

INCREASING WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN 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, with the aim of strengthening EU civilian CSDP missions.¹ The compact consists of 10 strategic guidelines and 22 political commitments that member states have agreed to implement by 2023. Among other things, member states have committed to making civilian CSDP missions more capable by providing more personnel and making them more effective through 'actively promoting' better representation of women.² Women have remained chronically under-represented in civilian CSDP missions at almost all levels, even though the EU and most of its member states have been very supportive of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

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.

² Council of the European Union (note 1), p. 9.

* The author would like to thank the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs for funding the research presented in this SIPRI Policy Brief and the external reviewers for commenting on earlier versions of it. All data visualizations are by Christian Dietrich. Views and opinions expressed do not necessarily represent any institutional position and the author bears the sole responsibility for any remaining errors or omissions.

PROMOTING WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION: SLOWLY GETTING UP TO SPEED

The commitment to promote better representation of women in civilian CSDP missions initially received little attention relative to other commitments under the compact. The 2019 joint action plan for the implementation of the Civilian CSDP Compact by the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Commission was rather weak on this point. It essentially shifted all responsibility for increasing the representation of women in missions to the EU member states, as these provide the majority of mission personnel.³ Several member states have reiterated in their national implementation plans (NIPs) their commitment to contributing more women to missions, yet few NIPs have specified in concrete terms how they are planning to achieve this. As of mid 2020, only Finland and Ireland had included targets in their NIPs for the proportion of women in their

³ Council of the European Union, Joint Action Plan Implementing the Civilian CSDP Compact, 8962/19, 30 Apr. 2019.

SUMMARY

● European Union (EU) member states established the Civilian Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) Compact in 2018 to strengthen civilian CSDP missions. Among other things, they committed to promoting better representation of women. Women have remained underrepresented at most levels in these missions.

This commitment gained prominence in 2020, the anniversary year of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. The number of women personnel started to increase in 2019, driven by the expansion of several missions. It increased from 237 in October 2019 to 259 in April 2020. The increase discontinued thereafter, likely as a consequence of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Meanwhile, the share of women personnel decreased slightly overall—from 22 per cent when the compact was established to 21 per cent in August 2020. There was more variation in the gender balance between and within individual missions.

This SIPRI Policy Brief recommends that EU member states should set targets for women's representation in civilian CSDP missions and commit to gender parity in future leadership roles. The European External Action Service (EEAS) should also introduce indicators based on the retention and recruitment of men and women mission personnel and analyse the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on these two issues.

