



# Supporting peacebuilding in times of change

A SYNTHESIS OF 4 CASE STUDIES

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## Acronyms

BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit
CSDP	Common Security & Defence Policy
CRS	Common Reporting System (OECD-DAC)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DEVCO	International and Development Cooperation DG of the European Commission
DFID	Department for International Development
DG	Directorate-General of the European Commission
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
EEAS	European External Action Service
EPRS	European Parliament Research Service
EU	European Union
FBA	Folke Bernadotte Academy
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
HMG	Her Majesty's Government - UK
IEP	Institute of Economics and Peace
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	non-governmental organisation
ODA	official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States

## Executive summary

The world has experienced significant changes in the last few years, as a result of geopolitical and domestic political dynamics that have evolved at a much faster pace. Europe has not been immune from these changes. At the same time, violent conflict has been on the rise, requiring more effective responses. While there has been much analysis on the characteristics of this changing world on the one hand, and on the need to better tackle violent conflict on the other hand, there has been little reflection about how support from European official actors for normative agendas like peacebuilding may evolve at the meta level. This is what this study aimed to look at, by analysing past developments, amidst concerns that this support will diminish or change.

Responding to violent conflict or the threat of violent conflict, either through support to peacebuilding or by other means, is both a political and a bureaucratic choice by governments. **Global policy commitments and disbursements of funding for civilian peacebuilding have been rising in the last ten years as has at a slower rate aid funding for peace and security overall. Yet it appears that support - and the quality of support - to peacebuilding is in flux, as influential factors that usually take significant time to evolve are all changing faster.** This is true even among the most consistent supporters of peacebuilding globally, and can be both a challenge and an opportunity.

Indeed, during the past 25 years, **the international peacebuilding community has been broadly reliant on a relatively small number of supporters, namely European countries and the EU institutions** which have played a highly influential role backing peacebuilding politically, through policy commitments and with financial disbursements. This report synthesises findings of four case studies of European countries and institutions active in peacebuilding support, namely Germany, Sweden, the UK and the EU institutions, which together provided 47% of total peacebuilding-related ODA during the past 10 years.

While no choices appeared inevitable for any of the cases studied, in each we found eight recurring factors that influenced support to peacebuilding throughout the 25-year period under analysis. By **exploring these factors, we can move beyond stock phrases like 'lack of political will', 'capacity constraints' or the latest policy initiatives to gain a clearer sense of why and how commitments were adopted and the degree of their implementation.** Through our study, we identified eight key factors that will likely continue to influence any future evolution in support to peacebuilding:



### The geopolitical era

Official support for peacebuilding was almost non-existent before the end of the Cold War, and while we are unlikely to return to an era of bipolar political competition, the current geopolitical flux will profoundly affect political support to peacebuilding, as it has in the past. Though it is difficult to predict the impact of these shifts, outcomes could include changing geographic priorities, attempts to co-opt peacebuilding approaches, and recourse to 'power politics' to resolve conflicts with potentially smaller space for non-governmental actors – while conflicts deemed non-strategic may be increasingly ignored.



### The domestic political culture including history

The domestic political culture, history and the national 'sense of place in the world' are fundamental characteristics that define support to peacebuilding. These did evolve in all of our case studies as the domestic politics changed, albeit usually slowly. While support to peacebuilding has by no means been a central consideration in this flux, the current changes in domestic political culture and the nature of national politics have brought opportunities and threats not seen during the past 25 years.



### The system of governance

The governance system defines the context and boundaries in which foreign and development policy decisions are reached. This factor is rather different from the others because of its role in 'filtering' and framing the political and bureaucratic choices that can be taken in support of peacebuilding. Systems of governance do not easily bend to a peacebuilding logic which entails more bottom-up, flexible, speedy, long-term, multi-actor, risk-taking and integrated action across government. They also explain why so much good conflict policy has struggled to be implemented in practice.



### Domestic events with an international dimension

These events (including terrorist attacks or irregular migration flows) - that touch upon or influence the highest levels of national politics - have become more prevalent in the past five years and can partially reset the foreign and development policy agenda, filtering down to influence support for peacebuilding.



### Major conflicts and instability

Major conflicts or instability (in the neighbourhood or elsewhere) with geopolitical significance (e.g. Iraq / Arab Spring) to or the direct involvement of one or more European countries (Afghanistan) may influence overall conflict-related policy even if the conflicts themselves are geographically isolated.



### Allies and other governments' initiatives

While the perspectives and influence of allies, governmental partners and, in the case of the EU, member states, appear to be less important than the first five factors, many policy commitments and approaches to violent conflict can be traced back to policies and institutional innovations developed by others they feel particularly close to. Policy and institutional innovations in countries such as the United Kingdom and to a lesser extent Sweden are particularly picked up and somewhat mimicked by the other cases.



### International commitments and norms

These commitments and norms relevant to responding to violent conflict, set at the UN or originating from initiatives at the OECD-DAC level, also impact policy, concepts and framing. The case countries and EU institutions themselves also played a role in supporting (often heavily) the creation of these norms, but nevertheless we regard this as a less important factor in shaping support to peacebuilding than the previously mentioned ones.



### Conflict-related expertise

The rise of non-military and non-diplomatic responses to conflict on national and international agendas has brought significant investment and increases in conflict-related expertise and knowledge. It is no coincidence that in Germany, Sweden, the UK and the EU, expertise and networks outside government, whether in academia, think tanks or specialist NGOs and wider civil society, were among the most influential and respected globally.

## Responding to change

We contend that, taken together, these eight factors explain why after 25 years of commitments, peacebuilding is not yet at the heart of foreign and development policy decisions but still subject to their dominant overarching trends. **As the world moves towards a new geopolitical order, and domestic politics evolve more rapidly, the international peacebuilding community will likely face significant change in the nature of support. The peacebuilding community will need to raise its game to promote new methods, approaches and champions to ensure the quality of support to peacebuilding is not undermined.** This will require engaging societies and opinion formers in different ways. The report concludes with key areas for reflection for the peacebuilding community overall to respond to these challenges.

# 1. Purpose and approach of the study

**Today's need for effective responses to rising violent conflict coincides with the most significant changes in the global and European environment in decades.** As the world changes, there may rightly be concern that support for normative agendas like peacebuilding<sup>1</sup> will diminish. Yet, for the past 25 years support for international peacebuilding has not been static. It has evolved politically, institutionally, financially and in policy terms. **There remains, however, little independent policy analysis of what has driven those changes,** whether in terms of individual countries, donors or institutions. As part of ECDPM's work on the evolution of European foreign and development policy, we have decided to map those changes.

This study has three aims:

- It analyses trends in **policy and financial support** to peacebuilding based on four case studies: Germany, Sweden, UK and the EU institutions.
- It identifies the most significant and consistent **factors driving change and continuity** over time in European support for peacebuilding.
- In light of these trends and factors, it **analyses implications for future support to international peacebuilding.**

During the past 25 years, a small group of European countries and the EU institutions have played a central and highly influential role in the international system that supports peacebuilding politically, through policy commitments and with financial disbursements. Indeed, the role of these actors has been so great that any evolution or change in their support to peacebuilding would have significant implications for the global system of response to violent conflict. Therefore, an analysis of the drivers of change within these countries and institutions, particularly as they affect peacebuilding support globally, is both necessary and urgent for those working in and outside governments and institutions concerned with responding to violent conflict (regardless of whether they self-identify as part of a 'peacebuilding community'<sup>2</sup>).

The case studies were selected following initial, wider research for several primary reasons:

- their consistent explicit policies and commitments to respond to violent conflict with clear peacebuilding aspects;
- their relative importance in what constitutes the 'European contribution' to the global response to violent conflict; and
- their comparatively large financial commitment (in comparison to other European and global actors) towards international peacebuilding as measured by official development assistance (ODA) criteria, both individually and collectively.<sup>3</sup>

Our study analyses support to peacebuilding at the level of governmental institutions and the relation of governmental institutions to non-governmental actors. Rather than assessing the quality, effectiveness or impact of peacebuilding policies and programmes, we seek to map the evolution of the political and policy framing of peacebuilding, as well as to identify institutional organisational and meta-level global funding trends for peacebuilding activities. This leads us to focus on official commitments at the overall foreign and development policy levels. There we pay particular attention to peace, security and development policies, as

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<sup>1</sup> For an explanation of the working definition of peacebuilding used in this report and the methodology, see annex 2.

<sup>2</sup> The 'peacebuilding community' is understood to be made up of (i) organisations, such as international NGOs, think tanks and research institutions, for which peacebuilding or peacebuilding approaches are a clear part of their primary mandate, and (ii) individuals who self-identify with peacebuilding approaches and may work for (inter)governmental or non-governmental organisations that also self-identify with peacebuilding approaches.

<sup>3</sup> The subjects of our four case studies together provided almost half of all ODA to peacebuilding in the past 10 years (2007 to 2016) (see Table 2). Annex 1 presents the potential capabilities for peacebuilding of each of the four cases.

well as institutional innovations (within governments) directly relevant to peacebuilding. **Our approach is to analyse why things are, rather than what they ‘should’ be or what would be ideal or optimal for peacebuilding.** Our starting point, therefore, was the political and bureaucratic context within each of the case studies, rather than conflict contexts in which they intervened or the implementation of these policy choices either continentally (e.g., in Africa), regionally (e.g., in the Middle East) or in a specific country (e.g., Syria).

**This study goes beyond terms like ‘political will’ and ‘capacity constraints’ to examine the factors that have influenced support for peacebuilding** within the wider domain of foreign and development policy. The study also helps trace the limitations of current approaches. Its intention, thus, is to offer a fresh perspective and framing of the issues, based on independent policy analysis by an institution outside the peacebuilding ‘community’.

We look at the evolution of support to peacebuilding from the late 1990s up to today, with a particular focus on the past ten years. This longer-term perspective is born not out of a desire to engage in historical analysis, but rather as an attempt to understand change. This is made possible by a large body of experience derived from almost 25 years of political choices, policy commitments, institutional innovations and funding mechanisms which have had significant global influence on policy responses to violent conflict and specifically on support to peacebuilding. Detailed perspectives on policy evolution, changing narratives, institutional set-ups and case-specific drivers of change are presented in the comprehensive case study documents, and are not repeated here.<sup>4</sup>

It is important in these times of **accelerating global and national change dynamics** to pose new questions to those promoting peacebuilding. How might they position themselves and engage in an international order that is seeing dramatic shifts?

## 2. Trends in European policy and financial support to peacebuilding

### 2.1. International context of conflict and response

The world has seen an **increase in violent conflict since 2014**, following a trend of decline since the end of the Cold War (See Figure 1). Conflict and fragility in the Middle East, North Africa, the Sahel and the Horn of Africa have led to unprecedented levels of forced displacement since the end of the Second World War. These developments have driven an increase in humanitarian spending. Yet, while analysis indicates that the nature of conflict and violence is changing and old tools and approaches need rejuvenation, funding for peacebuilding, while increasing, actually remains low. This is true particularly when compared to both humanitarian aid and total development assistance and - even more so - to the cost of war and military expenditure (IEP, 2017; Vernon, 2017; International Alert, 2017; UN and World Bank, 2018). Moreover, as **space for civil society declines in much of the world**,<sup>5</sup> room for non-state-centred approaches to peace and security is being further curtailed and challenged. Figure 1 presents global trends on violent conflict, the political environment and governance alongside trends in funding for aid, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding.

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<sup>4</sup> The case studies will be launched from October to December 2018 and available on ECDPM's website: <http://www.ecdpm.org/changingpeacebuilding>

<sup>5</sup> While the majority of countries with a ‘repressed’ or ‘closed’ civic space are in Africa and Asia, the CIVICUS Monitor reports a “burgeoning civic space problem in the EU”, with half of EU member states having a ‘narrowed’ civic space (CIVICUS, 2017).

Figure 1: Trends on violent conflict and international responses

## TRENDS RELATED TO VIOLENT CONFLICT AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

(\*All currency in US dollars)

### CONFLICT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

#### Conflicts

The number and severity of violent conflicts have declined since the end of the Cold War but there has been a worrying trend upwards since 2010, and especially since 2014.

Characteristics of these conflicts: mostly intrastate; more intractable; more likely to relapse.



Source: PRIO

From 2000 to 2016, a nearly **eight-fold increase** in global casualties from terror attacks.



Source: Global Terrorism Index 2017

#### Total world military expenditure in 2017



The highest level since the end of the Cold war. Military spending in 2017 represented 2.2% of global GDP (compared to 3.3% in 1992 and 2.1% in 2014).

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database

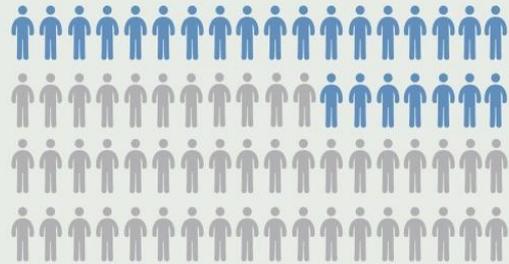
#### Displacement

Over the past two decades, the global population of forcibly displaced people has grown substantially, as a result of persecution, conflict, violence and human rights violations. This number has been exceptionally high since 2014.



Source: UNHCR

#### Impact on development



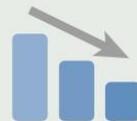
of the 7 billion people on earth today currently live in countries where development outcomes are affected by fragility, conflict and violence.

The average economic impact of violence for the 10 least peaceful countries was equivalent to 37% of their GDP.

Source: World Bank and Global Peace Index

### POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT & GOVERNANCE

Political rights and civil liberties around the world deteriorated to their lowest point in more than a decade in 2017 (12th consecutive year of decline in global freedom).



Source: Freedom House



Europe was no exception: 3 European countries were in the top 10 of the largest declines in political rights and civil liberties in 2017 (Hungary, Malta and Poland).

Source: Freedom House

**6 out of the 12**

countries with the worst scores in terms of political rights and civil liberties are in Africa.



Source: Freedom House

Yet there are some positive trends and opportunities for change: in 2015, **70% of African citizens** lived in countries that have shown **improvement in overall governance** over the last 10 years.



Source: Ibrahim Index of African Governance

over **201 million** people



The number of people in need of international humanitarian assistance globally in 2017.

Source: Development Initiatives



Only **2%** of the world's population lives in a country where civic space is fully open. By contrast, almost **1/10 people** live in a country with a closed civic space.

Source: CIVICUS monitor

## FUNDING ENVIRONMENT

### Aid trends

Measured in real terms, Official Development Assistance (ODA) has **doubled since 2000** (boosted in recent years by aid spent on refugees in donor countries).\*\*

Source: OECD



Foreign aid from official donors (0.31% of their combined GNI)

2017

\*\*Correcting for inflation and currency fluctuations

### Humanitarian spending internationally

Source: Development Initiatives

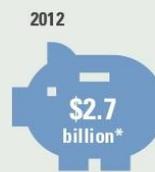


**80%** of all humanitarian needs are driven by conflict

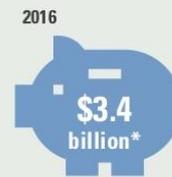
Source: World Bank

### Funding for peacebuilding

The amount spent on conflict, peace and security by official donors



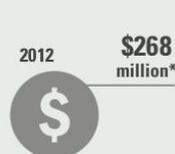
Of which \$1.4 billion (51%) went to peacebuilding



(2% of total aid) of which \$1.9 billion (55%) went to peacebuilding

Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System codes 152 and 15220, Gross disbursements, 2016 constant prices

### The amount spent for overall peace and security grantmaking by private foundations



Of which \$10 million (4%) went to peacebuilding



(1% of total foundation giving) of which \$21 million (6%) went to peacebuilding

\*\*\*latest updated data  
Source: Peace and Security Funding Index

## 2.2. Evolution of European policy support to peacebuilding

While several concepts and associated terms enter and leave policy circles at national, EU and multilateral levels, 'peacebuilding' has been used consistently in the past 20 years. It is certainly a less prominent term now than it once was, but it has nevertheless achieved more policy adherence than other terms that once enjoyed popularity with civil society and academia, such as conflict transformation.

