INCREASING MEMBER STATE CONTRIBUTIONS TO EU CIVILIAN CSDP MISSIONS

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European Union (EU) member states established the Civilian Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) Compact in November 2018 to revive the EU’s civilian CSDP and better align it with their common security interests. The compact is a package of 10 strategic guidelines and 22 political commitments to make civilian CSDP missions more capable, more effective and more joined up with other EU instruments. First and foremost, member states committed to developing, preparing and providing more of the capabilities that these missions require to perform their full range of tasks. EU member states agreed to implement the compact by early summer of 2023.

Delivering the compact has become both more urgent and more uncertain in the context of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The global health and economic crises that began in 2020 will likely contribute to fragility and instability everywhere. This includes the extended neighbourhood of the EU, which, in the words of Josep Borrell, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, is already ‘engulfed in flames’. On the one hand, this will further increase the demand for civilian crisis management and other interventions. On the other hand, it may further constrain the ability of EU member states to allocate attention and resources to civilian CSDP missions.

MAKING CIVILIAN CSDP MISSIONS CAPABLE AGAIN

Civilian CSDP missions are staffed by personnel who are seconded to them by EU member states (or participating non-EU states) on a voluntary basis and by personnel who are contracted by these missions directly. In the compact, EU member states have committed to making civilian CSDP missions more capable by, among other things, (a) increasing the number

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1 Council of the European Union, Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the establishment of a Civilian CSDP Compact, 14305/18, 19 Nov. 2018.


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2 SIPRI POLICY BRIEF

Figure 1. Key trends in the demand for and supply of personnel contributions to civilian CSDP missions, 2010–20

CSDP = Common Security and Defence Policy; EU = European Union; MS = member states; OSCE = Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe; UN = United Nations

Notes: Figures do not include contributions to the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor’s Office. The share of personnel that EU member states contributed to civilian CSDP missions (third column) is based on the total number of personnel seconded to civilian CSDP missions, OSCE field operations and UN peace operations (individual police officers only).


of seconded personnel, (b) raising the proportion of seconded personnel to at least 70 per cent of the international personnel, and (c) prioritizing the appointment of seconded personnel to operational roles. In the years leading up to the compact, the share of seconded personnel in the missions had fallen sharply, from 83 per cent in 2010 to 66 per cent in 2018. Missions had also become increasingly reliant on the contributions of a small group of supportive member states. All this occurred while the number of personnel deployed in civilian CSDP missions decreased by more than 50 per cent, from over 2500 in the early 2010s to 1100–200 in 2017–18.

EU member states are determined to reverse these trends. Civilian CSDP missions are a highly political instrument that remain under their inter-governmental control. The member states make all their decisions regarding these missions on the basis of unanimity and they are expected to provide the capabilities that missions need to carry out their mandates. This reliance on contributions by member states has been perceived as both a strength and a weakness. One advantage is that member states can second civil servants and law enforcement officers to

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3 Council of the European Union (note 1), p. 5.
4 These figures and all other personnel-related figures in this Policy Brief do not include the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor’s Office (KSC & SPO), which has been active since 2016 and is based in the Hague, the Netherlands. The KSC & SPO is supported by the EU Rule of Law Mission Kosovo but is not part of the mission legally. Heads of mission are always coded as contracted personnel.
missions. This can contribute to missions’ credibility by preserving and demonstrating their shared political engagement. It also reduces the missions’ common costs as contributing countries absorb most of the costs of seconded personnel. The downside is that member state contributions in the form of personnel secondments are temporary and often insufficient. Many missions must therefore contend with high turnover and vacancy rates, which can negatively affect mandate delivery. Another consequence is that many missions have become increasingly reliant on contracted personnel.

UNDERSTANDING THE SUPPLY AND DEMAND OF CIVILIAN CAPABILITIES

EU member states’ aim to raise the share of seconded personnel in civilian CSDP missions to at least 70 per cent was not based on a thorough analysis of why this share had been declining in the first place. There were four broad trends that affected personnel contributions to civilian CSDP during the 2010s in terms of supply and demand (see figure 1). These developments were not conducive to maintaining a high proportion of seconded personnel in missions in the years leading up to the compact. Some of these trends continued after the compact was established.