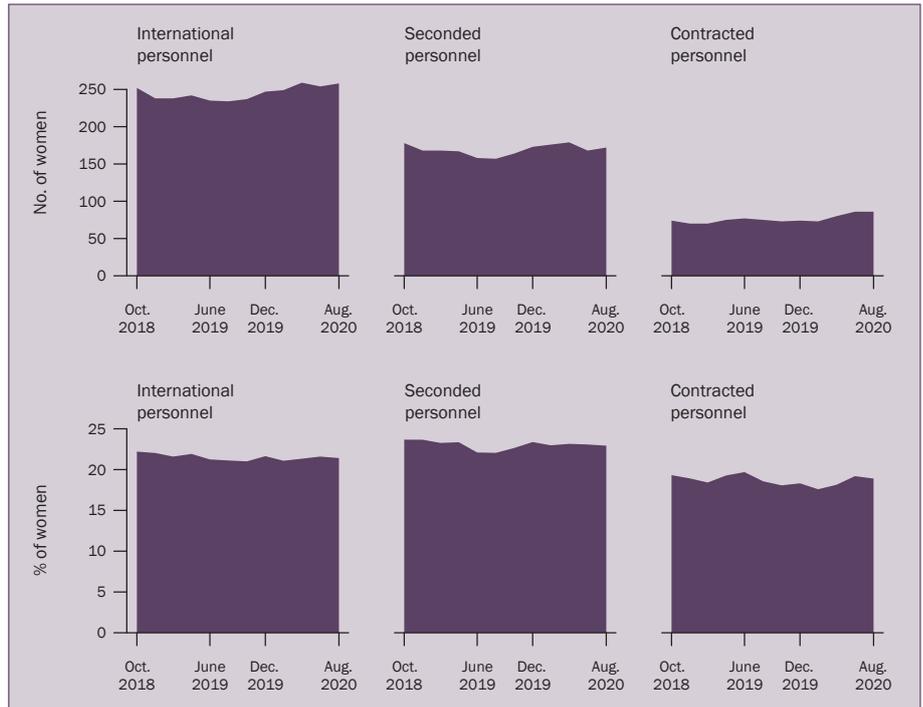


Figure 1. Number and share of women personnel in civilian CSDP missions, Oct. 2018–Aug. 2020

CSDP = Common Security and Defence Policy

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

Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, Oct. 2020.

national contributions (50 per cent and 40 per cent respectively).⁴ Meanwhile, some NIPs make no reference to women’s representation at all. The issue was largely neglected during the first annual review conference on the Civilian CSDP Compact and was not among the ‘waypoints’ that were identified and endorsed later by the Council of the EU.⁵

Notwithstanding, there have been signs of increased attention to the representation of women in civilian CSDP missions in 2020, the 20th anniversary year of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on

women, peace and security. There are a few examples that stand out.

First, the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) of the EEAS—which serves as the operational headquarters of civilian CSDP missions—has been working on a gender strategy and action plan for the CPCC and civilian CSDP missions. The strategy and action plan are awaiting approval by the new civilian operations commander.⁶ This strategy does not set targets for the representation of women in missions, however, as this is the prerogative of the member states. The EEAS has previously encouraged EU member states to set such targets in its 2019 Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, but

⁴ Based on a survey by the author of 16 national implementation plans, on file with the author.

⁵ Council of the European Union, Council Conclusions on the implementation of the Civilian CSDP Compact, 14611/19, 9 Dec. 2019.

⁶ European External Action Service official, Interview with author, 24 Sep. 2020.



so far there has been no movement on this issue.⁷

Second, EU member states and the EEAS have started an informal process led by member states in which they collaborate on the development of capabilities for civilian CSDP missions. This work is currently organized around informal clusters on thematic areas that are directly relevant to promoting better representation of women in the missions, such as national secondment processes, career path development, legislative and budgetary issues, and strategic communications. Member states are considering dedicating a separate cluster to increasing women's representation in missions.⁸

Third, the new European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management (COE) has made it a key priority to contribute to better representation of women in civilian CSDP missions. The COE is a German initiative and is Germany's flagship contribution to the Civilian CSDP Compact. Its mission is to support EU member states and the EEAS in the implementation of the compact by identifying best practices and pooling relevant expertise. The inaugural workshop of the COE was on increasing women's representation in civilian CSDP missions. The German foreign minister declared this 'one of the key goals of the Compact' at the formal opening of the COE in September 2020.⁹ Given that Germany holds the rotating

presidency of the Council of the EU in the second half of 2020, women's representation in missions is expected to receive more attention at the second annual review conference of the Civilian CSDP Compact in November 2020 and in the subsequent Foreign Affairs Council meeting.

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN CIVILIAN CSDP: THEN AND NOW

At first glance, the representation of women among the international personnel deployed in all civilian CSDP missions has not changed much since the compact was established in November 2018—neither in absolute nor in relative terms (see figure 1). At the time, across 10 missions, the EU was deploying 1135 international personnel of which 883 were men (78 per cent) and 252 were women (22 per cent). In August 2020, across 11 missions, there were 1205 international personnel of which 947 were men (79 per cent) and 258 were women (21 per cent).¹⁰

In the first year of the Civilian CSDP Compact, both the number and the share of deployed women decreased somewhat (see figure 2). This was mainly due to the downsizing of the EU Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) in Kosovo.¹¹ The number of deployed women

Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management, Berlin, 17 Sep. 2020.