**Nonetheless, the meaning and scope of peacebuilding, particularly in policy formulation and implementation, remains ambiguous.** Variations in definitions and understandings of peacebuilding can be identified along a number of spectrums, as illustrated in Table 1. It is now widely acknowledged that the transition from conflict to peace is seldom linear, but often marked by relapses into violence. Peacebuilding in this sense is understood to cover efforts before, during and after violent conflict (see UN Security Council Resolution 2282 and General Assembly Resolution 70/262). In addition, while earlier peacebuilding practices were often based on a 'liberal peace model' geared towards pursuit of rapid democratisation, free and globalised markets and rule of law through external intervention, the current praxis tends to favour more locally grounded and participatory approaches to peacebuilding.

Table 1: Spectrums of meaning in peacebuilding terminology

← Spectrums of Meaning in Peacebuilding Terminology →	
Focus on post-conflict time span	Focus on all stages of conflict
Narrow focus on specific kinds of activities	Wide focus on a range of activities including peacekeeping, human rights monitoring, mediation, development, education, governance, etc.
Immediate focus on ending direct violence	Long-term focus on addressing root causes of violence, including structural injustices
Outcome-oriented focus on solutions	Process-oriented focus on transformation
Focus on the role of outside experts "intervening" in local conflicts	Focus on the role of insiders and increasing their capacity for building peace
Focus on high level national and international interventions	Focus on all levels of interventions, from the community, regional, and national levels
Focus on military peace operations	Focus on non-military approaches to building peace and security

Source: Schirch, 2008, p. 4.

Figure 2 below shows multilateral and bilateral policy developments relevant to peacebuilding over the past 20 years. In Europe, peacebuilding as both an approach and a goal in responding to violent conflict has had to **share space with other narratives and concepts related to peace and security**. Some of these have coexisted relatively harmoniously. For example, in Germany, the term 'peacebuilding' has traditionally been used in close connection with 'crisis prevention' and 'conflict resolution'. In Sweden, 'human security', 'conflict prevention' and, most recently, 'sustaining peace' are concepts that resonate strongly, while 'stability' or 'structural stability' has gained ground in the UK. Other concepts produce more friction, either because they put more emphasis on the 'state' rather than society or because they emanate from national interests rather than collective security concerns or are more short-term than long-term. Concepts like 'stabilisation', 'statebuilding', 'countering violent extremism', 'the security-development nexus' and 'crisis management' have gained traction particularly in the UK and the EU.

In light of the changing global political dynamics the world is witnessing today, **several European countries recently updated their policies and commitments regarding responses to violent conflict.** The UK, Sweden, Germany and the EU Institutions have all released new relevant policies since 2015.<sup>6</sup> All these documents include peace-related commitments, either within stated foreign and development policies or in new or revised policies specific to violent conflict. These policies and documents indicate a **clear trend towards greater appreciation of security actors, the need for non-state and state actors to work together and an increasing focus on the nexus between global and national security.**

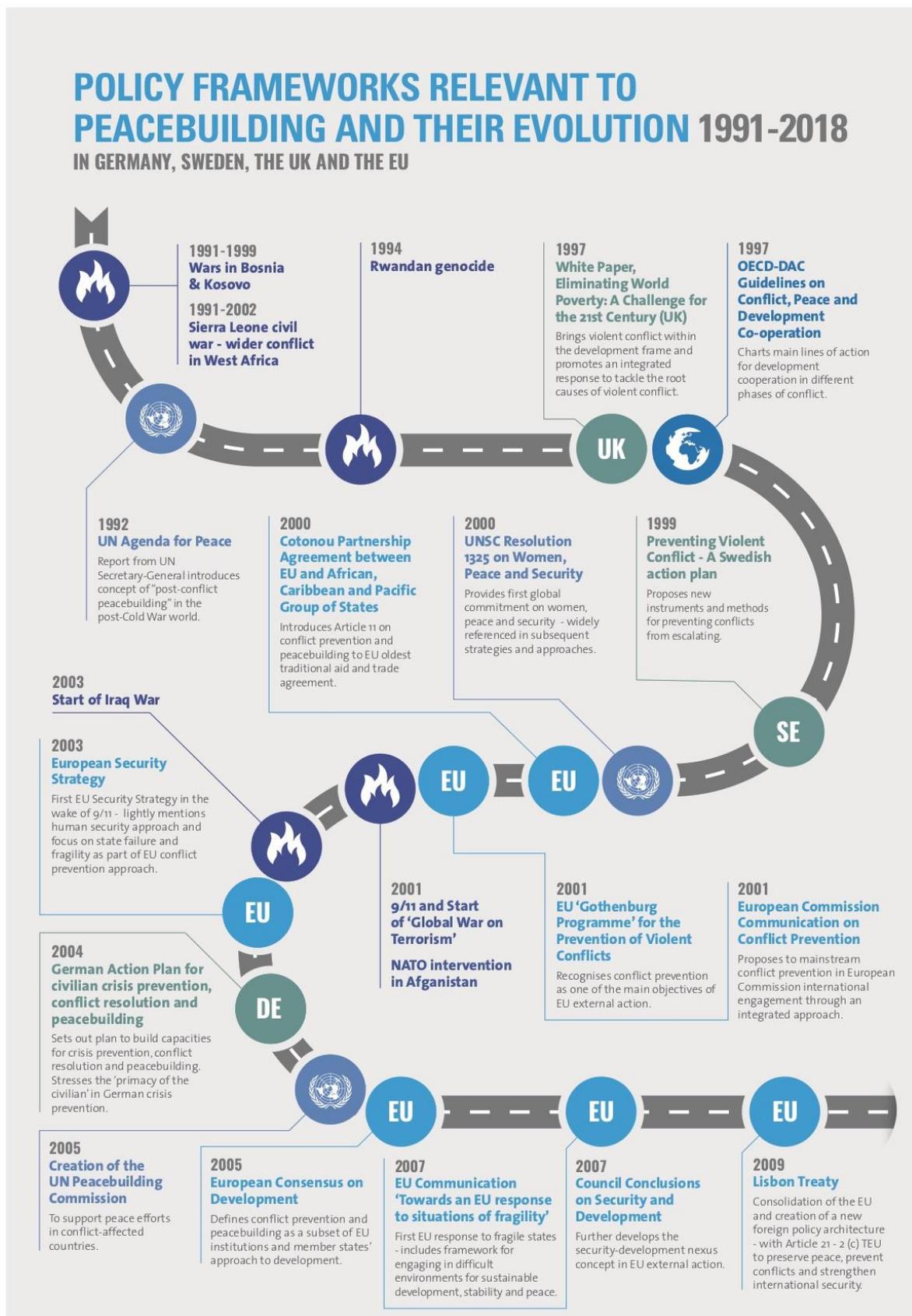
The impetus for developing new conflict policies at both the EU and the national level seems to have come from events and conflicts of geopolitical significance. Within the UN, too, there have been renewed initiatives, led by Sweden and the UN Security Council, to put conflict prevention back on the agenda. This resulted in UN Security Council Resolution 2282 on 'sustaining peace' (UNSC, 2016, p. 1), which was adopted by the General Assembly as well. Yet few analysts would suggest that there has been a surge in popular, political or diplomatic support to implement peacebuilding approaches.

These recent examples of bilateral and multilateral policy frameworks are not the first attempts to galvanise more effective responses to violent conflict. Most of these policies (see figure 2) restate and reformulate existing commitments, which themselves were only partially implemented. They have thus been met with some scepticism by the peacebuilding community. And while there has been significant repackaging and reuse of concepts such as 'integrated' and 'comprehensive' to describe approaches to violent conflict, policies have not necessarily become more complex or encompassing.

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<sup>6</sup> The UK released the 'National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015' see (HM, 2015). The EU published its 'Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy' in 2016 (European Union, 2016). In 2017, Sweden produced its new 'Strategy for Sustainable Peace 2017-2022' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017). That same year, Germany released its 'Guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace' in 2017 (Federal Government of Germany 2017).

Figure 2: Policy frameworks relevant to peacebuilding and their evolution, 1991-2018





### 2.3. Evolution of European and international financial support to peacebuilding

Despite global commitments, the number of donor countries investing significantly in peacebuilding remains relatively small. Our four cases, alongside the United States and Norway, have been among the largest and most consistent supporters of civilian peacebuilding since 2007 (Table 2). The Netherlands, Switzerland and Denmark are other important contributors.<sup>7</sup>

Table 2: Top ten OECD donors to civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution, 2007-2016

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Average rank (rounded to top 10)
United States	1 (\$349m)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3 (\$299m)	1
United Kingdom	2 (\$115m)	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	2	1 (\$483m)	2
Germany	4 (\$77m)	4	4	2	2	2	3	2	4	2 (\$335m)	3
EU institutions	8 (\$35m)	3	3	5	4	3	2	3	3	4 (\$241m)	4
Norway	3 (\$96m)	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	5	5 (\$92m)	5
Sweden	7 (\$51m)	7	6	7	6	6	6	6	6	6 (\$79m)	6
Netherlands	9 (\$31m)	8	9	9	7	8	7	7	7	7 (\$59m)	7
Switzerland	6 (\$66m)	6	7	12	9	10	8	8	8	8 (\$53m)	8
Denmark	14 (\$14m)	18	16	10	10	9	9	9	10	9 (\$46m)	9
United Nations	21 (\$2m)	17	13	14	11	11	10	10	9	11 (\$30m)	10 =
Canada	18 (\$6m)	11	8	8	13	14	14	16	12	13 (\$18m)	10 =

Source: ECDPM analysis from OECD figures, CRS code 15220, in millions of US dollars. Gross disbursements in constant 2016 prices.

<sup>7</sup> In order to analyse financial resources for peacebuilding from OECD donors, we used the Creditor Reporting System (CRS), and more specifically codes 152 'conflict, peace and security' and its sub-code 15220 'civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution'. More details about the methodology can be found in annex 2.

Outside the top ten contributors, donors spend significantly less on peacebuilding. Indeed, in 2016, the 22 donors outside of the top ten represented only about 8% of total spending on peacebuilding. **The international peacebuilding community thus appears broadly reliant on a relatively small number of donors, whose contributions have remained stable for at least the past ten years.** Germany, Sweden, the UK and the EU institutions provided 47% of total peacebuilding-related ODA during the past ten years. When adding disbursements from Norway, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Denmark, we find that 'European' support amounted to 63% of all ODA for peacebuilding. That said, reliance on a small number of governmental funders points to a vulnerability of the peacebuilding community to potential changes or shifts in the politics and policies of these countries. Further, within the top ten, there are substantial differences: in 2016 the largest contributor, the UK, gave more than ten times the amount of the ninth-ranking Denmark.

From 2007 to 2016 there was an increase in ODA on 'conflict, peace and security'. Although there were fluctuations from year to year, since 2008 total contributions to this area have not fallen below US \$2.7 billion (see Figure 3). Yet, despite the rise of peace and security as a policy priority of Western donors, 'conflict, peace and security' is still a relatively small area of ODA spending. It represents on average just **2% of total aid from OECD donors**, and from OECD-DAC members specifically.

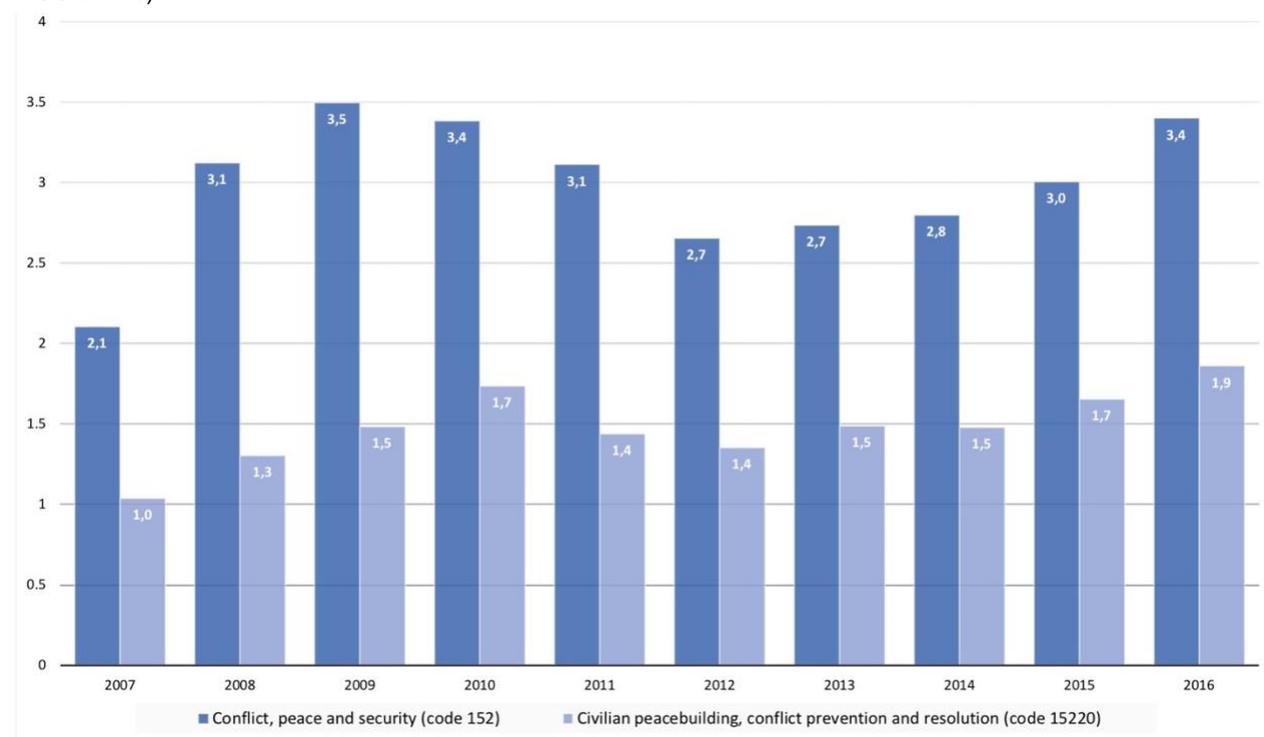
Figure 3 shows that global disbursements for '**conflict, peace and security**' rose by 61% from 2007 to 2016, reaching a peak in 2009 after an increase of US \$1 billion from 2007 to 2008 alone. Funding declined thereafter, to US \$2.7 billion in 2012, before rising again to reach \$3.4 billion in 2016.

Increased funding was particularly evident for the EU institutions (403%), the UK (302%) and Germany (273%), while Sweden's disbursements under this area rose at the much lower rate of 24%. Interestingly, over the same period (2007-2016), military expenditure increased by 8% in Germany and fell both in Sweden and in the UK, by 1% and 12%, respectively (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2018). Military expenditures, though far exceeding ODA disbursements for conflict, peace and security (for the evolution of these disbursements see the four case studies), have remained rather stable in our case studies over the past ten years. In contrast, ODA for conflict, peace and security has increased exponentially.