First, the demand for personnel contributions from missions in Europe decreased and the demand from missions in other regions increased. A large reduction in demand from missions in Europe was partially offset by a growing demand from missions in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and in sub-Saharan Africa. Missions in Europe tend to have many contributors and therefore usually also many seconded personnel. Missions in MENA and sub-Saharan Africa tend to have fewer contributors and also fewer seconded personnel. A key explanation for this is that most missions outside Europe tend to receive few contributions from small and Eastern European member states. Another factor that is often cited is that many member states have struggled to contribute personnel to missions in the Sahel due to French-language requirements.

Second, the EU deployed fewer operational personnel and more mission support staff. Operational personnel implement the substantive mandates of missions and are usually seconded by member states, whereas mission support staff are more often contracted. Yet it has also become more difficult to fill all operational positions with seconded personnel. Nowadays, many of these roles require specialized expertise, as civilian CSDP missions are increasingly advising partners and building their capacity in niche areas such as irregular migration, terrorism and violent extremism, organized crime, cyber threats and hybrid warfare.

Third, civilian CSDP missions were competing with others for EU member states’ capabilities. Domestically, law enforcement services have been preoccupied by terrorism threats and challenges arising from irregular migration in many member states, especially in southern Europe. Internationally, member states have contributed more personnel to operations run by other organizations, such as the Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, and by EU agencies, such as the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (also known as Frontex). The contributions to Frontex are expected to increase further in the 2020s as Frontex is developing a standing corps of 10,000 border guards.

Fourth, civilian CSDP missions received fewer contributions from non-EU states. The number of personnel seconded by non-EU states participating in missions decreased from more than 200 in 2010–11 (9 per cent of the total) to fewer than 10 in 2018 (1 per cent of the total). Civilian CSDP missions also received fewer contributions from the United Kingdom, which voted to leave the EU in 2016 and withdrew from the union in 2020. The number of UK secondees decreased from 98 in 2013 (5 per cent of the total) to 21 in 2018 (2 per cent of the total). These developments disguised the fact that the share of personnel in all missions who were seconded by the current 27 member states more or less stopped declining in 2013.

IMPLEMENTING THE COMPACT: OFF TO A SLOW START

The compact generated genuine political momentum to strengthen civilian CSDP. Yet EU member states’ commitment to contribute more personnel to missions did not produce immediate results. Both the number and the share of seconded personnel in the missions decreased further in the first year of implementation (see figure 2). This does not mean that there was no progress at all. Several member states developed national implementation plans for the compact, and the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Commission produced their own joint action

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These were useful exercises that set in motion processes within member states and at EU level that could enable higher personnel contributions in time. The EEAS and member states also agreed on the concept of the secondment of specialized teams, which allows missions to recruit entire teams in addition to individual experts. Nevertheless, in terms of tangible progress, the first year of the compact was underwhelming and unsatisfying. Therefore, one outcome of the first annual review conference on the implementation of the compact, in November 2019, was an agreement on the importance of registering concrete results in the next year. This was needed in order to sustain political momentum and ensure that the compact could be delivered fully and on time. The goal of increasing the number of seconded personnel in missions was the first of a number of ‘waypoints’ that were adopted to this end. EU member states endorsed this goal at the Foreign Affairs Council meeting in December 2019, effectively redoubling their commitment to increasing their contributions to civilian CSDP missions during 2020.

INCREASING NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO CIVILIAN CSDP

Immediately after the Civilian CSDP Compact was established, the number of seconded personnel deployed in the missions decreased to the lowest level in 10 years (see figure 2). This was mainly due to the authorized downsizing of the EU Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) in Kosovo. The number of seconded personnel started to increase towards the end of 2019. Between August 2019 and April 2020, it increased from 712 to 773. This was driven by decisions to expand the existing missions in Georgia, Iraq, Libya, Mali and Ukraine, and to establish a new mission in the Central African Republic (CAR). Since the start of the compact, up to 229 additional positions have been created in these missions, including 66 in the EU Advisory Mission in the CAR (EUAM RCA).

The number of seconded personnel in missions was somewhat lower in the summer of 2020. This was likely a lagged effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, which reached Europe and the areas in which there are missions in early 2020.