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ Smit, T., 'Increasing member state contributions to EU civilian CSDP missions', SIPRI Policy Brief, Nov. 2020.

⁷ European External Action Service, EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) 2019–2024, EEAS(2019) 747, 5 July 2019.

⁸ European External Action Service official (note 6).

⁹ European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management, Speech of the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs Heiko Maas, MdB, on the occasion of the opening of the European

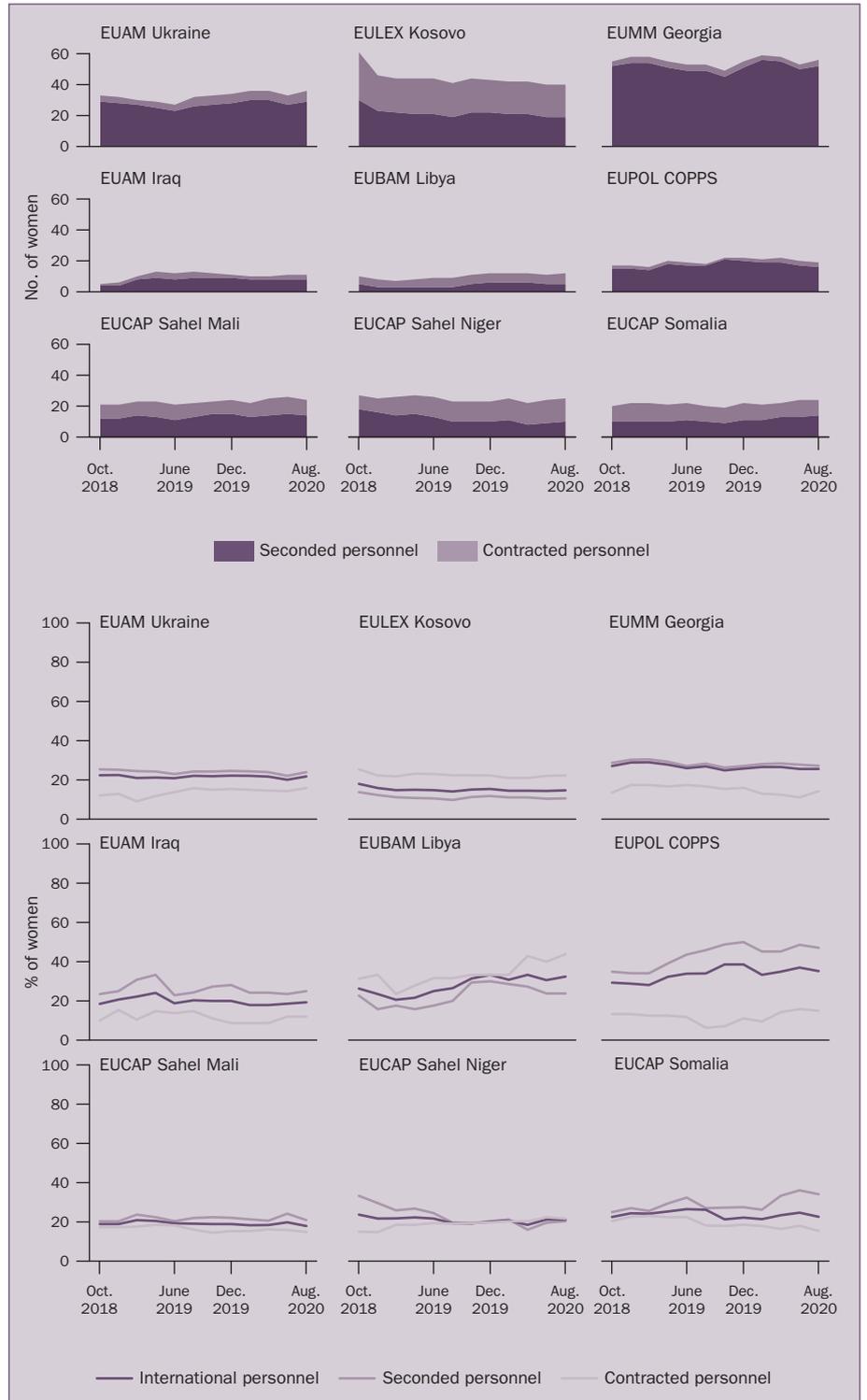


Figure 2. Number and share of women personnel in civilian CSDP missions, by mission, Oct. 2018–Aug. 2020

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

Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, Oct. 2020.



started to increase again in the second year of the compact's implementation, when several missions were growing. However, the representation of women across all missions did not improve, as the number of deployed men increased at a similar rate.

