, (iii) weapons of mass destruction, (iv) energy security and climate change, (v) human rights, and (vi) migration. These security issues are addressed by the EU at various intersecting levels and by different means and policy-instruments, ranging from the bilateral (e.g., the growing dialogues between the EU and single States in a bilateral framework), regional (the EU internal dimension, or the interaction between the institutional actors and the EU Member States), interregional (the development of interregional dialogues between the EU and other regional organisations), and the global level (the link between the EU and the UN on the one hand, and the EU and other multilateral organisations on the other).

The aim of this paper is to provide a brief factsheet of the relevant findings with respect to regional cooperation that emanated from the case-studies and the 'mapping exercise' conducted by the six papers produced for Work Package three.

## 1: Method

The six papers produced under Work Package three with respect to regional cooperation drew their information from a specific analytical framework (see the paper on 'the EU as a regional Actor: a Framework for Analysis' for a more detailed overview). This framework consists of an analysis of (i) *the institutional dimension underpinning each security issue,* (ii) *the EU's policy output,* and (iii) an *evaluation of the Union's institutional and output dimension*; this 'check-up' of EU policy through the

assessment of its coherence, the current levels of accountability, and the legitimacy of EU action, enables a reflection on the merits of European policy in the security field.

1.  The institutional dimension should be understood as reflecting the division of competences between the EU and its Member States in the respective issue areas, as laid down in the Treaties and derived from the relevant case law of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) and a brief overview of the changes the Treaty of Lisbon made to EU policy in the security field. This institutional dimension serves as an important underpinning of the Union's policy output and is thus a crucial element of this analysis.

2.  The analysis of the Union's policy output consists of providing an overview of the key objectives that the policy is set to fulfil, the most important instruments that have been adopted at the EU level, and a brief analysis of the external dimension underpinning EU internal security policy.

3.  The third step of the analysis can be seen as performing a check-up of the EU policy to date, by evaluating the Union's institutional and output dimension by means of various criteria. First, EU security policy is analysed for coherence to see if EU external action is both consistent with and provides for synergy effects between its various external policies. Secondly, the presence of checks and balances is looked at, providing an overview of the current levels of accountability for EU policy. Finally, the legitimacy, or the 'success', of EU action in the security field is assessed.

The relevant findings with respect to regional cooperation have subsequently been combined and checked against the information that emanated from the case-studies to produce the present 'fact-sheet'. The following paragraphs list the key-findings with respect to regional cooperation per security issue that have emerged from this analysis.

# 2: Key-Findings

## 2.1: General Implications

- Union competences in the field of security policy overall limited where decision-making power lies primarily with the Member States;
- The field of energy provides some exception, due to extensive measures taken with regard to the internal energy market. However, on external energy policy Brussels has very few competences;
- The field of migration similarly allowed the – then European Community – to adopt a great number of measures with respect to visas, asylum, immigration and other areas connected with the free movement of persons, customs cooperation and countering fraud;
- Parliamentary involvement limited under the CFSP, causing friction between the Council and the Parliament at times over adopted decisions;
- European Parliament seems to devote greater attention to the protection of the individual, both from Member States as well as from third countries, whereas EU Member States seem predominantly concerned with the security of the Union and its citizens;

## 2.2: Regional Conflict

- A poor understanding of the complexity of regional conflicts (and their construction) often results in a failure to design sustainable regional security governance mechanisms. The European policy community is found to apply to a large extent a 'state-centric', rather than 'regional' lense to the conflicts in the Great Lakes region in Africa;
- Since the mid 2000s, the Union has tried to apply a more regional approach to conflicts, whereby a political solution for the entire conflict region is sought, rather than providing band-aid solutions to conflicts and security problems taken in isolation;
- The above translates into a preference on part of the Union to engage in cooperation with regional organisations to reach a settlement to a conflict, rather than seeking a confrontational approach vis-à-vis aggressors in a regional conflict setting. The Union takes up an anti-violence position whereby diplomacy and negotiations are preferred over military involvement;

- The EU finds it problematic to engage successfully in regional conflicts where there is the absence of a credible regional counterpart to the Union;
- EU promotes itself as a normative actor advocating human rights and democracy;
- EU Member States' interests play a major role in the conflicts in Africa. E.g. former colonial powers such as France and Belgium, but other Member Sates equally pursue their specific interests, particularly in the Great Lakes Region. EU military policies are highly influenced by Member States' policies (e.g. French troops were involved in the ongoing fighting in Chad and the Central African Republic due to own security concerns of France);
- The effectiveness of EU security governance is undermined by the hierarchical and complicated relationships between Brussels and the field level due to the multitude of actors, an overlap of bilateral and EU policies and top-down approaches from Brussels. This is further exacerbated by weak staff competence because staff mostly consists of inexperienced junior employees to the most difficult settings where senior experts avoid to be deployed due to the difficult living and working conditions;
- If the EU wants to deploy over the full range of CSDP operations, its operational capability may fall short.