Within these overall flows, '**civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution**', a subsection of conflict, peace and security, grew by 79% from 2007 to 2016, yet a dip was registered in 2011-2012, followed by a rise, reaching US \$1.9 billion in 2016 (about 1% of total aid) (Figure 3). Over the same period, total ODA increased by 65%.

Figure 3 also shows 2016 as the highest year in the past ten for spending on peacebuilding. We see that spending almost doubled during the past ten years. These ODA trends tell us that, in the current environment, resources are available and on the increase, both in terms of overall ODA and ODA devoted specifically to peace and security, including peacebuilding. Among our case studies, increased disbursements for civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution were particularly evident for the EU (a 577% increase from 2007 to 2016), the UK (a 320% increase) and Germany (a 335% increase), whereas in Sweden the increase was 'only' 55% (Figure 6 in annex 3).

Figure 3: Disbursements by all OECD donors for conflict, peace and security and for civilian peacebuilding (in billions of US dollars)



The three main **channels of delivery** for peacebuilding ODA disbursements in the last decade have been 1) public sector, 2) multilateral organisations and 3) NGOs and civil society. The public sector channel has experienced ups and downs from 2007 to 2016, and while it has increased in absolute terms, its share among the different channels has decreased from 31% to 23%. The share of peacebuilding ODA channelled through multilateral organisations has remained fairly constant from 2007 to 2016 (although it has increased by 156% in absolute terms). In absolute terms, disbursements channelled through NGOs and civil society have been constant yet their share as a channel of delivery has decreased from 30% to 21% from 2007 to 2016. More details about channels of delivery can be found in annex 3.

Another avenue of financial support is **private foundations' philanthropic spending on peace and security**, which reached \$350.7 million in 2015, of which \$20.5 million was categorised explicitly as peacebuilding albeit using different criteria. This spending is significant, yet is considerably less than what official donors disbursed collectively or individually. For example, the top 10 peace and security foundation funders awarded \$171,1 million in 2015 (\$17,1 million per funder on average - Foundation Center and the Peace and Security Funders Group, 2018)<sup>8</sup> whereas the top 10 OECD donors for conflict, peace and security disbursed \$2,603 million in 2015 (\$260,3 million on average).

In sum, **the increase in resources for peace and security in general and peacebuilding more specifically is a positive development and shows that the availability of resources has been on the increase.** Although ODA spending for conflict, peace and security – and for peacebuilding – has remained relatively low compared to other areas (2% of total aid compared to 7% for education, 15% for economic infrastructures or 9% for government and civil society), the fact that peacebuilding funding rose significantly in our four case studies is an important finding (see annex 3 and for more details on disbursements in each of the countries, see the detailed case studies).

<sup>8</sup> A significant degree of caution should be used on the figure for 'peacebuilding' as if an encompassing definition of the term is used then a considerable part of the \$350.7 million rather than just \$20,5 million could be classified as peacebuilding.

### 3. What drives European support to international peacebuilding?

By 'political' we mean that decisions are made by politicians at the head of government and at the ministerial level. By 'bureaucratic' we refer to the way an administrative system chooses to prioritise and interpret political and policy choices and how it organises itself to follow through on the political choices made.

What factors influenced the political and bureaucratic choices made in our four case studies from Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the European Union institutions? The four cases revealed a number of important differences, but also some broadly similar patterns and issues. While no choices appeared inevitable for any of the cases studied, in each we found eight recurring factors that influenced the margins of manoeuvre for political and bureaucratic choices. By exploring these factors, we can **move beyond stock phrases like 'lack of political will' and 'capacity constraints'** to gain a clearer sense of why and how policy commitments were adopted and the degree of the vigour influencing their implementation.

The **eight factors** that influenced support to peacebuilding throughout the 25-year period under analysis derived from the four case studies are the following (see also Figure 4):

- geopolitical era;
- domestic political culture including history;
- system of governance;
- domestic events with an international dimension;
- major conflicts and instability;
- allies and other governments' initiatives;
- international commitments and norms; and
- conflict-related expertise.

We further contend that **these factors will likely continue to influence any future evolution in support to peacebuilding**. In our qualitative judgment from the research, the eight factors do not carry equal weight in determining support to peacebuilding, nor are they neat, distinct areas with hard boundaries. Rather, they represent aspects that blend into and influence each other.

Figure 4: Factors that influence support to peacebuilding

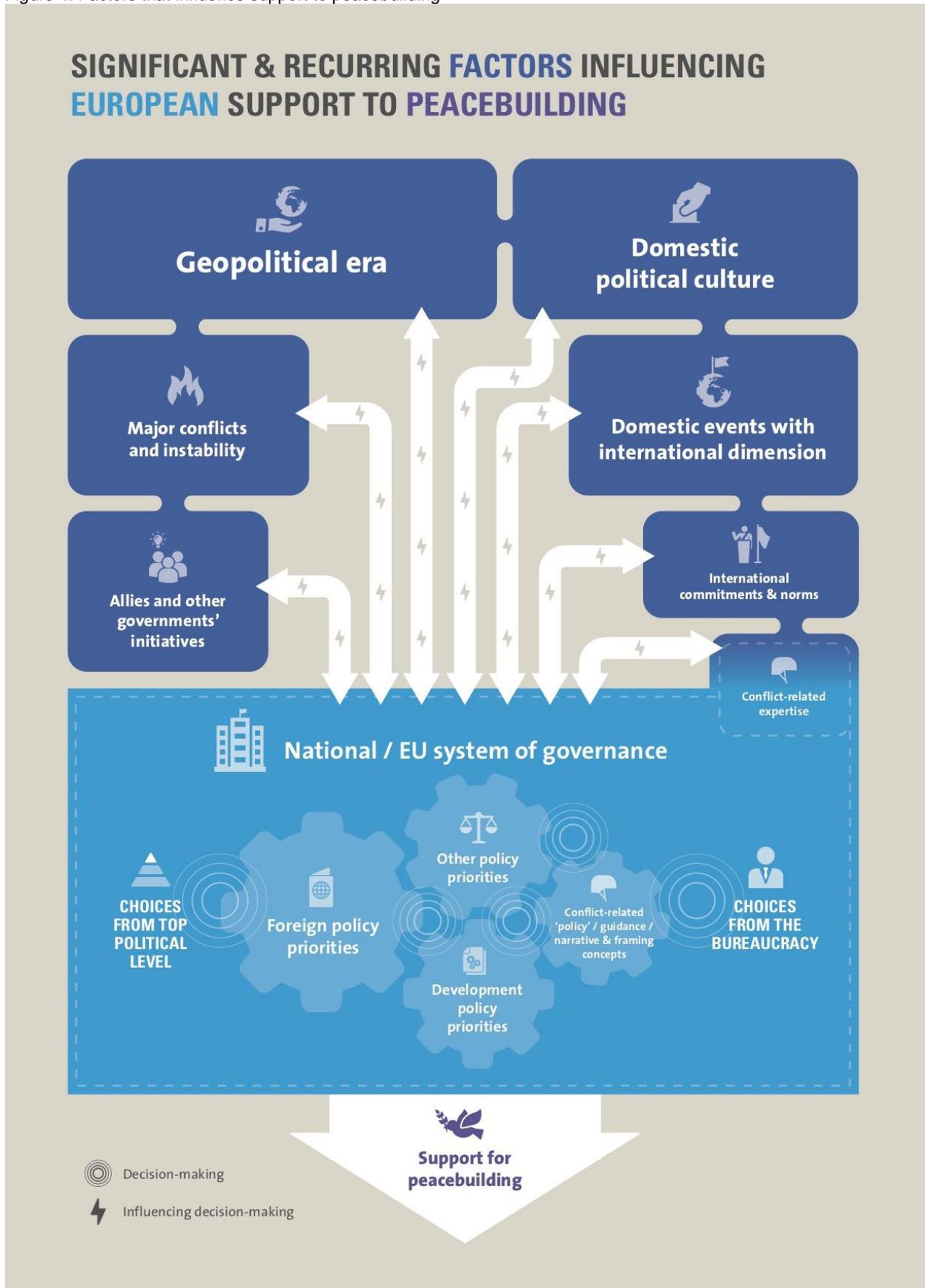


Figure 4 depicts the eight factors, suggesting how they may be linked and blend. All the factors influence the system of governance, which itself imposes some boundaries on the choices made at the highest political and bureaucratic levels. The system of governance itself is the third factor that enables or limits support to peacebuilding. The political and bureaucratic choices made are reflected in foreign and development policy and in other policy priorities, as well as in conflict-related policies and the concepts used to describe responses to conflict (usually as a subcategory of foreign and development policy). These choices, once made, impact the overall nature and level of support to peacebuilding.



## Geopolitical era

The **first influencing factor is the geopolitical era** in contemporary history. Our analysis identifies it as the most significant factor as it has the ability to set the tone and margins for manoeuvre for government priorities and foreign and development policy overall. In the past 20 years, three distinct periods can be distinguished that are relevant to support for peacebuilding: the post-Cold War era (1990-2001), the Global War on Terror (2001-2011) and the shifting geopolitical order (2011-present).

### Post-Cold War era (1990-2001)

The immediate post-Cold War era brought optimism that a liberal international order would prevail, alongside a belief that greater effort should be made to prevent and resolve violent conflict. During the Cold War, foreign and even development policy was used as a vehicle for geopolitical competition, and different world views were promoted through active proxy wars and conflicts. The **post-Cold War era** offered opportunities for action aimed at the creation of global public goods, such as a more peaceful world and opened up political and financial space for support to peacebuilding. The increasing occurrence of intra-state conflict - rather than inter-state wars - in this era, also led to more 'interventionist' approaches to peace that aimed to take into account the importance of domestic political, socio-economic and cultural institutions in addressing the root causes of violent conflict (see e.g. the 1992 UN Agenda for Peace). Non-violent, multi-actor responses to violent conflict thus moved from the very margins of foreign and development policy increasingly to the mainstream.

The end of the Cold War had a particular impact on Germany and the EU. Released from the geostrategic gridlock of the bipolar world order that had dominated the second half of the twentieth century, the reunified **Germany** was able to redefine its international role. Specifically, German involvement in NATO operations in Kosovo in the late 1990s and later in Afghanistan signalled a gradual shift away from the doctrine of 'renunciation of war' that had determined German foreign policy since the Second World War (Gießmann, 2004). It also triggered a process of reflection on how a more engaged foreign policy could be reconciled with Germany's constitutional commitment to promoting peace worldwide. This led, ultimately, to adoption and operationalisation of a German crisis prevention and peacebuilding policy (Bundesregierung, 2000).

Europe's inability to prevent conflict in the Balkans and the genocide in Rwanda similarly played a major part in the advent of a stronger peacebuilding and conflict prevention orientation in the **EU**. Thus, the 2001 European Commission communication on conflict prevention and the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts (the 'Gothenburg Programme') set an ambitious agenda for a more central position for conflict prevention in the EU's external action. Conflict prevention was to be mainstreamed in EU development programming. In parallel, the 2000s saw the operationalisation of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), to allow the Union to act more autonomously on matters of peace and security in its neighbouring regions, albeit only with unanimous approval of member states. Introduction of the CSDP represented an important milestone in making the EU a more politically-engaged actor in the broad domain of peace and security in the new geopolitical order. That said, conflict prevention and peacebuilding were not

usually the main priority of CSDP operations. Rather, CSDP mandates tended to focus on building civilian and military security and justice sector capacities at the state level.

### **Global War on Terror (2001-2011)**

A second major period was marked with the advent of the '**Global War on Terror**' following the 9/11 attacks in the United States. Though perhaps not truly global, the 'War on Terror' did have a significant impact on political and bureaucratic choices throughout the world. In all of the cases analysed, it brought security considerations more to the fore in foreign and development policy. Yet, many ideas regarding the importance of responding to conflict non-violently endured, including approaches directly inspired by earlier thinking and policy relevant to peacebuilding from the preceding period.

Despite a general scepticism regarding the Global War on Terrorism among the non-governmental peacebuilding community, it did help put issues of violent conflict, fragility and peace more centrally on European foreign policy agendas. Indeed, without it, it is unlikely that peacebuilding and peaceful responses to conflict would have been so high on foreign and development policy agendas and increasingly seen as a legitimate area for spending. Starting in 2009, for instance, **the UK** introduced a new focus on fragile states, promising to allocate half of its ODA to these countries (the pledge was officially implemented in 2015). This was accompanied by an emphasis on building peaceful states and societies, as evident in the work of the UK Department for International Development (DFID). Likewise, in **Germany** an increased focus on international security, global conflict and state fragility led the development ministry to formulate a strategy for peacebuilding, including guidelines for making development aid more conflict-sensitive and peace-oriented (BMZ, 2005). In parallel, the German Ministry of Defence introduced the notion of 'networked security' in policy discourse, reflecting an emerging understanding of the added value of civil-military coordination in responding to different phases of a conflict cycle (Wittkowsky and Meierjohann, 2011).

Nevertheless, the effects of the Global War on Terrorism differed quite markedly in Germany, Sweden, the UK and the EU, underlining that responses were the product of conscious political choices, fed by different narratives and priorities. In **the UK**, the preferred approach since the end of the 2000s has been 'stabilisation', a combination of integrated military and civilian actions. Similarly, **Sweden's** 2008 strategy for participation in peace support and security-building operations fosters integration of military and civil elements. Here, however, conflict prevention measures, mediation and dialogue, which are traditional tools of Swedish engagement, are more prominent than in the UK. Finally, the Global War on Terror had a major impact on **EU** decision-making, as it created political momentum within the Union to define common security interests and to formulate an approach to pursue these, leading to the 2003 European Security Strategy. While this strategy focused largely on traditional security threats, such as international terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, it also committed the EU to advancing 'effective multilateralism' and promoting a liberal international order. In development policy, too, a focus on 'fragility' and the 'security-development nexus' gained traction in various EU policy documents. Yet, although the EU increased its funding to conflict-affected countries, this did not bring about a real paradigm shift in approaches to conflict prevention and peacebuilding (ADE, 2011).

### **Shifting geopolitical order (2011-present)**

Politicians, analysts and commentators have argued recently that **international relations are on the verge of a significant geopolitical transition**. Rising global powers such as China and the increased assertiveness of Russia are said to form a challenge to the dominance of the Western-led liberal international order. At the same time, the Trump presidency in the United States and Brexit present major disruptions of the status quo from within the West. This suggests that we may be witnessing a transition from the post-Cold

War unipolar world order to a multipolar one, where competition between global powers is increasingly common and old alliances, particularly Western ones, are more fragile. In addition, the impact of technology, cyber warfare and hybrid threats are features of the new global era and call for new tools and approaches.

In light of such global shifts, concerns have been expressed by a number of analysts about the **erosion of the rules-based international order and multilateralist approaches** of the past 50 years (see, Foreign Affairs, 2018, & Roth M., & Ulbert C, 2018). These changes will likely influence responses to violent conflict, and hence support to peacebuilding in the years to come. In **Sweden**, for instance, an increasingly assertive Russia has driven various policy changes. This traditionally non-aligned country, strongly attached to non-participation in military alliances, has reactivated conscription and increased its defence budget. It is furthermore reconsidering its position regarding NATO membership. In parallel, threats to the international order seem to have incentivised Sweden to engage even more in international fora, including on peacebuilding issues. The **UK** sees the new challenges on the international stage primarily through the lens of its own national security. The underlying idea here is that conflict and insecurity abroad impact security at home. In **Germany**, policy no longer frames peacebuilding as merely a tool to project values. Rather, it is also presented as a means to advance national interests, such as protecting its citizens and territorial integrity, and stemming irregular migration and displacement (Federal Government of Germany, 2017). In the **EU**, the emerging focus on 'resilience' in external action has been described as a less ambitious, more pragmatic alternative that prioritises stability over transformative peacebuilding in a world that is becoming less predictable (Wagner and Anholt, 2016).