This illustrates that achieving a more equal representation of men and women in missions is particularly challenging in times of growth.¹² Between October 2019 and April 2020, the total number of women personnel increased by almost 10 per cent, from 237 to 259. This was not enough to improve the representation women overall, although it prevented their representation from decreasing further. It is quite common that, when missions are expanding, the share of women among the personnel goes down even though the number of women goes up.

The number of women personnel stopped increasing in mid 2020. This may have been a consequence of a temporary suspension of the recruitment of new mission personnel following the outbreak of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and the evacuation of most deployed personnel in March 2020. Since then, recruitment has resumed and personnel have gradually been returning to mission areas. It remains to be seen whether the number of women in missions will continue to increase and whether (and how) the pandemic will affect the recruitment and retention of men and women mission personnel.

¹² Smit, T. and Tidblad-Lundholm, K., *Trends in Women's Participation in UN, EU and OSCE Peace Operations*, SIPRI Policy Paper no. 47 (SIPRI: Stockholm, Oct. 2018).

VARIATION BETWEEN MISSIONS

In contrast to the fairly steady rate of women's participation in all CSDP missions since the establishment of the compact, there was more variation in the representation of women among the international personnel deployed in individual missions—both between missions and within missions over time.

First, the number of women personnel increased in almost all civilian CSDP missions. The only mission in which it decreased was EULEX Kosovo, which has been downsizing. The missions in Europe—EULEX Kosovo, the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia and the EU Advisory Mission (EUAM) in Ukraine—continued to have the largest number of women personnel. However, missions in other regions have been catching up. As of 2020, nearly half of all women personnel serving in civilian CSDP missions were deployed in missions in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) or sub-Saharan Africa, compared to 37 per cent on average in 2018.

Second, the share of women personnel decreased in most civilian CSDP missions. The EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) in Libya and the EU Police and Rule of Law Mission for the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS) are the only missions in which the representation of women has markedly improved since 2018 and in which women make up more than 30 per cent of the international personnel in 2020 (see figure 2). Both missions are relatively small compared to other missions.¹³