It remains difficult to assess whether and to what extent individual member state contributions have increased since the compact was introduced (see figure 3). Much depends on which baseline is chosen for these comparisons and which end point, especially as it is likely that the overall number of seconded personnel would have continued to increase in 2020 if the impact of COVID-19 had been more limited. Thirteen member states seconded more personnel to missions in August 2020 than they did on average during 2018. Nineteen member states increased their national contribution between August 2019 and April 2020, the period in which the total number of seconded personnel grew most.

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7 Council of the European Union, Council Conclusions on the implementation of the Civilian CSDP Compact, 14611/19, 9 Dec. 2019.
Figure 3. Personnel contributions by EU member states to civilian CSDP missions, 2018 (average)–Aug. 2020

CSDP = Common Security and Defence Policy; EU = European Union

Notes: The circle markers highlight the highest and lowest values in the time series. Figures do not include contributions to the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor’s Office. Heads of mission are coded as contracted personnel. Personnel contributions are compared to the average size of the national contribution per month in 2018.

In many cases the increase was modest. The only national contribution that diminished sharply during the pandemic was that of Sweden, which fell from 94 to 76 personnel between April 2020 and August 2020. The number of personnel seconded by Latvia more than doubled, from 8 on average in 2018 to 17 in April 2020, but this country participates only in EUAM Ukraine and the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) Georgia. Belgium and Czechia contributed fewer personnel in 2019–20 than on average in 2018, but participated in more missions. Other member states with decreased contributions since the compact include Bulgaria, Greece and Spain, all of which have been hosting Frontex operations on the external border of the EU.

The gap between the major contributors to civilian CSDP missions and the other member states has widened since the start of the compact. Major contributors are defined here as member states that provide at least 5 per cent of all seconded personnel. Currently these consist of the largest EU economies (except for Spain) and the Nordic member states: Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland and Sweden. In 2018 these member states accounted on average for 67 per cent of all seconded mission personnel. Since 2019 this number has risen to 70–71 per cent. Spain has been a major contributor to military CSDP missions and operations but its participation in civilian CSDP missions has been very limited. However, this might change following the appointment in 2020 of a new civilian operations commander from Spain.

**RAISING THE SHARE OF SECONDED PERSONNEL IN MISSIONS**

Whereas the number of seconded personnel in all missions has increased since the compact was introduced, the share has continued to decrease (see figure 4). In 2018, when EU member states agreed that at least 70 per cent of all mission personnel should be seconded, the share was 66 per cent. In 2019, it went down to 64–65 per cent. In 2020, following the outbreak of the
COVID-19 pandemic, it dropped to 62 per cent. This was because the number of contracted personnel increased more than the number of seconded personnel.

The share of seconded personnel decreased in nearly all missions, especially those outside Europe (see figure 5). In most cases this was caused by disproportionate increases in the number of personnel seconded.
contracted personnel. Missions were already experiencing this before COVID-19 started and regardless of whether they were upsizing or not. Due to these developments, the apparent divide between missions in Europe and missions in other regions was exacerbated.

The share of seconded personnel in missions in Europe increased from 74 per cent in 2018 to 75 per cent in 2020. As of 2020, EUAM Ukraine and EUMM Georgia were the only remaining missions in which at least 70 per cent of international personnel were seconded. The share of seconded personnel in EULEX Kosovo had increased and was the third highest of all missions. This was mainly because the mission downsized but retained its 100-strong formed police unit (FPU) provided by Poland. Without this FPU, the share of seconded personnel in EULEX Kosovo would have been 47 per cent instead of 66 per cent. The missions in Europe—especially those in Georgia and Ukraine—have continued to receive personnel from most EU member states.

The share of seconded personnel in missions in MENA decreased from 66 per cent in 2018 to 57 per cent in 2020. In the EU Police and Rule of Law Mission for the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS) this share fell below 70 per cent for the first time in December 2019. It continued to decline in 2020, to levels similar to those of the other missions in the region. The missions in this region have continued to rely mainly on contributions from Germany, Italy and the Nordic member states.