## 2.3: Terrorism

- The Union's self-perception is one of 'a force of good' promoting human rights, democracy, and peaceful means in solving conflicts;
- The EU beliefs development is in-and-of-itself a global good, which in turn is used to justify a sustained intervention in the region in terms of security governance. This can mobilise resources, yet on the other hand it has the potential to stymie debate on the issue and lead to a stagnant and ineffective policy. It is said the latter has been the case in Afghanistan;
- A wide range of anti-terrorism legislation has been adopted in the Union since 11 September 2001; Externally however, internal wrangling between Member States largely prevented a coherent external approach;
- However, implementation of this legislation in the various Member States is lagging behind and effective information-sharing is still a problem;
- Internal divisions within the Union played a key-role in the decision to blacklist Hamas around 2002/2003. The UK largely prevented the opening of a more official line on Hamas around 2003/2004;

- Internal differences – fuelled by the recent problems in the region incl. the Gaza war in December 2008-January 2009 – have hitherto prevented the EU from being able to take a unanimous decisions;
- EU policies with regard to the MENA region more broadly and more specifically with regard to Egypt have been characterised by a markedly 'securitised' discourse in particular in the field of counter-terrorism where the Union's external action is perceived through an increasingly narrow security lens. This has led to ineffective, EU defensive and exclusionary policies;
- There is a clear discrepancy between the calls for democracy and freedom in the middle east and the policies of stability that the Union has advocated in the last decades;

## 2.4: Energy Security

- There seems an intra-EU divide between the Union's larger Member States on the one hand and the central and Eastern European Member States on the other with respect to natural gas relations with Russia. The former are largely opposed to more concerted action at EU level and prefer an industry led approach with minimal supranational involvement, whereas the latter see it as a way to improve their leverage vis-à-vis third country suppliers such as Russia;
- Some of the Central and Eastern Member States feel they need the support of the European Commission to keep on par with the bigger Member States when it comes to energy;
- These intra-EU divides have led to Member States often operating individually when it comes to the signing of gas contracts, a practice which has resulted in a number of deals signed with Gazprom despite the Commission's rhetoric to reduce dependency on Russia;
- Equally, the dominance of bilateralism creates intra-EU competition between pipeline projects which have as their aim to source alternative gas supplies from Central Asia – harming the Union's overall diversification goals in the end;
- Disagreement exists between EU Member States and between Member States and the European Parliament and the Commission about the extent to which an emphasis human rights and democracy promotion should feature in the energy relations with Central Asian producer countries. The Parliament insists on a heavier focus on human rights and democracy promotion (e.g. the refusal to ratify the PCA with Turkmenistan, the lifting of sanctions against Uzbekistan, and the consternation surrounding recent meetings with the

leaders of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan), whereas some of the Union's larger Member States and the Commission to some extent seem more in favour of a pragmatic approach;

## 2.5: Weapons of Mass Destruction

- The EU views itself as a force for good whose policies are based on peaceful means and persuasion, rather than the use of force and coercion, and which pursues moral values rather than narrow security interests;
- EU WMD policy is predominantly influenced by the 'Rogue Doctrine', which asserts that proliferation is driven by a small number of countries and non-state actors but presents a real threat, because proliferating countries may help one another [and] takes place outside the current control regime;
- WMD policy on the external level, remains heavily impacted by bilateral affairs of EU Member States owing to initiatives such as the E3 contact group with Iran which did not reflect the interests of the entire Union per sé[1], the absence of the EU in initiatives such as the Proliferation Security Initiative, the EU not being a member of the IAEA, and the difficulties for the Union to defend its common positions at the NPT Review Conferences where France and the UK as Nuclear Weapon States and Permanent Members of the UN Security Council frequently opt for a different course;
- The EU's narrative of 'the more secure countries feel, the more likely they are to abandon WMD programmes' is inconsistent with the fact that France and the UK – two countries which are far more secure than Iran, North Korea, India and Pakistan – possess WMDs and show no indication of getting rid of them;
- Level of accountability to European Parliament low, given WMD policy falls within the purview of the CFSP;
- At EU level there is a lack of the full application of the WMD Strategy's Chapter 2, to take into account that in many cases the countries developing WMD's do so for legitimate security concerns;
- A large dissonance exists between the ways in which EU member States, the European Parliament and the Commission address Iran and North Korea in their public speeches. The Parliament stresses above all non-military intervention and human rights and democracy

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[1] Note that this situation was somewhat improved when the E3 group was enlarged to the EU3 group, by including then High Representative Javier Solana.

promotion. The UK espoused a politicised, but non-securitised frame of the Iranian nuclear Programme. Germany and France however strike a much more securitised tone.