¹³ This does not include the EU Border Assistance Mission for the Rafah Crossing

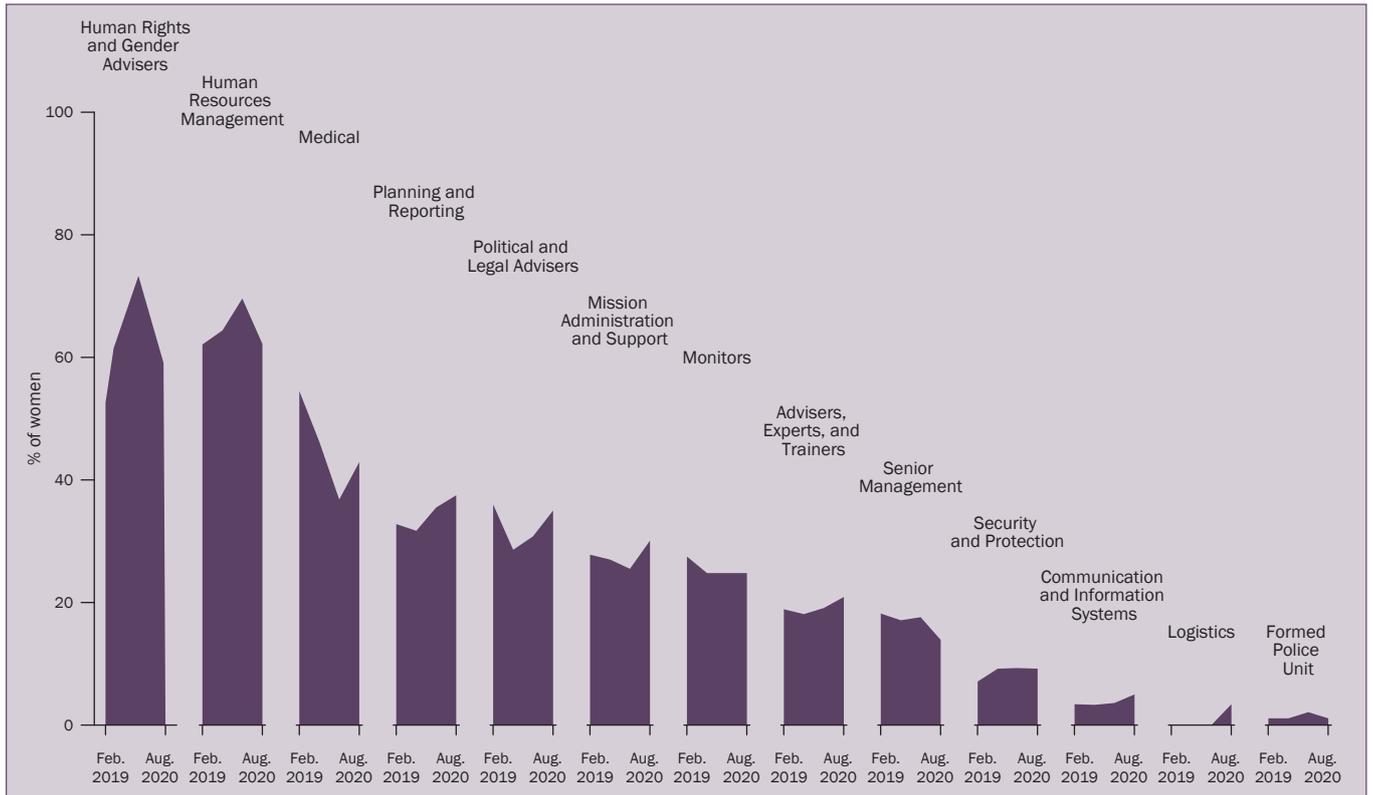


Figure 3. Share of women personnel in civilian CSDP missions, by post category, Feb. 2019–Aug. 2020

CSDP = Common Security and Defence Policy

Notes: The post categories are the author’s selection and not exhaustive. The category ‘senior management’ includes the posts of head of mission, deputy head of mission, chief of staff and head of operations. Figures do not include personnel from the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor’s Office.

Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, Oct. 2020.

The share of women personnel decreased most and remained the lowest in EULEX Kosovo. The main explanation for this is that the mission downsized while retaining a 100-strong and almost all-male formed police unit (FPU).

Third, women continued to be better represented among seconded than contracted personnel in most civilian CSDP missions. Again, the main exception was EULEX Kosovo. Also again, this was almost fully—albeit not entirely—on account of the low number of

Point (EUBAM Rafah), which is an outlier in terms of its small size, or the EU Advisory Mission in the Central African Republic (EUAM RCA), which was launched in July 2020 and has not yet reached full operational capacity.

women in the seconded FPU. Most missions employ very few women contracted personnel.

INCREASING WOMEN’S REPRESENTATION IN OPERATIONAL AND LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

The Civilian CSDP Compact aims for better representation of women in missions *at all levels*. The personnel of civilian CSDP missions perform a wide range of functions that require various competences and professional backgrounds. Some of these capabilities that missions require are in short supply in many EU member states and are recruited from sections of the public or private sector that remain dominated by



men. This is reflected in the extent to which women are represented within different job functions and categories of the international personnel of the missions.