The share of seconded personnel in missions in sub-Saharan Africa decreased from 49 per cent in 2018 to 43 per cent in 2020. EU member states should be especially concerned that they have not managed to curb this development, let alone turn it around. The missions in sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 34 per cent of the combined authorized personnel strength of civilian CSDP missions in 2020. This was up from 28 per cent in 2018, when the compact started, and 14 per cent in 2014, before the EU Capacity Building Mission (EUCAP) Sahel Mali was established. The missions in the Sahel have continued to depend heavily on personnel contributions from France. Since 2020, these missions have been competing with EUAM RCA for French-speaking seconded personnel. This mission is smaller than the other missions in the region, but it has a scalable mandate and might evolve into a larger capacity building mission in time.

PRIORITIZING SECONDED PERSONNEL IN OPERATIONAL FUNCTIONS

EU member states are clearly prioritizing operational positions when they contribute to civilian CSDP missions. The available data shows that the number of seconded personnel in operational functions increased from 537 in February 2019 to 571 in August 2020. This means that 75 per cent of all seconded mission personnel had operational positions. This currently includes positions such as advisers, experts, trainers, the monitors of EUMM Georgia and the FPU of EULEX Kosovo. Since the

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8 There is no data that breaks down mission personnel by job category or employment regime (seconded or contracted) in the years prior to 2018.
Figure 6. Number and share of seconded personnel in operational functions in civilian CSDP missions, Feb. 2019–Aug. 2020

CSDP = Common Security and Defence Policy; EUAM = EU Advisory Mission; EUBAM = EU Border Assistance Mission; EUCAP = EU Capacity Building Mission; EULEX = EU Rule of Law Mission; EUMM = EU Monitoring Mission; EUPOL COPPS = EU Police and Rule of Law Mission for the Palestinian Territories.

Notes: Figures do not include personnel from the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor’s Office. Heads of mission are coded as contracted personnel.

start of the compact, the number of seconded operational personnel has increased, especially in EUAM Ukraine and EUMM Georgia.

The share of seconded personnel in operational functions is high in general and in most missions (see figure 6). This is partly because member states prioritize operational positions, but also because most of these positions have never been open to contracted personnel. However, the number of contracted personnel in operational functions increased from 72 in February 2019 to 104 in August 2020. This means that almost half of the increase in the number of operational personnel in this period consisted of contracted personnel. As a consequence, the share of all operational mission personnel that were seconded decreased from 88 per cent to 85 per cent.

Some missions have recruited more contracted personnel to operational positions than others. Since the start of the compact, the number of contracted operational personnel has increased, especially in EUCAP Sahel Mali, EUCAP Sahel Niger, EUCAP Somalia and EULEX Kosovo. As of August 2020, these missions were employing 87 contracted operational personnel—mostly advisers, experts and trainers—out of a total of 104 contracted operational personnel. If EU member states had provided the personnel for these positions, the share of seconded personnel in all missions would have been 71 per cent instead of 62 per cent.

**BREAKING THE TREND OF DECLINING SHARES OF SECONDED PERSONNEL**

EU member states and civilian CSDP missions need to do a combination of three things if they want to raise the share of seconded personnel in missions. First, they need to retain seconded personnel in missions or replace them with other seconded personnel when they leave. Second, they need to appoint more seconded personnel to positions that are newly created or vacant for other reasons. Third, they need to appoint more seconded personnel to positions that are currently held by contracted personnel, when these positions become available. The first requirement is necessary to prevent the share of seconded personnel decreasing further, but it will be insufficient to reverse this trend as long as the demand for personnel contributions is increasing. The second and third requirements are especially important when missions are upsizing, as many have been doing recently.

However, there are four reasons why increasing the share of seconded personnel in missions this way is easier said than done. First, much of the recruitment by missions concerns positions that are already held by seconded personnel. This is inevitable since the majority of the personnel are seconded and because the turnover rate of seconded personnel is relatively high, especially in missions in high-risk environments. Although there is no data to support this possibility, it would be reasonable to expect that on average the deployments of seconded personnel would be shorter than those of contracted personnel.
is temporary by definition and most seconded personnel have a job to return to at home, unlike contracted personnel.