At the same time, the loosening ties between the EU and the Anglo-Saxon world has been a significant driver of renewed cooperation within Europe on matters of security and defence. Doubts about the US commitment to NATO and worries regarding the consequences of Brexit (given the UK's usual reluctance to support EU cooperation on defence matters) have opened space for the remaining EU member states to explore deeper military cooperation. For example, joint operational planning and capability development are now gaining increasing consideration. This trend, if it continues, could change the face of EU external action, as Europe is traditionally associated with 'soft power' tools such as enlargement, trade and development aid.

The conclusion is that the changing geopolitical environment significantly impacts the margins of manoeuvre, the levels of ambition and the framing of support for peacebuilding within European foreign and development policy. Official support for peacebuilding was almost non-existent before the end of the Cold War, and while we are unlikely to return to an era of bipolar political competition, the current geopolitical flux will profoundly affect political support to peacebuilding, as it has in the past. Though difficult to predict the impact of these shifts, **outcomes could include changing geographic priorities, attempts to co-opt peacebuilding approaches, and recourse to 'power politics' to resolve conflicts with little space for non-governmental actors – while conflicts deemed non-strategic may be increasingly ignored.**



## Domestic political culture and history

As the preceding section alludes to, the second factor framing peacebuilding responses is the **domestic political culture and 'sense of place' in the world**. While support to international peacebuilding is by definition undertaken outside the domestic political realm, these characteristics nonetheless explain why such support has become a priority for some and how it is entwined with their own identity and history. This factor explains why support to peacebuilding differs so markedly even among Western European countries, for example, between France and Sweden.

**Sweden** is a small, non-aligned European country with a strong identity as a peaceful actor that does not participate in military alliances. This creates space for a value-based approach to peace policy and to its

wider foreign and development policy. The country also has a strong tradition of support to multilateralism and collective security and a belief that adherence to international norms benefits both national and global security. These perspectives, derived from Sweden's history and sense of its place in the world, have a huge impact on how Sweden promotes and implements its support to peacebuilding. Longstanding, stable and generous development assistance and active engagement on the global and European scene regarding values and a normative agenda are clear Swedish characteristics. While successive initiatives and focuses can be identified in relation to responding to conflict, depending on the political parties in power at any particular time, Sweden's core tenants have changed little over the past 50 years.

Following the Second World War, **Germany** developed a strong non-interventionist tradition and a downplayed role as a foreign policy actor in its own right. Influential elements of German political culture have remained strongly pacifist in orientation, as reflected in the country's overall foreign policy. Germany has sought to immerse itself in a united Europe and to be a good multilateral player. Despite being a major economic power, its foreign and defence policy remained modest until recently. Today's shifting global power balances have made Germany increasingly responsive to calls to provide leadership within Europe and on the global scene, regarding peace, security and development and as a defender of multilateralism and the rules-based international order (see Federal Government of Germany, 2017).

The **UK** has a global political and colonial history, a nuclear and military power and a permanent seat at the UN Security Council. It has a self-designated 'special relationship' with the United States, which is the only superpower of the post-Cold War era. The UK has always seen itself as a global power, promoting liberal and democratic values as well as its own security and economic interests. Though the UK's relationship with the EU has never been entirely harmonious, few expected Brexit to become a reality three years ago. UK politics is more adversarial than consensual. An interventionist and 'political' foreign, defence and development policy are characteristic of the UK's view of its place in the world. The UK also displays a boldness in developing and championing new approaches and reliance on knowledge and expertise in responding to violent conflict. Also, more often than not, a majority one-party government has enjoyed significant autonomy in setting the UK foreign and development policy agenda.<sup>9</sup>

The **EU** is both a supranational and an intergovernmental entity. Since its creation, it has projected itself as a promoter of peace and of economic well-being, both among its member states and across European societies more broadly. The EU has pursued a policy of enlargement (taking in new members) as a way to foster peace and stability on the continent, particularly through promotion of free trade and democratic reform. While its development policy dates back to the Union's creation in the 1950s, foreign and security policy are newer elements. These remain very much works in progress in European integration. The EU has traditionally prioritised commercial and economic interests through a robust and influential trade policy, while also supporting 'European' values such as conflict prevention and a strong commitment to multilateralism (as it is itself a product of these). While the changing global environment and much more difficult transatlantic relations as well as Brexit have pushed the EU to become more of a security if not military actor, the perception of the EU as a peace project focused on civilian 'soft power' remains very much alive. In foreign and external aid policy, the EU institutions struggle to connect with European citizens and reconcile member states' differing interests, levels of ambition, geographic and thematic priorities and strategic cultures.

Our case studies demonstrated that political culture and 'sense of place' in the world are **usually slow to evolve and difficult to influence**. Yet, they form the bedrock of political decision-making regarding foreign

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<sup>9</sup> The start of the New Labour period in the 1990s brought a number of innovations, such as creation of DFID and an increased focus on conflict prevention as part of development policy. Since 2010, under the Conservative government, a security focus has become more dominant and explicit, evidenced by the establishment of the National Security Council.

and development policy and **shape the available margins of manoeuvre** in decision-making. They explain, for example, why **Sweden's** and **Germany's** commitment to peacebuilding has transcended changes of government. They also explain why **Germany's** security commitments have always had strong civilian rather than military elements. Political culture and sense of place similarly drive the centrality of national interests in UK foreign and development policy, as well as certain normative values in the **UK's** approach to violent conflict. They explain why the UK has been unafraid to pursue military and interventionist approaches under governments led by different political parties. The **EU's** perception of itself as a civilian power with a strong normative value-based agenda indicates why support to peacebuilding and conflict prevention has never been fundamentally questioned, although it has coincided with other approaches and support levels have fluctuated over time.

Yet, recent years have proven that political culture and sense of place can change. This opens the possibility for both positive and negative evolution in support to peacebuilding. The **UK's** place in the world is certainly changing. Indeed, Brexit has made the country's future position a topic of vigorous debate. Significantly different views are heard within the body politic, across political parties and throughout society on what its future should entail.<sup>10</sup>

The **EU**, which will lose a supporter of peacebuilding after Brexit, has made the political choice to increase its security role through traditional security means. Yet, the EU's civilian identity and soft power approach and the constituency behind it will not disappear. **Germany**, both within Europe and domestically, is acting on the need to develop a more robust and engaged foreign policy to match its strong global economic role. It has shown moral leadership, too, in recent years on issues such as responding to irregular migration by being more welcoming of refugees to Europe, although this has not been without controversy. Still, the recent rise of right-wing populism in the country is already having considerable impact on the political debate regarding migration as well as on aid and international cooperation. More continuity is found in **Sweden**, though the political landscape there too is changing, with the rise of a more right-wing populist party. That party does not share the country's traditional worldview and has mobilised negative public opinion on issues such as migration. This was quite clear in the run-up to the September 2018 election, as the Sweden Democrats managed to impose their electoral agenda and law, order and immigration took over from the economy and public services as the main issues at stake, pushing the other parties to toughen up their stance (Fondation Robert Schuman, 2018).<sup>11</sup> Indeed, while initially welcoming, Sweden has now enacted tough migration and asylum policies. As a result, the political spectrum in Sweden also seems to have evolved.

To conclude, national political culture and sense of place in the world are fundamental characteristics that define support to peacebuilding. These did evolve in all of our case studies as the world around them changed, albeit slowly. **While support to peacebuilding has by no means been a central consideration in this flux, the current changes have brought opportunities and threats not seen during the past 25 years.** Understanding, engaging and adapting to this situation will present significant challenges for the peacebuilding community.

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<sup>10</sup> At another level, some of the political choices made by UK governments, for example, to increase its aid budget to 0.7% of national income, have been met with a degree of hostility within the country. In the UK, aid spending does not enjoy the same level of social consensus and support as, for example, in Sweden where aid contributions are part of the 'social DNA'. This example does demonstrate that choices that are not fully owned across society can nonetheless be made where political leadership is strong and an effective coalition is mobilised.

<sup>11</sup> Although the party achieved a lower score than forecast by the polls (17.5% compared to the expected 20 to 30%), its score has grown by 4.7% since the last elections, strengthening its position as the country's third biggest party.



## System of governance

The **third factor** framing peacebuilding support is the **system of governance**, both in general terms and in relation to foreign and development policy specifically. The governance system defines the context in which foreign and development policy decisions are reached and implemented. This factor is rather different from the others because of its role in 'filtering' and framing the political and bureaucratic choices that can be taken in support of peacebuilding (see Figure 4).

A clear illustration of this filtering and framing is the call for '**integrated**', '**comprehensive**' or '**whole-of-government**' approaches in peacebuilding and conflict response policies found in all of our case studies. This reflects recognition of peacebuilding as a complex domain that cuts across foreign, security, development and other policy domains, thus requiring cross-ministry or cross-sector collaboration of government institutions. In practice, whole-of-government approaches have proven **extremely difficult to realise** in all of the cases studied, despite numerous restatements and repackaging of policy commitments over the past 20 years. Indeed, success in shaping comprehensive action for peacebuilding is severely challenged by systems of governance that are not designed to work in an integrative way.

The constitutional autonomy of ministries in **Germany** and the independence of government agencies and federal enterprises (e.g., the German development agency (GIZ) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) in **Sweden**) do not lend themselves easily to integrative action. At the **EU level**, too, the European External Action Service (EEAS), the Council of the European Union, the European Commission and the European Parliament each have their own hierarchies, bureaucratic systems and cultures. This is not a conspiracy against effective support to peacebuilding, but rather a reflection of constitutional and administrative realities articulated in primary law or cross-governmental rules that are **rarely subject to fundamental revision**.

In the **EU**, the institutional environment for peacebuilding is a direct product of the European integration process itself. Peacebuilding in the EU occupies a space across the foreign and development policy domains. This means it often falls through the institutional cracks between the supranational and intergovernmental spheres of EU external action. Furthermore, peacebuilding in the EU is often held hostage by institutional battles for control. The Commission, keen to retain its independence, steers clear of more political approaches to peacebuilding that would require closer involvement of member states. The very priority of peacebuilding support is a subject of diverging opinions among EU members. Moreover, the debate within member states is often simplified - particularly at the higher political levels - to a choice between 'hard' security under the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) or 'soft' peacebuilding and conflict prevention approaches. This bypasses the complex interrelations between both.

Governance systems also influence responses to violent conflict and support to peacebuilding through the degree of flexibility and adaptiveness they allow for initiatives in fragile environments prone to sudden change. Bureaucratic governance systems typically offer little leeway for working with non-traditional stakeholders such as non-state armed groups. Changing approaches rapidly and taking political or financial risks - particularly where public reputation and finances are considered to be at stake - are anathemas in most bureaucratic governance systems.

In the face of this reality, those concerned with responding to conflict have devoted enormous efforts to the creation of workarounds and achievement of incremental change. In **Sweden**, for example, the governance system is characterised by 'small' ministries and autonomous agencies such as the Folke Bernadotte Academy (the government agency for peace, security and development) and SIDA. This has limited, however, integrated ways of working through shared financing instruments and cooperation between political

dialogue and development cooperation, though the importance of such links has been recognised in policy frameworks for more than two decades.<sup>12</sup> Nonetheless, in Sweden incremental change has been accomplished, especially under the Social Democrat-Green coalition, and cooperation is slowly emerging.

In 2004, **Germany** established an inter-ministerial steering committee for civilian crisis prevention, chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and comprising representatives from all other federal ministries. The committee is mandated to coordinate implementation of Germany's crisis prevention and peacebuilding policy. Yet, its success in overcoming ministerial divisions remains mixed at best. Reasons are its limited political and operational authority (for instance, it does not manage its own operational budget) and its low visibility beyond a community of committed stakeholders. Indeed, in a fragmented institutional landscape, peacebuilding usually remains a niche area for certain departments and dedicated staff members, with few incentives for mainstreaming or comprehensive action despite clearly articulated policy commitments to it.

There may nonetheless be opportunities to seize when significant changes of governance do occur. A watershed moment in the **UK** was the creation in 2001 of the conflict prevention pools funding mechanism, which eventually became the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund in 2015. This significant institutional innovation has driven cross-departmental collaboration and inspired other countries. In the **EU**, entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 and subsequent creation of the EEAS changed the EU system of governance, though the European Commission and member states retained their powers. Intense lobbying by several European Parliament members, civil society organisations, think tanks and certain member states led to the creation of a dedicated institutional home for peacebuilding policy within the EEAS. This came in the form of the Division for Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Mediation, recently reconstituted into a new Division for Prevention of Conflicts, Rule of Law/Security Sector Reform, Integrated Approach, Stabilisation and Mediation. In the absence of strong institutional incentives and high-level political leadership, this division brings together thematic expertise in peacebuilding and puts it at the disposal of all EU institutional entities by offering services and guidance on a demand-led basis. Other EU bodies have established their own conflict and peace expertise hubs, including the Fragility, Resilience Unit of the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) and the Mediation Unit of the European Parliament. Despite such innovations, the EU's institutional framework has remained fragmented overall, and peacebuilding expertise and support capacities are still spread thinly across EU structures.

To conclude, the system of governance is a factor that is usually slow to evolve, as it is rooted in constitutional, primary law and long-held conventions. **Systems of governance do not easily bend to a peacebuilding logic**, entailing more bottom-up, flexible, multi-actor, speedy, long-term, risk-taking and integrated action across government. Yet, as globalisation increasingly challenges governmental systems and constitutional realities (many of which date from the 1950s or earlier), there is perhaps now more scope for change than in the past 25 years, particularly when coupled with changes in geopolitical era and sense of place in the world. Understanding the role of governance systems brings a greater appreciation for why so many sound conflict response policies, often with a strong peacebuilding dimension, have failed to be effectively implemented in practice. **Unless new conflict response policies acknowledge or seek to change this reality**, any new initiatives will likely be condemned to repeating the partial implementation of the past.

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<sup>12</sup> This is not to dismiss that the peacebuilding community has always had a qualified support for integrated approaches seeing them positive if they prioritise local ownership, long-term, multi-stakeholder, bottom-up approaches, while being broadly critical if they perceived them as a back door to securisation and top-down pursuit of self-interest.



## Domestic events with an international dimension

**The fourth factor is domestic events with an international dimension that touch upon or influence the highest levels of national politics.** These events, which have become more prevalent in the past five years, can partially reset the foreign and development policy agenda, filtering down to support for peacebuilding. They are influential precisely because they relate to domestic rather than just international or ‘external’ politics.

An obvious example is the terrorist **attacks** in Europe that have strongly impacted responses to conflict since the start of this millennium. In the **UK** especially, attacks since 2005 but particularly in 2016 have driven political leaders to choose harder security and short-term responses in foreign policy. Even development policy in the UK is now framed as ‘in the national interest’, much more than at any times since the end of the Cold War. Aid is posited as a vehicle for tackling global challenges, such as the root causes of irregular migration and the threat of terrorism, which directly threaten British interests.