## 2.6: Human Rights

- In its external relations, the EU has often demonstrated hostility towards the use of heavy measures such as sanctions and embargoes, to promote human rights in other countries. More generally instead, it has favoured a gradual approach characterised by political dialogue, development cooperation and democracy assistance, which is based on the conviction that rewarding positive attitudes towards political reforms is a better long-term strategy than overtly punishing temporary setbacks;
- The EU is said to have traditionally shown greater zeal in resorting to punitive measures for violations of human rights in those regions of the world where it had 'the upper hand', particularly in the 'poor, marginal countries' of sub-saharan Africa. A stronger mainstreaming of human rights considerations into the CFSP is thus desirable. Illustrative in this regard is the failure for the EU to agree internally on difficult dossiers.
  - o E.g. during the 2006 Lebanon conflict, the EU was basically split in half between a group calling for an immediate ceasefire and another who was wary to do so. This resulted in a rather weak and ineffective final document, that mostly reflected the vetoes from the group who did not want to call for an immediate ceasefire and by arguing instead that the loss of innocent life was deplorable, rather than illegal or inacceptable;
  - o E.g. The European Commission called most consistently for the need of humanitarian action during the 2006 conflict, indicating strong support for the concept of human security. The Finnish Presidency at the time however were more reluctant to adopt principles such as the primacy of human rights and seemed to adopt a more conventional approach to the crisis, focused primarily on its political and strategic development.
  - o E.g. no European country endorsed the Goldstone report after the December 2008-January 2009 Gaza conflict. The European Parliament however advocated a much stronger reaction towards Israel;

- Disagreement exists between EU Member States and between Member States and the European Parliament and the Commission about the extent to which an emphasis human

rights and democracy promotion should feature in the energy relations with Central Asian producer countries. The Parliament insists on a heavier focus on human rights and democracy promotion (e.g. the refusal to ratify the PCA with Turkmenistan; the lifting of sanctions against Uzbekistan; and the consternation surrounding recent meetings with the leaders of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan; its insistence that genocide was taking place in Darfur), whereas some of the Union's larger Member States and the Commission to some extent seem more in favour of a pragmatic approach refraining from strong language;

## 2.7: Migration

- After the terrorist attacks in the US (9/11) and Europe (London 2005 and Madrid 2004), the Union's stance on migration shifted towards one whereby illegal and irregular migration should be kept under control to preserve the European space of freedom, security and justice. Equally, the EU framed migration in the sense that illegal and irregular migration could be related to organised crime and terrorism;
- Border states such as Spain, Italy, and Greece frequently "complain" about being over-burdened with the influx of migrants, claiming other Member States are not doing enough to share the burden. This resulted among others in the decisions by Italy to grant temporary visas after the influx of migrants after the Arabian revolutions and the decision by France to re-instate border controls as a consequence;
- Compared to the EU Member States and the Commission, the European Parliament insists on a heavier focus on the protection of human rights in the management of migration flows. The Parliament is particularly worried about the confused assimilation between irregular migration and asylum seekers. It fears the political and humanitarian dimension of asylum is increasingly being obscured by what are essentially security aspects. The Parliament was particularly concerned about the development of repressive EU measures (readmission agreements, police checks, the return Directive etc.) before a common policy for legal migration was being defined;
- Priorities within EU migration policies are not clearly spelled out, thus it is not clear whether the primary aim is to 'save lives' or to reduce the flow of irregular migrants heading for Europe;
- The collection and sharing of reliable and consistent information sharing between Member States and between Member States and the EU Institutions still proves challenging today.

Increased cooperation is needed to improve this situation. Equally, the transposition of relevant EU legislation by Member States is often not occurring at the desired pace;

- Relations with third countries in terms of migration often show unnecessarily overlap between relations between the Union and third countries and individual Member States and third countries. Often the state-state relations lack a more comprehensive scope, being mainly based on eliminating incoming flows of migrants. This leads to a lack of consistency between EU and Member State level and undermines the effectiveness of Union policies.

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