Second, most member states prioritize missions and positions in which the number and share of seconded personnel are already relatively high. If additional efforts are focused on the positions that are considered most attractive (e.g. management positions) or accessible (e.g. monitors), this will not contribute to increasing the proportions of seconded personnel in missions because there is no shortage of seconded candidates for these positions. There is also a risk that this will lead to higher rejection rates of candidates who are nominated for secondment, since every position can only be filled by one person. This could in turn discourage member states and potential applicants from seeking secondment to missions.

Third, once missions have recruited contracted personnel, there may be few opportunities to replace them with seconded personnel. Contracted personnel are generally only eligible for positions when there are no seconded personnel available. Missions can request that a position is opened up for contracted personnel when two consecutive calls for contributions have not produced qualified seconded candidates. This process can take several months. Fourth, the next time these positions (initially exclusive to seconded personnel) become available again, they are open to contracted candidates from the start and usually budgeted accordingly. Member states and individual candidates for secondment may therefore prefer to pursue positions for which they are not competing with contracted candidates. Missions may have little incentive to spend extra time and effort searching for seconded personnel for positions that have apparently been difficult to fill previously.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

EU member states have increased the number of seconded personnel in civilian CSDP missions since they established the Civilian CSDP Compact in 2018 and are actively working towards increasing their national contributions further. However, almost two years on, the share of seconded personnel in missions was further removed from the 70 per cent target set in 2018. Realizing this objective by 2023 has become more challenging because the scope of the demand for personnel contributions is growing again, the nature of the demand has continued to evolve in ways that previously contributed to a declining share of seconded personnel, and the number of contracted mission personnel has increased in absolute terms. The target will become even more out of reach if the number of contracted mission personnel increases further due to a temporary decline in EU member state contributions in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Such an outcome might reignite the very discussion that was settled (at least for the time being) by the Civilian

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CSDP Compact—that is, about the effective human resourcing of missions and whether missions are actually more capable when member states are providing their personnel.

**Recommendations to European Union member states**

1. EU member states should continue to work towards substantially increasing their contributions to missions in the medium and long term by:
   - developing relevant capabilities;
   - removing procedural, legislative and financial obstacles to personnel contributions; and
   - incentivizing eligible public servants and their employers to consider deployment in a civilian CSDP mission. These efforts should be undertaken together with the EEAS and the new European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management.

2. EU member states should increase and diversify their personnel contributions to missions in the short term, especially to the missions in sub-Saharan Africa, to prevent those missions becoming even more dependent on contracted personnel.

3. EU member states should nominate more candidates for positions that were previously or are currently held by contracted personnel, especially positions that are part of the operational functions of missions.

**Recommendations to the European External Action Service**

1. The EEAS should conduct a mapping exercise of all positions that are specified in the operation plans of missions. It should also regularly provide EU member states with overviews of the current and expected vacancies relating to all positions currently occupied by contracted personnel.

2. The EEAS should start collecting statistics on retention and turnover of seconded and contracted personnel in every mission, including length of deployment. The statistics should be disaggregated by gender and, for seconded personnel, also by seconding authority.

3. The EEAS should introduce additional indicators based on retention and recruitment of mission personnel, with the aim of measuring progress towards the target of 70 per cent seconded personnel in missions. These indicators should include the numbers and percentages of seconded and contracted personnel per year who (a) extend their deployment or contract and (b) are newly recruited. These indicators should be broken down by gender, job function and seconding authority.

4. The EEAS should conduct an analysis to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the number and quality of the nominations and applications received by missions in response to calls for contributions. The analysis should also examine the numbers of seconded and contracted personnel who have extended their deployment in missions.
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<td>CAR</td>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
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<td>COVID-19</td>
<td>Coronavirus disease 2019</td>
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<td>CSDP</td>
<td>Common Security and Defence Policy</td>
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<td>EEAS</td>
<td>European External Action Service</td>
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<td>EUMM Georgia</td>
<td>EU Monitoring Mission Georgia</td>
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<td>EUPOL COPPS</td>
<td>EU Police and Rule of Law Mission for the Palestinian Territories</td>
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<td>FPU</td>
<td>Formed police unit</td>
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<td>MENA</td>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
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