The recent rise in the number of **irregular migrants and refugees entering Europe**, and the impact of these inflows on politics in **Germany, Sweden** and the **EU**, has also sharpened the focus on conflict and stability. Strategies to address such issues are now placed at the heads of government level in European politics rather than within the political remit of foreign or development ministers. As a consequence, this factor has the **power to reorder priorities and change the framing** of responses to violent conflict through foreign and development policy. Domestic events evoke pressure for ‘quick wins’ from the political top, though such politicians are not usually familiar with, or sympathetic to, the intricacies and long-term nature of the peacebuilding process. This has been illustrated by **Germany** and the **EU**, which established, respectively, ‘special initiatives’ and EU Trust Funds as tools for quick decision-making and flexible aid disbursement. The specific aim in these cases was to address the “root causes of irregular migration”, thereby adding an explicit domestic objective to aid policies. Similarly, the **UK’s** Conflict, Stability and Security Fund has received increased resources and expertise to address the drivers of “transnational threats to stability”, such as extremism and illegal migration (HM Government, 2015, p. 64). However, **vast increases in spending through such quick and flexible mechanisms risk limiting political interest and funding for longer-term, more structural and sustainable support to peacebuilding**, especially in countries and regions farther away from Europe.

Here again, this response is a political choice, not an inevitability. **Sweden**, for example, took in a larger share of asylum seekers than any other European country relative to its population in 2014 and 2015 and also experienced a terrorist attack in 2017. This has not yet significantly impacted its approach to violent conflict or diluted its commitment to peacebuilding to date, though it has impacted national politics in other ways (for example, asylum laws have been significantly toughened and domestic attitudes towards immigration are slowly changing, as demonstrated by the rise of a right-wing nationalist party). This is related of course to the second factor we identified, namely the Swedish political culture, which has a longer history of promoting peace.

The conclusion here is that there is a need **for those with an interest in supporting peacebuilding to engage actively in the narrative around public or policy responses to domestic events with an international dimension.** Counterterrorism strategies, for instance, can be designed with a peacebuilding and prevention component, as in Sweden and as advocated by some peacebuilding NGOs in the UK. For the peacebuilding community, this implies **engagement with and deeper understanding of the drivers of political action and public sentiment around domestic events.** Choices, however, must quickly be made in the immediate aftermath of an event about how far to go along with the prevailing political sentiment and how much to try to promote a more nuanced understanding.



## Major conflicts and instability

The **fifth influencing factor is major conflicts or instability in the neighbourhood or elsewhere, with geopolitical consequences**. Such a conflict does not necessarily have to be ‘major’ in terms of the number of inflicted deaths or devastation in the affected regions, countries or societies. Rather, they are major in their relevance to foreign and development policy in the European countries potentially supporting peacebuilding. Their importance usually arises from either their geopolitical significance or the direct involvement of or impact on one or more European countries. Such conflicts may influence overall conflict-related policy even if they are geographically isolated themselves.

The failure of the **EU** to mount a collective and effective response during the **Balkan conflicts** of the 1990s led to the genesis of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy and the CSDP missions. The **Rwandan genocide in 1994**, as an abject failure of the international community and both foreign and development policy, was another significant driver of change. Rwanda pre-genocide was considered a development success story yet development aid contributed to conflict (see Uvin, P. 1999). The genocide provoked significant rethinking, as it demonstrated that development cooperation could not be considered *a priori* a safeguard against conflict. The **Balkan conflicts and the Rwandan genocide** significantly impacted the first conflict prevention commitments of **Sweden** and the **EU**, developed in 1999-2001 and still cited today. For Germany, its participation in the NATO intervention in Kosovo in 1999 (Operational Allied Force) was a significant break from its traditional post-World War II doctrine of ‘renouncement of war’.

The **EU** launched its first European Security Strategy in 2003, in part to clarify its own role following the lack of EU agreement on intervention in **Iraq** and differing perspectives on the Global War on Terrorism, including the United States’ new security strategy. **Sweden’s** engagement in **Afghanistan** raised questions about its national strategy for participation in international peace support and security-building operations, which called for integrated military and civilian actions. A later evaluation of this engagement recommended that military operations and civilian efforts not be mixed. The **UK’s** experiences in **Iraq and Afghanistan**, where it was a military actor in the conflict, had significant impact on its support to and prioritisation of conflict response within its foreign and development policy, particularly in relation to stabilisation. The outcome of the UK’s inquiry into the intervention in Iraq (known as the ‘Chilcot Report’)<sup>13</sup> resonated throughout the UK government, in the sense of producing more realism on interventions. **Germany’s** military involvement in Afghanistan induced a counteraction where the country’s 2004 plan for crisis prevention and peacebuilding which emphasised the primacy of civilian means as a conflict management tool.

In all of the cases, particularly **Germany** and the **EU**, the fallout from the Arab Spring and events in Ukraine had significant impact on foreign policy priorities, as **conflicts close to EU borders have revealed the failure of the EU’s neighbourhood policy to ensure stability for Europe**. The marked rise and then drop in interest in statebuilding as a concept to guide policy responses in relation to violent conflict globally can similarly be explained by its perceived failure, in Iraq and Afghanistan, as was also evident in the more ‘light footprint’ approaches focused on stability and containment adopted by European actors’ response to the Arab Spring.

In our case studies, these types of conflicts and instability tended to drive securitisation, based on stabilisation and protecting perceived national interests and own citizens’ security, rather than rejuvenated global approaches to peacebuilding. A 2018 report on peace and security by the European Parliamentary Research Service underlined that “[t]he security of the **EU** itself is addressed as part of stability and security abroad, in particular in Europe’s immediate neighbourhood” (EPRS, 2018, p. 70). This again is a **political choice**. While **Sweden** has taken some very specific measures to respond to what it sees as an increased

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<sup>13</sup> See, Report of a Committee of Privy Counsellors, 2016.

threat from Russia, it has not yet shifted its development policy and response to violent conflict towards a greater emphasis on state security or 'national interest' considerations.

To conclude, any major conflict or instability that induces direct engagement - particularly militarily - or has direct impact on a country or region has significance beyond the specific geographic context of concern at that moment. Rather than taking each new conflict as a starting point, past experiences of conflict or instability influence the choices made in the next, in political, bureaucratic and policy terms. Conflicts and instability near a country's own borders or with particular geopolitical significance to a country or region (e.g., Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan) will therefore influence support to peacebuilding in the future. Yet, the shape this influence takes is the outcome of political choices in which other factors are also at play, and which therefore vary across different countries.



### Perspectives and influence of allies and other governments' initiatives

The **sixth factor**, albeit of lesser influence than the first five, is the **perspectives and influence of allies, governmental partners and, in the case of the EU, certain member states**. This factor impacts development policy trends and foreign policy, particularly commitments to non-military responses to violent conflict.

Indeed, many policy commitments and approaches to violent conflict can be traced back to policies and institutional innovations developed by either **Sweden** or the **UK**. **Sweden** has been a key norm-setter on conflict policy. It formulated its own commitments in this area in a 1999 action plan on preventing violent conflict. These have been replicated in many other countries' policies. In 2001, the Swedish Presidency of the EU worked with the EU institutions to drive forward the groundbreaking, in policy terms, EU Gothenburg Programme for the prevention of violent conflicts. Since then, however, **the EU** institutions have been more of a 'fast follower' than a leader, though it remains considerably more advanced than all but a few of its member states. In 2017-2018, **Sweden, Germany** and Finland have been actively leading the development of a strengthened civilian capacity for conflict prevention and management at the EU level. The idea here was to balance recent advances in EU military cooperation, led especially by France, with non-military capabilities. **Allies' wider influence on one another is also evident**. France, as an influential European country, is pushing Germany to think more about increasing its capacity for military responses. But these urgings have also stimulated Germany to respond by bolstering its non-military and peacebuilding policies linked to German political culture.

The **UK** has been an influential norm-setter in institutional innovations and capacities for responding to violent conflict. The UK was the first to develop a specific 'Stabilisation Unit' and pooled funding mechanisms earmarked for responding to violent conflict. These, such as the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund, are often cited as models of good practice. **There has also been a degree of mimicry of institutional initiatives and framing concepts, with those in one country influencing others**. A recent example is the desire expressed in **Germany** and the **EU** for dedicated units or government entities responsible for stabilisation, following the UK's example. The UK recruits and employs 'conflict advisers' with a particular skill set and expertise. Similarly, the 'countering violent extremism' narrative was championed by the UK after originating in the Netherlands around the middle of last decade, and has since been picked up in the conflict policy of others. The 2016 Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy specifically and regularly references peacebuilding. This was in no small part due to expertise from the UK, Nordic countries and civil society inside and outside of the EU institutions. In another example, the Nordic countries have been successful in pushing policy and institutional innovations related to mediation at the EU level. This led, for example, to the establishment of a mediation support unit within the EEAS with seconded national experts and to Council conclusions on mediation. This type of influence or mimicry is not confined to policy on

responding to violent conflict. It is common in foreign and development policy more widely. Indeed in development policy, issues such as the importance of private sector development and a 'results agenda' have spread from one country to another, particularly across like-minded countries among which there is a high degree of trust and similar Northern European political culture.

To conclude, the ideas of certain allies and partners can be particularly influential, especially at the level of choices on conflict policy and their operationalisation. Yet **this influence is most evident within just a small group of 'like-minded countries' rather than across a larger segment of either EU allies, OECD countries or the international community as a whole.** Indeed, investments in such lead countries, with the hope that innovations and influence will 'filter through' to the larger group, seem to have only limited effect, albeit possibly an important one given how much these **norm-setters** and lead countries support peacebuilding globally.



## International commitments and norms relevant to responding to violent conflict

The **seventh factor** is **international commitments and norms relevant to responding to violent conflict.** These are set at the UN level and at other levels, such as that of the OECD-DAC, which is particularly active in **norm-setting** for development policy and spending, including in peace-related domains. Even though our case study countries put enormous effort into establishing international norms and policies to influence support for peacebuilding, we nonetheless consider this factor to be of lesser importance than the first six.

The fact that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) did not have any specific commitment related to conflict, security and governance was seen as a limitation within all of the cases studied. **Germany, Sweden, the UK and the EU** actively promoted inclusion of Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These aims, part of the OECD-DAC agenda since the late 1990s, have been further refined by the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, which offers guidelines for pursuing them. The UN's new 'Sustaining Peace' agenda - following from UN Security Council Resolution 2282 and General Assembly Resolution 70/262 in 2016 - championed by **Sweden** among others, and strongly supported by the EU and its member states, can be understood as an attempt to place the non-violent side of responding to conflict back on the global agenda. Going hand in hand with the reform agenda of the UN Secretary-General, these efforts have created momentum for conflict prevention and peacebuilding as well as for a more coherent and integrated approach to peacebuilding at the international level.

The particular challenge of this seventh factor is its agenda-setting power for the foreign and development policies of our case studies. Indeed, considerations related to the first six factors can influence support to peacebuilding and responses to violent conflict more prominently. Furthermore, international norms are likely to be more fully adopted by states such as **Sweden**, which already enjoy a high degree of alignment between the international language of norms and the domestic political culture. In all four of our cases, we found substantial efforts to set or influence the global agenda. For example, each explicitly acknowledged the link between conflict and development policy and had stimulated UN agencies and the World Bank to recognise this connection. It has therefore been easier for them to adopt or reaffirm international norms, as they themselves pushed for them in the first place. This ties in with actors' own sense of their place in the world. The **UK** would like to think of itself more as a norm-setter than a norm-taker including in developing policy responses to conflict. The **EU** is committed to multilateralism and acknowledges the value of adopting and promoting norms that its member states have already adopted on the global stage. Much of the EU's own conflict-related policy (e.g., its security sector reform) shows very close parallels to OECD-DAC language. **Germany** would like to be seen as a good pupil of multilateralism. **Sweden** is an enthusiastic proponent of

international norms when they resonate with its own liberal values, particularly regarding peace, human rights and democracy. As a relatively small power, it is much more reliant on the international institutions than a country like the UK, for instance.

To conclude, while international norms related to peace, conflict and development are an important factor influencing national conflict policies, a **degree of realism is needed when judging how transformative or influential international norms actually are** beyond the small community of conflict experts and units within lead governments. Yet, while the changing geopolitical environment seems certain to challenge international norms, they will remain important, both in themselves and among an influential peacebuilding community in support of multilateralism.



## Conflict-related expertise

The **eighth factor** is **conflict-related expertise**. The rise of non-military and non-diplomatic responses to conflict on national and international agendas has brought significant investment and increases in conflict-related expertise and knowledge. 25 years ago, specific units dealing with non-military approaches to conflict were extremely rare, and dedicated and professional ‘conflict advisers’ did not exist. These are now established parts of the foreign affairs and development bureaucracies in all of the cases studied. Similarly, most of the peacebuilding organisations that existed 25 years ago had small turnovers and staffs, and professional umbrella networks were nascent at best. Though high-level policy commitments did exist or were emerging, there was a lack of operational guidance on conflict analysis for instance, and no real expertise and personnel positioned to drive change through or advise on peacebuilding.

The **EU** made a commitment to conflict sensitivity and conflict analysis in 2001, but it was not until 2011 that it actually developed and approved guidance on the topic. The **UK** now has a dedicated cadre of ‘conflict advisers’ that has grown in size from two to more than sixty over the past 20 years. They are based mostly within DFID but are found across government. In **Sweden**, SIDA has progressively fine-tuned its conflict sensitivity and analysis capability. In 2017, it released a ‘peace and conflict toolbox’. The expertise of Sweden’s Folke Bernadotte Academy is increasingly drawn upon and recognised by the government. For instance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs commissioned the Academy to analyse Sweden’s role in mediation, to inform the creation of a ‘dialogue and peace processes’ support function within the conflict department of the ministry. In **Germany**, the initial impetus to build up expertise came from the development ministry, BMZ, which, as part of its 2005 strategy for peacebuilding, formulated guidelines for more conflict-sensitive development actions. This was replaced in 2013 by the BMZ’s strategy paper ‘Development for Peace and Security’, which in turn led GIZ and the KfW Development Bank, to adopt a common methodology for peace and conflict assessments.

These experts do not all see or have officially supporting peacebuilding as their primary purpose. Indeed, much of their engagement relates to other issues in the conflict sphere, such as stabilisation, resilience, security sector reform, crisis response and governance. The point is that, in the past, a lack of capacity or lack of expertise and knowledge could legitimately be seen as a major obstacle to implementation of policies supporting peacebuilding. Now, however, capacity and expertise are no longer lacking – although the capacity is often marginalised, still not to scale, and is somewhat diluted in the pursuit of multiple goals.

**Further, in reality, much conflict-related expertise and knowledge resides outside of government.** Expertise in civil society, think tanks and academia has been influential largely through its connection to expertise within governments rather than through a direct route to political leaders or opinion formers. Ideas and concepts developed outside governments, whether these regard ‘conflict sensitivity’, ‘strategic peacebuilding’, ‘security sector reform’ or ‘peace process support’, have been taken up and adopted by

experts within governments, albeit more within the framework of conflict responses than in overarching approaches to foreign and development policy. Influential personnel and expertise has also entered government bodies from civil society. Exchanges of expertise were furthermore found between the EU and our three case study countries. Whereas 25 years ago career prospects for an 'expert' in peacebuilding were extremely limited, now it is possible to pursue a career as a conflict and peace specialist. Expert networks and influential international non-governmental peacebuilding organisations have matured over the years, though they themselves have inevitably been influenced by the political culture and policy and funding environment from which they have emerged.

It is no coincidence that in our four cases expertise and networks outside government, whether in academia, think tanks or NGOs, were among the most influential and respected globally. This relates both to the level of experience and to the availability of funds and, oftentimes, a conscious policy by governments to develop 'soft power' ideas to influence others. Despite tensions between government officials and experts outside government, constructive dialogues and interchanges have been frequent among staff at the expert level, particularly when specialists from international NGOs approach government bodies. In some cases formal structures have been established to facilitate government-expert dialogue, such as the German Advisory Board for Civilian Crisis Prevention and Peacebuilding and the EU Civil Society Dialogue Network. These provide platforms for sustained exchanges, though their ability to reach the highest levels of political and even bureaucratic decision-making has remained very limited.

To conclude, expert networks, organisations and influential individuals, though constrained, have been highly influential in keeping peacebuilding and non-violent approaches to conflict 'on the agenda' at the lower levels of government and intergovernmental bodies. In all of our case studies, they were also instrumental in adoption of existing norms. They were particularly active in driving and influencing policies and institutional innovations related to conflict from outside government. Yet, the ability of this expert level to challenge or influence relevant political choices overall seems limited. Even at the bureaucratic level experts have met significant and persistent constraints. Indeed, they have had little influence on the decisions of top-level foreign ministry bureaucrats, let alone political choices. This is a challenge that the peacebuilding community must grapple with. The expert level will certainly remain important, but the past 20 years demonstrate that this route alone has clear limitations for wider transformation.

## 4. Key Findings

### 4.1. Overall trends

**After 25 years of commitments, peacebuilding is not yet at the heart of foreign and development policy decisions.** Support to peacebuilding is therefore still subject to dominant overarching trends in the foreign and development policy domain.

The whole approach and concept of peacebuilding has had to jostle for space among other framing concepts and approaches that have been popular in policy terms, such as 'resilience', 'stabilisation' and 'fragility'. In all our case studies we found a trend of increasing use of peacebuilding terminology in relation to promoting the country's own interests and own citizens' security rather than global or human security. Nonetheless, peacebuilding has been remarkably resilient while other terms and concepts have come and gone in foreign and development policy or have less resonance today, such as conflict reduction or conflict transformation. Key principles underpinning peacebuilding – such as it being multi-stakeholder, broader than just the state, long-term, multidimensional, non-violent, and requiring context analysis and understanding – have been either supported or undermined by the rise of other concepts and approaches.

The financial resources available for peacebuilding have broadly risen during the past ten years. **Although they are still not commensurate with the challenges, the actual amount of resources is significant.** Most organisations that are part of the peacebuilding community have grown as well. The issue at present is therefore not a chronic lack of funds or a significant reduction in available resources globally. It is rather about the **'quality' of funds**; and this was a concern expressed by interviewees within governments as well as in non-governmental agencies. Particular constraints were mentioned regarding funding flexibility, long-term approach, restrictive geographic remit, or narrow sub-thematic focus (particularly on issues such as countering violent extremism).

As demonstrated, the **peacebuilding community still relies on a small number of official government and intergovernmental donors.** These donors have provided steady and significant financial support. However, **their limited number makes the peacebuilding community vulnerable to cuts and changes in the thematic and geographical policies** and priorities of these actors.

## 4.2. Factors influencing support to peacebuilding

**No one factor adequately explains the evolution of support to peacebuilding in all of the cases,** nor can any single factor indicate how such support may evolve in the future. Yet, blended together, the eight factors identified go a long way in explaining the dynamics driving change and continuity. The **margins of manoeuvre** are most certainly influenced by the factors identified. However, how to respond to violent conflict and support peacebuilding is **still ultimately a political and bureaucratic choice.**

The past 25 years have brought a number of conflict-related policy changes and innovations. Yet, while **new conflict-related policies and institutional innovations are to be welcomed,** they inevitably run up against the same two constraints that have hampered peacebuilding in the past. First is **bureaucratic systems of governance,** which do not easily bend to a peacebuilding logic, which calls for more bottom-up, flexible, speedy, long-term, risk-taking and integrated action across government. Second is the **limited political appetite for pursuing or prioritising peacebuilding approaches,** rather than policy alternatives such as security, development, crisis management, containment and humanitarian assistance in response to violent conflict. This owes much to the **national political culture and sense of place in the world.** Indeed, peacebuilding seems to be caught in a **smaller and, some would say, shrinking 'room',** where the walls are made up of bureaucratic constraints, and the ceiling marked by political boundaries.

**Support and the quality of support to peacebuilding is in flux,** as influential factors that usually take significant time to evolve are all changing faster. This is true even among the governments that have been the most consistent supporters of peacebuilding globally, and can be both a challenge and an opportunity depending on the factor and on how these changes are dealt with.

## 5. Implications for future support to peacebuilding

### 5.1. For the international peacebuilding community

**Over the past 25 years, the peacebuilding community has not been naïve about the evolving situation it faces.** Whether within or outside government institutions, experts have busied themselves with the at times Sisyphean task of creating a more enabling environment for support to peacebuilding. Or they have moulded creative **workarounds** to overcome what they saw as shortcomings of the current system. The increase in financial and specialist human resources devoted to peacebuilding has been in large part thanks to this work. Yet, **most of the emphasis has been on engagement at the expert technical level,** where there is a

willing audience speaking the same language and sharing a common commitment to the principle of constructive engagement. The effort has been in improving the technical dimensions of peacebuilding without ensuring this is accompanied by backing of adequate political weight. It has been difficult, and even deemed risky, to engage with wider constituencies within Western countries, or with opinion leaders in the wider foreign policy realm and leaders of political parties and senior politicians in ways that could be seen as 'political'. Even senior officials charged with supporting peacebuilding within governments have limited space and ability to engage and change either the political culture or the system of governance because the topic has not had popular or consistent top-level political support.

So while **there is undoubtedly much work still to be done at the expert level**, and engagement at this level still provides a way to connect with and support often isolated and frustrated change agents within 'the system', our analysis suggests that transformational change – towards prioritising peacebuilding in a changing world – will not come from leveraging expertise alone. **Engaging with and understanding wider societal dynamics and interests, including those in the foreign policy realm and among political leaders - beyond addressing global coalitions of the like-minded - will be necessary in order to influence the political culture and 'sense of place' in the world and calls for targeted, political and societal interventions.**

**It is perhaps the principles underpinning peacebuilding** (multi-stakeholder, multidimensional, long-term, based on context analysis), rather than the term peacebuilding itself that should be promoted and sought. This could allow for greater buy-in from actors that do not have significant knowledge or understanding of peacebuilding but are still likely to support its foundation. It would also allow for other terms and approaches to be assessed by these same principles and to push back against the co-option of peacebuilding to more securitised approaches.

As the world moves towards a new geopolitical era, the international peacebuilding community will face profound change. It cannot continue to rely entirely on those who have been consistent supporters of peacebuilding in the past. There is the **need for new champions and more diversity in political, policy and financial terms**. This will not be easy. The lack of diversity among those supporting peacebuilding is a significant weakness for the community. Its vulnerability is more starkly evident now than before, though the financial sums in support for peacebuilding involved paradoxically at this point have never been larger. Thus **efforts should focus on improving the 'quality' of the financial support given and on communicating why such changes are necessary, rather than seeking simply 'more' resources.**

The analysis would suggest that those concerned with supporting peacebuilding will have to adopt new strategies, tactics and methods.

## 5.2. For the peacebuilding community in European countries

The geopolitical era and political culture were found to be shifting in all four of the cases in our analysis, putting existing governance systems under increasing pressure. This, however, presents **opportunities that could be seized for positive change in support to peacebuilding**. Peacebuilding communities with strong legitimacy and networks, such as those in Germany, Sweden, the UK and the EU<sup>14</sup>, have the greatest interest and most significant chance of effectively navigating this evolving environment and safeguarding support for peacebuilding in these places but cannot do it alone. Particularly if they can find within themselves or other flexible resources to take this path. The changes now underway require a **profound rethink of national and**

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<sup>14</sup> While this study did not focus on support to peacebuilding by other European countries, such as Norway, the Netherlands and Denmark, indicators point to broadly similar challenges for them as well.

**EU engagement in promoting peacebuilding, or at least new avenues to complement the past and present paths.** The expert route, so long favoured by peacebuilding organisations because of its efficiency and the willingness of the audience, needs to be complemented by more political types of engagement, making the case for peacebuilding approaches that engage societies and political leaders. This **calls for new networks, new alliances and different types of engagement with opinion leaders and a better understanding of concerns and views within societies** as they relate to peacebuilding. It calls for **direct engagement in debates**, not just on conflict-related policy development and implementation, but **on the wider issue of how countries see their place in the world**. If the trends identified in this report are visible in other European countries there will be a general need for engagement with wider society, with opinion leaders and with high-level politicians as countries reassess their priorities at this geopolitical crossroads in Europe.

### 5.3. For philanthropic donors interested in peacebuilding

Although philanthropy plays an important role in supporting peacebuilding, it was not the focus of this study as this support does not reach the same level financially and particularly politically as the case study countries and the EU noted here, either collectively or individually. Philanthropy in itself cannot directly make up for any negative changes in political or financial support given by these official donors to peacebuilding even if there were to be a significant upgrade and focus within the philanthropic community towards peacebuilding. Yet philanthropy in its support to peacebuilding is values-led and is not subject in the same way to the eight factors that we identified as impacting government support. It can take risks, engage in supporting more political work (within limits), be more flexible, swifter and creative than official donors, yet can also back issues or approaches that are less fashionable in governmental policy circles if it chooses to. Philanthropy has a long history of not only supporting implementation but also advocacy work and more creative ways of influencing opinion formers and narratives. Independent critical analysis of government policies and the politics and bureaucratic drivers behind them have been somewhat hampered by the fact that governments themselves do not tend to fund political analysis or advocacy for which they or other allied governments are the focus. This is a role that has to be covered elsewhere.

In response to the challenges mentioned, there is undoubtedly a role for non-official and philanthropic support, for example, think tanks, civil society and the media, for engagement in societal action towards politicians and opinion leaders. Going beyond the expert level in the peacebuilding community will require new types of flexible resources, as well as innovation and experimentation and different coalition-building. Not all initiatives will yield immediate results, and therefore patience will be required. Some initiatives will be politically risky and thus by their very nature not conducive to government support. There is of course a danger that rather than focusing support on downstream implementation (including supporting local civil society peacebuilding), philanthropic donors may turn increasingly inwards to confront challenges within their own countries of origin, yet this has to be balanced by reflecting on what would occur if negative trends would not be countered.

### 5.4. Key areas of reflection for the peacebuilding community overall

Beyond the analysis presented, this report hopefully raises a number of questions of reflection within the peacebuilding community in Europe and beyond on how to respond. While there are many questions that arise, some structure is put forward to guide discussion.

### **Change as an opportunity or threat?**

Are shifting global politics and the chances of a new geopolitical era an opportunity or threat? Does it open up opportunities for a more globally democratic and diverse approach to peacebuilding that is less reliant on the West for support or are potential changes likely to weaken peacebuilding globally? Are there things that the peacebuilding community can do to maximise the chance for more positive outcomes?

### **Making the case for support to peacebuilding differently?**

What is the most effective way to make the case for peacebuilding in the current political era that will connect with society and decision-makers? Is there a need for new evidence to make the case for peacebuilding more digestible in countries that traditionally support it? Or is the decision to support peacebuilding an emotional choice that requires different methods of engagement?

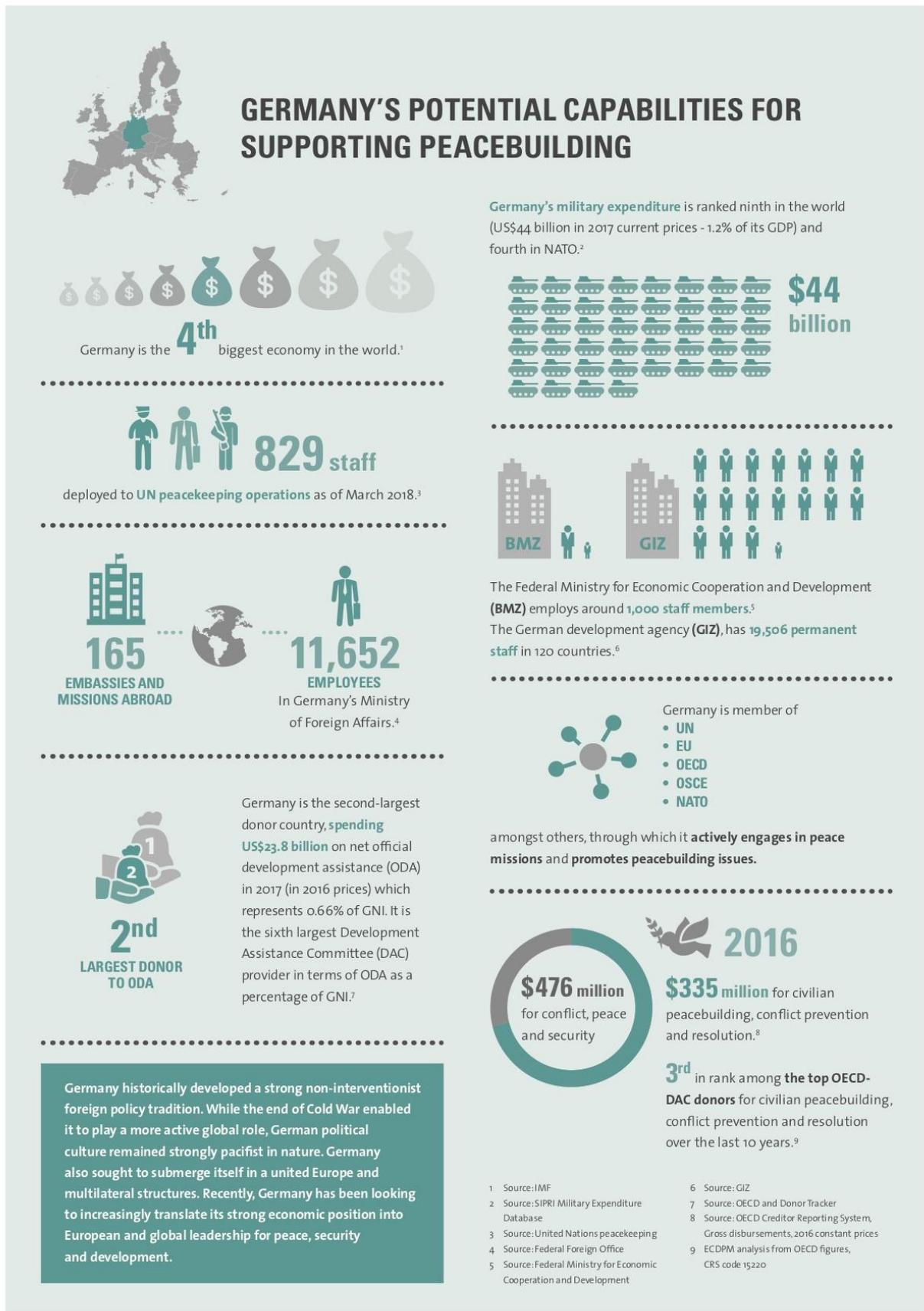
### **Getting political at home?**

Should international peacebuilders seek to start playing a more proactive role in shaping political perspective and public opinion on conflict within their own countries that support peacebuilding? If so, how? Should the community engage more in the political sphere and in national debates that do not necessarily relate directly to conflict or peacebuilding but wider foreign and development policy? What role can new mobilisation and communication approaches play, and what risks are associated with going down this path?

### **How to address structural challenges?**

What barriers or impediments might prevent peacebuilders and peacebuilding organisations from plotting a new course? What structural changes might be needed to support this more political approach to peacebuilding (e.g. funding diversification, new coalitions and networks, more political organisations and umbrellas, new types of engagement strategies with new tools)? What further independent policy analysis from outside the peacebuilding community would be useful?

## Annex 1. German, Swedish, UK and EU potential capabilities for peacebuilding





## SWEDEN'S POTENTIAL CAPABILITIES FOR SUPPORTING PEACEBUILDING

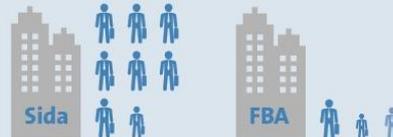


Sweden is the world's **23<sup>rd</sup>** largest economy!<sup>1</sup>

According to the SIPRI Military Expenditure Database Sweden's **military expenditure** was US\$ 5,6 billion in 2017 current prices (1% of GDP).

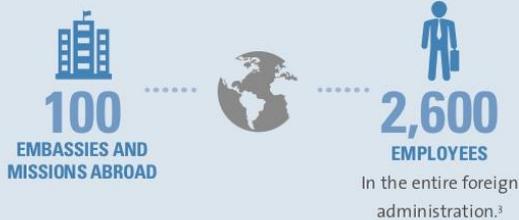


352 staff deployed to UN peacekeeping operations as of March 2018.<sup>2</sup>



The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (**Sida**) has a total of **782 employees**.

The Folke Bernadotte Academy (**FBA**), the government agency for peace, security and development, has a total of **130 employees** and around **60 secondees**.<sup>4</sup>



100 EMBASSIES AND MISSIONS ABROAD

2,600 EMPLOYEES

In the entire foreign administration.<sup>3</sup>



Sweden is member of

- UN
- EU
- OECD
- OSCE

amongst others and frequently **advocates for peacebuilding issues** within them.

SWEDEN IS ONE OF ONLY FIVE DAC MEMBERS DELIVERING



0.7% OF ITS GNI TO ODA

Sweden is the largest donor in terms of official development assistance (ODA) in proportion to the size of its economy, spending 1.01% (US\$5.4 billion) of its gross national income (GNI) on net ODA in 2017. This makes it the seventh largest donor country in absolute terms.<sup>5</sup>



\$137million for conflict, peace and security

\$79million for civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution.<sup>6</sup>

6<sup>th</sup> in rank among the top OECD-DAC donors for civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution over the last 10 years.<sup>7</sup>

The Swedish political culture is based on a strong identity as a peaceful actor and a consensual society. The country does not participate in military alliances and has a value-based foreign and development policy, strongly supporting multilateralism. Sweden is also home to an important peace movement and prominent NGOs and research institutes working on conflict and peacebuilding.

1 Source: IMF

2 Source: United Nations Peacekeeping

3 Source: Ministry for Foreign Affairs

4 Source: Sida's and FBA's websites

5 Sources: OECD and Donor Tracker

6 Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System, Gross disbursements, 2016 constant prices

7 ECDPM analysis from OECD figures, CRS code 15220



## UNITED KINGDOM'S POTENTIAL CAPABILITIES FOR SUPPORTING PEACEBUILDING



The UK is the world's **5<sup>th</sup>** largest economy.<sup>1</sup>



**737** staff

deployed to **UN peacekeeping operations** as of March 2018.<sup>3</sup>



**170**  
EMBASSIES AND MISSIONS ABROAD



**14,000**  
EMPLOYEES

In the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO).<sup>4</sup>

**THE UNITED KINGDOM IS ONE OF ONLY FIVE DAC MEMBERS DELIVERING**



**0.7%**  
OF ITS GNI TO ODA

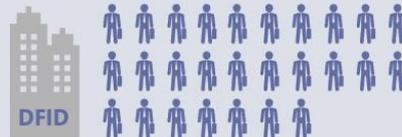
The United Kingdom (UK) is the third-largest donor country, spending **US\$18.4 billion** on net official development assistance (ODA) in 2017 (in 2016 prices). It is the fifth largest Development Assistance Committee (DAC) provider in terms of ODA as a percentage of GNI.<sup>6</sup>

The UK political culture is influenced by its global nuclear and military power and its colonial history. The country promotes liberal and democratic values as well as its own security and economic interests. It develops and champions bold and innovative approaches to responding to violent conflict. The UK is also home to respected and leading peacebuilding NGOs, academic institutions, think tanks and conflict expertise.

**UK military expenditure** was US\$47 billion in 2017 current prices (1.8% of GDP). The UK has the second largest defence budget in NATO (after the US), and the seventh largest in the world.<sup>2</sup>



**\$47 billion**



The Department for International Development (**DFID**) employs around **2,700 staff** in London, East Kilbride and globally.<sup>5</sup>



The UK is member of

- UN
- EU (until March 2019)
- OECD
- OSCE
- NATO
- COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS

and has a permanent seat on **the UN Security Council**.



**\$581 million**  
for conflict, peace and security

**2016**

**\$483 million** for civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution.<sup>7</sup>

**2<sup>nd</sup>** in rank among **the top OECD-DAC donors** for civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution over the last 10 years.<sup>8</sup>

1 Source: IMF

2 Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database and NATO

3 Source: United Nations peacekeeping

4 Source: FCO's website

5 Source: DFID's website

6 Source: Donor Tracker

7 Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System, Gross disbursements, 2016 constant prices

8 ECDDP analysis from OECD figures, CRS code 15220



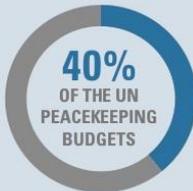
## THE EUROPEAN UNION'S POTENTIAL CAPABILITIES FOR PEACEBUILDING



The EU is the world's **2<sup>nd</sup>** largest economy.<sup>1</sup>



EU member states contribute about 7% of the total **personnel to United Nations operations** which corresponds to **6,655 personnel in total.**<sup>3</sup>



derives from the cumulative **contribution of the 28 EU member states.**<sup>5</sup> Collectively, the EU and its member states are the **single largest financial contributors to the UN system.**



The EU has **8 special representatives** (June 2018) with a mandate to contribute to EU efforts to consolidate peace, stability and the rule of law.<sup>7</sup>



after the US, Germany and the UK, with net official development assistance (ODA) at **US\$16.0 billion** in 2017 (in 2016 prices). The European Union and its member states continue to be **the world's leading provider of ODA** with an overall amount of US\$88 billion in 2017 (57% of global ODA). This amount represents 0,50% of EU Gross National Income (GNI).<sup>8</sup>

The EU self-identifies as a project to promote peace in Europe through economic integration and democratic reforms. The EU institutions are traditionally seen as a civilian and value-driven 'soft power' with a strong tradition in development and a commitment to multilateralism. Foreign and security policy are newer elements in the EU integration process and remain largely member state-driven.

The **Military expenditure of EU member states** amounted to US\$259 billion in 2017 current prices (1,5% of the GDP of the EU).<sup>2</sup>



Under the EU's **Common Security & Defence Policy.**<sup>4</sup>



The EU is an **observer to the United Nations** with an upgraded status since 2011, and an important **partner of NATO and the OSCE.** The European Commission participates in the work of the OECD.

The European External Action Service has **4,067 staff**, including its 140 delegations around the world. **3,078** work at DEVCO (Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development) and **183** work at the Foreign Policy Instrument (FPI).<sup>6</sup>



**2016**

**\$241 million** for civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution.<sup>9</sup>

**4<sup>th</sup>** in rank among the **top OECD-DAC donors** for civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution over the last 10 years.<sup>10</sup>

1 Source: IMF  
2 Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database and IMF  
3 Source: United Nations peacekeeping  
4 Source: EEAS  
5 Source: EEAS  
6 Source: EEAS and European Commission  
7 Source: EEAS  
8 Source: Donor Tracker, European Commission (The overall amount of €75,7 billion provided by the EU and its Member States in 2017 was converted into US\$ for comparability reasons).  
9 Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System, Gross disbursements, 2016 constant prices  
10 ECDPM analysis from OECD figures, CRS code 15220

## Annex 2. Our methodology

### Overall approach

The authors also recognise that there is a degree of conceptual vagueness around the term ‘peacebuilding’. There is no single agreed definition of ‘peacebuilding’, but instead different interpretations and uses of the concept exist. ‘Peacebuilding’ as a term also has to compete with other, partially overlapping terms such as ‘stabilisation’ or ‘resilience’ in policy discourse. For methodological reasons, this paper uses the approach to peacebuilding from the original OECD DAC Guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation as a working definition (1997: 86, emphasis added):

Peacebuilding and reconciliation focuses on *long-term support* to, and establishment of, viable political and socio-economic and cultural institutions *capable of addressing the root causes of conflicts*, as well as other initiatives aimed at creating the necessary conditions for *sustained peace and stability*. These activities also seek to promote the integration of competing or marginalised groups within mainstream society, through providing *equitable access to political decision-making, social networks, economic resources and information*, and can be implemented in all phases of conflict.... Peacebuilding involves both *long-term preventive measures and more immediate responses before, during and after conflict*.

This definition has informed the qualitative analysis of this study, as it has been used as a baseline to assess how the meaning and use of peacebuilding terminology in Europe differs among different actors and how it has evolved over time. While other definitions exist, the attraction of this definition is that all the cases were OECD-DAC members and it dates from the start of the period of analysis in the 1990s.

In carrying out this work, we assessed primary documentation such as policy statements complemented by analyses, commentaries, articles, reports and evaluations from academia, civil society, think tanks and in some cases parliaments and quasi non-governmental bodies. Overall we analysed more than 400 documents, details of which are presented in the respective case studies. In addition, we undertook 46 interviews with some 60 people (details of those interviewed will be available in the case studies), comprising current and former policymakers, experts from think tanks and research institutes, and civil society representatives in different parts of Europe.

Based on data collected through the literature review and interviews, a first draft of each case study report was prepared and peer reviewed internally by ECDPM colleagues. Preliminary findings and conclusions were presented at a workshop held 12 March 2018 with ten academics, former officials and civil society representatives, all experts on the peacebuilding policies of the UK, Sweden, Germany or the EU institutions. The expert seminar served two purposes. First, participants were invited to critically assess the draft case study reports and provide feedback. Second, the seminar provided a platform for discussion of our broader cross-cutting analysis of the research results and the implications of our findings for future peacebuilding support from Europe as presented in this synthesis.

The current study was necessarily limited in scope. While the findings reported here reflect a synthesis of the case studies, it would be a mistake to assume that the eight factors had similar weights in each of the cases or that they could be easily extrapolated to other cases, such as the United States or a donor country without a history of support to peacebuilding without further research. There also remains a need to build further evidence ‘bottom-up’ from conflict impacted countries and communities. Future research could focus, for example, on a particular geographic conflict context, such as a region like the Sahel or a country like the Democratic Republic of Congo. Or it could look at a wider cross-section of countries supporting peacebuilding

support from Europe, for example, including the Netherlands or Norway as a countries with a history of supporting peacebuilding and France as a country that does not. Though desirable, both these avenues of research were beyond reach in this phase of the work within the available resources.

### **Approach to aid statistics**

We additionally analysed financial flows based on OECD-DAC data since 2007, both global figures and those for the individual cases (section 2.3). In the OECD-DAC financial reporting scheme, called the Creditor Reporting System (CRS), funding related to **conflict, peace and security** is reported under **code 152**. It includes security system management and reform; civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution; participation in international peacekeeping operations; reintegration and small arms and light weapons (SALW) control; removal of landmines and explosive remnants of war; and prevention and demobilisation of child soldiers. The **subcode 15220 ‘civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution’** includes funding for two purposes: (i) support for civilian activities related to peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution, including capacity building, monitoring, dialogue and information exchange; and (ii) bilateral participation in international civilian peace missions and contributions to civilian peace funds or commissions.<sup>15</sup> We made the methodological choice to analyse the evolution of disbursements for both code 152 and code 15220 by Germany, Sweden, the UK and the EU institutions over the past ten years, and to identify the top contributors to code 15220 only.

This approach was chosen to provide as accurate as possible a picture of donor financial support to peacebuilding. Yet, it is not without inherent flaws. First, OECD-DAC CRS codes 152 and 15220 are not perfect indicators. The first encompasses activities that some may view as beyond the realm of peacebuilding, such as SALW control and removal of landmines. The latter may be perceived as too narrow. Also it relies on coding of project by officials of the donors concerns who could have very different understanding of what constitutes civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution.

Second, our focus on ODA limits the scope of our financial flows’ analysis to the amounts that donors actually reported to the OECD-DAC. As a consequence, the figures may give an incomplete picture. Costs involved in, for example, political engagement in peace processes may be left out. Furthermore, administrative considerations may lead actors not to report certain expenses. For example, some funding under the EU’s Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace, which is the EU instrument most directly related to peacebuilding, is not reported to the DAC as ODA for such reasons as is much of the funding under the UK’s Conflict, Security and Stability Fund.

Besides, to avoid double counting, projects are allocated to a single purpose code on the basis of the activities that comprise the largest share of the project. Some ODA spending relevant to peacebuilding will certainly have been missed by looking only at codes 152 and 15220 (Dalrymple, 2016). Indeed, a 2011 comprehensive evaluation of European Commission support to conflict prevention and peacebuilding using a different methodology (taking key terms from the European Commission’s own 2001 Conflict Prevention policy framework) and using the European Commission’s own internal project database came to a vastly different figure than that derived from the CRS code alone (see ADE, 2011).

Despite its flaws, we chose this approach for three main reasons: (i) availability and accessibility of data, (ii) the association with the working definition of peacebuilding adopted in this paper and (iii) comparability of figures both over time (corrected for inflation) and between donors. The authors are open to further more detailed research on the ODA in the future should there be a strong demand for such analysis.

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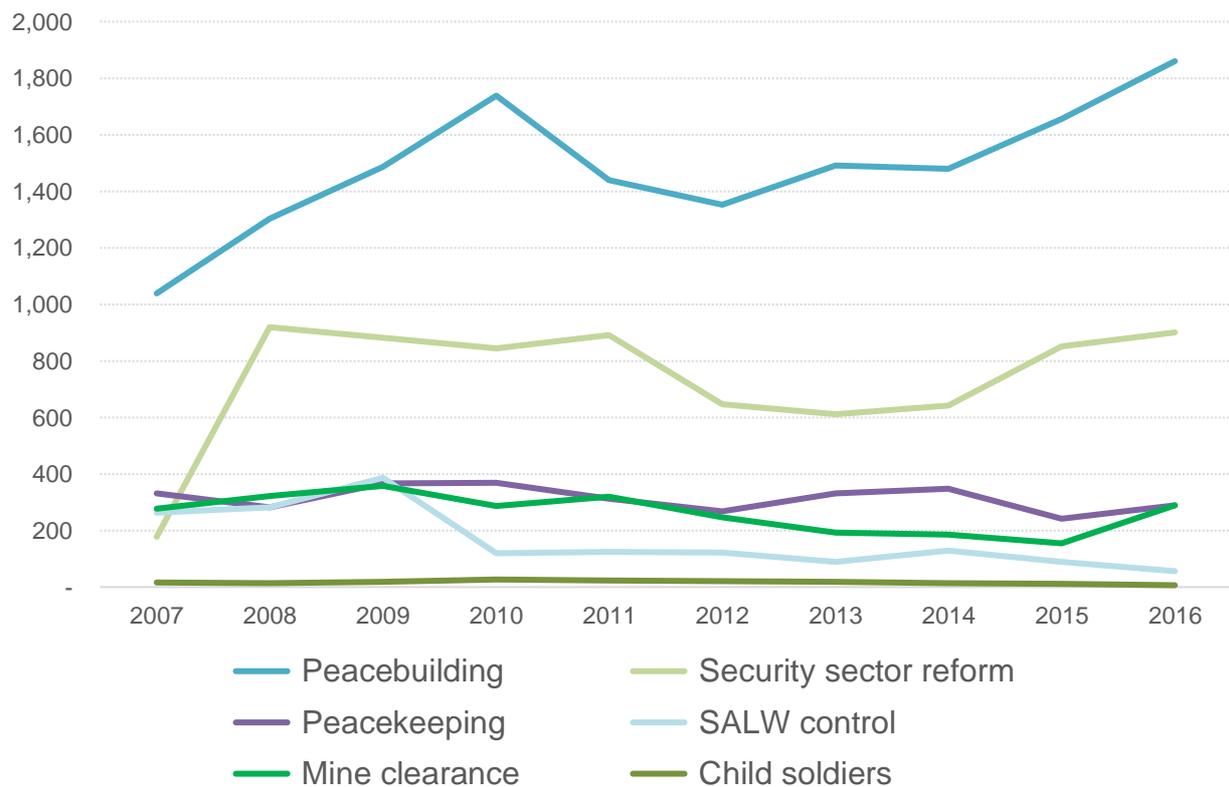
<sup>15</sup> Financing of military equipment and services as well as anti-terrorism activities are excluded from ODA reporting (OECD-DAC, 2016). Thus code 15220 excludes engagement in military strategy and defence cooperation.

### Annex 3. Additional findings related to conflict, peace and security and peacebuilding as areas of ODA spending

**Civilian peacebuilding (code 15220) represents some 50% of spending on conflict, peace and security (code 152) by all OECD donors, and 52% of such spending by DAC countries.** This share is particularly high in the UK and Germany, with, respectively, 72% and 66% of funds for conflict, peace and security going to civilian peacebuilding on average. Those figures are 55% for Sweden and 40% for the EU institutions. This may reflect the fact that ‘peacebuilding’ as a category covers a broader range of activities than the other codes related to peace and security. Peacebuilding is a wide category that includes support to peace processes, political negotiations, conflict sensitivity, mediation, resilience initiatives, support to local governance and capacity building for civil society (Dalrymple, 2016).

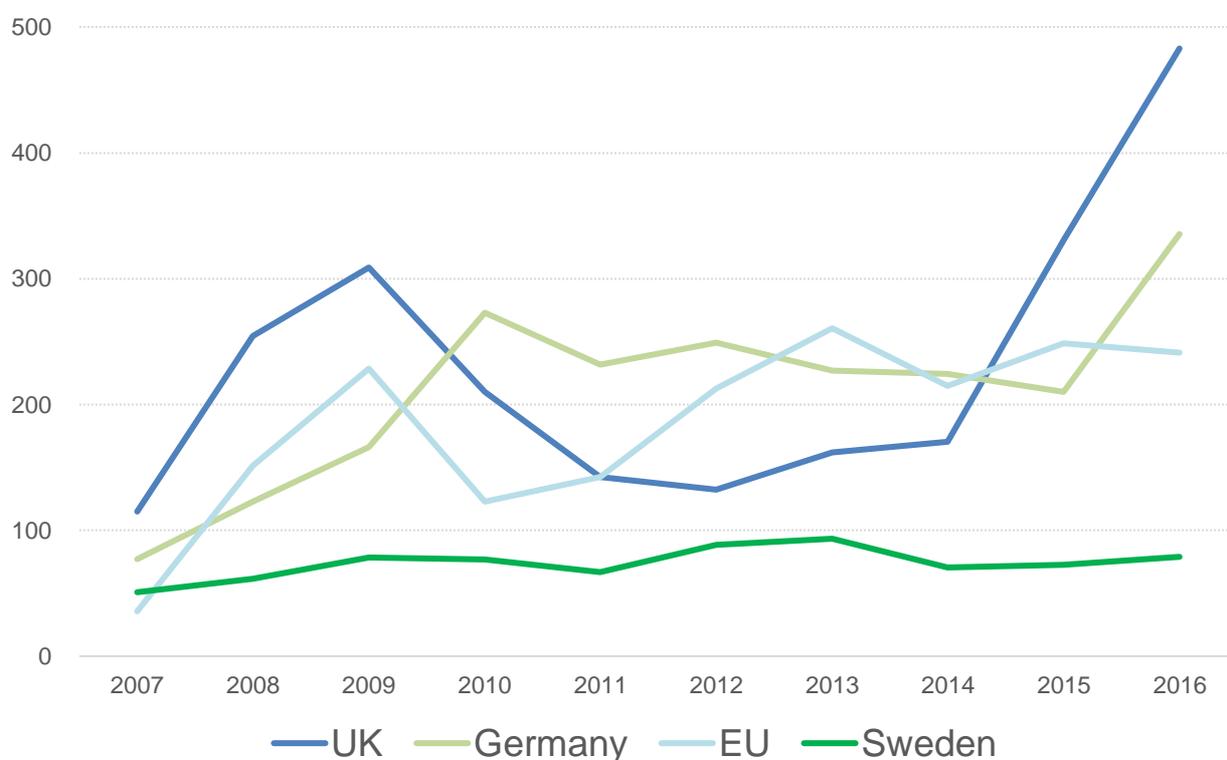
Figure 5 presents the evolution of peacebuilding and other codes related to conflict, peace and security. The growth of code 152 between 2007 and 2008 is explained in part by the increase in resources for security sector reform, which quadrupled in that period, while other codes, such as small arms and light weapons (SALW) control and mine clearance dropped considerably over the past decade. Yet, while security sector reform is the second most important conflict-related purpose code, disbursements for this code are still far below resources allocated to civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution.

Figure 5: Disbursements by all OECD donors for purpose codes within conflict, peace and security (in millions of US dollars)



Source: developed by the authors from CRS data (code 152)

Figure 6: Disbursements for civilian peacebuilding from Germany, Sweden, the UK and the EU (in millions of US dollars)



Source: developed by the authors from CRS data (code 15220)

Among our case studies, Sweden and the UK allocated the largest percentage of their total ODA to conflict, peace and security in 2016, at 4% and 5%, respectively. Similarly, among our case studies, the UK allocated the largest share of its total ODA to civilian peacebuilding (4%) in 2016.

Table 3: ODA allocated to conflict, peace and security as a percentage of overall ODA

	2007	2012	2016
<b>All donors</b>	2%	2%	2%
<b>Germany</b>	1%	3%	2%
<b>Sweden</b>	4%	5%	4%
<b>UK</b>	2%	3%	5%
<b>EU institutions</b>	1%	2%	3%

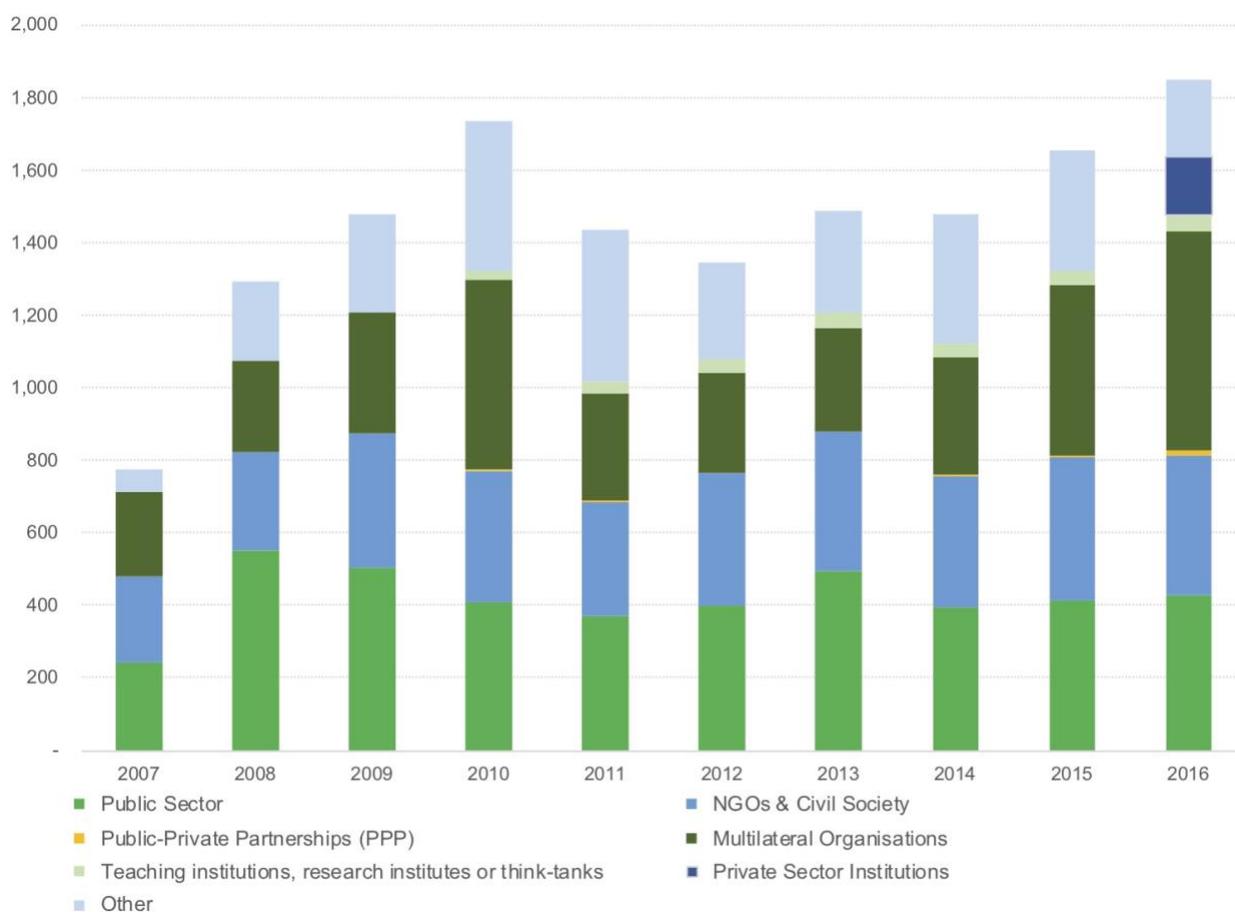
Source: developed by the authors from CRS data (code 152)

Table 4: ODA allocated to civilian peacebuilding as a percentage of overall ODA

	2007	2012	2016
<b>All donors</b>	1%	1%	1%
<b>Germany</b>	1%	3%	2%
<b>Sweden</b>	2%	3%	2%
<b>UK</b>	2%	2%	4%
<b>EU institutions</b>	0%	1%	1%

Source: developed by the authors from CRS data (code 15220)

Figure 7: Channels of delivery for civilian peacebuilding for all donors (in millions of US dollars)



Source: developed by the authors from CRS data (code 15220)

Figure 8: Share of the different channels of delivery for civilian peacebuilding for all donors in 2007

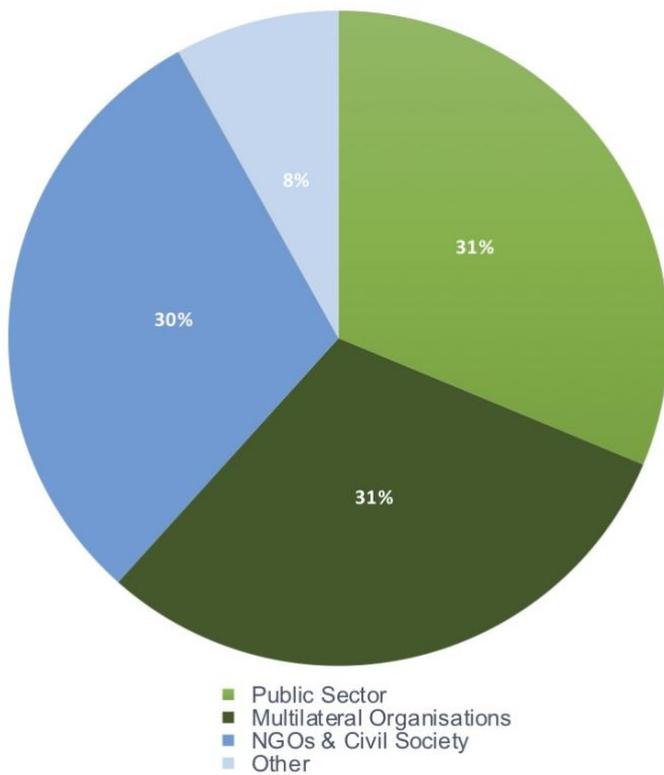
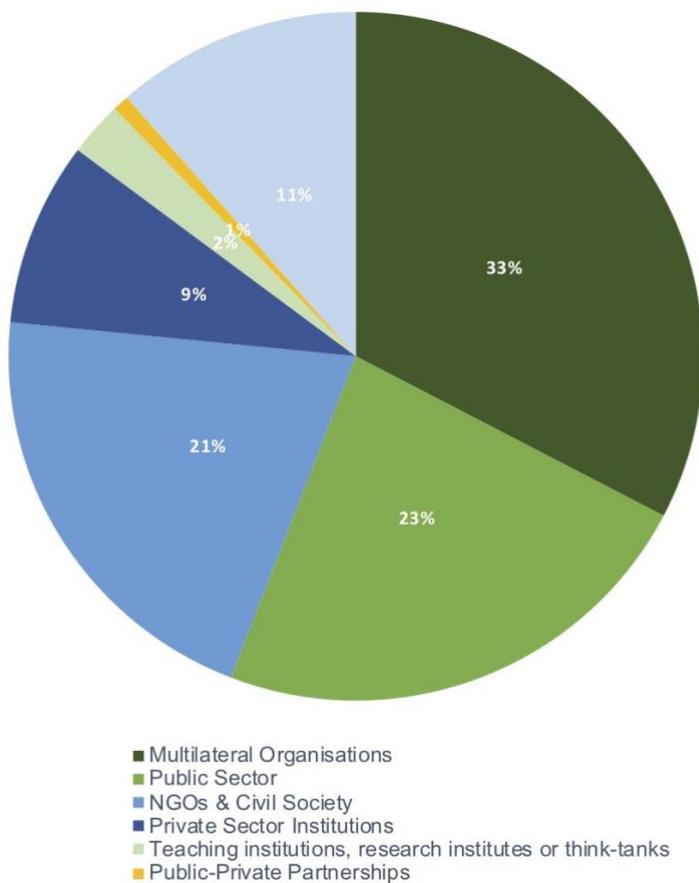


Figure 9: Share of the different channels of delivery for civilian peacebuilding for all donors in 2016



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**Case Studies for the Project:**

Deneckere, M. and Hauck, V. (forthcoming 2018) Supporting Peacebuilding in Times of Change: Case Study of Germany, Maastricht, ECDPM.

Deneckere, M. and Sherriff, A. (forthcoming 2018) Supporting Peacebuilding in Times of Change: Case Study of the EU Institutions, Maastricht, ECDPM.

Veron, P. and Sherriff, A. (forthcoming 2018) Supporting Peacebuilding in Times of Change: Case Study of Sweden, Maastricht, ECDPM.

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## About ECDPM

The European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) is an independent ‘think and do tank’ working on international cooperation and development policy in Europe and Africa.

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- Private sector engagement

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