There are job functions and categories in missions in which women are already represented equally to or more than men (see figure 3). These include specific positions, such as advisers on human rights and gender, as well as mission support functions, such as human resources management. Meanwhile, there are job functions and categories in which there are very few women personnel. The share of women is the lowest in the FPU of EULEX Kosovo and more generally among the international personnel working in support functions such as security and protection, information and communication technology, and logistics. In 2019 and 2020, around a quarter of all international personnel deployed in civilian CSDP missions were working in one of these functions (275–300 positions in total). Around 5 per cent of them were women. By comparison, the share of women among all personnel in other functions was 27 per cent during the same period.

The representation of women in key operational and leadership roles in missions is still below this average. These are the positions that most EU member states prioritize in their contributions to missions. Operational personnel are the ones who implement the missions' mandates and engage with partners in the host nation. Together with the leadership of the missions, they are the most visible to the local population.

Many contemporary civilian CSDP missions are mandated to provide strategic advice or build

partner capacity in areas such as policing, rule of law, security sector reform, border management and maritime security. Most of their operational personnel are advisers, experts or trainers. As of August 2020, these functions were filled by a total of 325 personnel, of which 21 per cent were women. EUPOL COPPS was the only mission in which more than 25 per cent of advisers, experts and trainers were women. Women accounted for 25 per cent of the monitors of EUMM Georgia, which contributes to confidence building by patrolling and observing the administrative boundary lines with Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and for 1 per cent of the FPU of EULEX Kosovo, which continues to serve as the second security responder in Kosovo after the Kosovan police.

The share of women in key leadership positions in missions—head of mission, deputy head of mission, chief of staff and head of operations—decreased from 18 per cent in February 2019 to 14 per cent in August 2020. At this point not a single civilian CSDP mission had a woman head of mission or head of operations (women have been better represented among deputy head of mission and chief of staff positions). This could improve quickly since missions do not have many key leadership positions (one of each at most; sometimes the deputy head of a mission also serves as the chief of staff) and because the baseline representation of women is low. EU member states can directly encourage better representation of women in these positions by nominating more women candidates, which they implicitly committed to when they established the compact. However, EU member



states have appointed eight new heads of mission since then and all but one of them were men.¹⁴ The appointment in October 2020 of Nataliya Apostolova of Bulgaria as the new head of EUPOL COPPS, effective in mid November, was the first appointment of a woman head of mission since 2016.¹⁵

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Under the Civilian CSDP Compact, EU member states committed to promoting better representation of women in missions based on 'increased national contributions'.¹⁶ This is a key objective of the compact and regarded as a necessary condition for strengthening civilian CSDP. If countries are to provide a larger share of the current and future capability requirements of missions, they must increase their national contributions. Indeed, these requirements have already been increasing since the compact, following decisions to upsize a number of existing missions and to establish the new EUAM in the Central African Republic (EUAM RCA).¹⁷

However, this context is not necessarily conducive to increasing women's representation in missions, which in the past has improved the most when the demand for

personnel contributions has gone down.¹⁸ Furthermore, the compact prioritizes increased national contributions to missions' operational functions, in which the representation of women has been relatively low so far. Finally, some member states will increase their contributions more than others. This may have unpredictable or even contradictory effects on women's representation in missions, as there are major differences between member state contributions in terms of how large and how gender-equal they are.

For many years, a relatively small group of member states has been providing the majority of the seconded personnel in all civilian CSDP missions. This group consists of five of the six largest economies of the EU (France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland) and the three Nordic member states (Denmark, Finland and Sweden). Most of these countries also contributed a relatively high number of women personnel in 2019–20, especially Finland, Germany and Sweden (see figures 4 and 5). France and Poland were exceptions, with women accounting for less than 10 per cent of the personnel that they contributed. Finland and Sweden all but achieved gender parity in their respective contributions in 2020.

The gender-disaggregated data on national contributions to civilian CSDP that became available in February 2019—after the compact had been established—revealed that a small number of EU member states accounted for the majority of all seconded women personnel in missions. At the time, Finland, Germany, Italy and Sweden

¹⁴ Heads of missions are contracted by the European Commission but appointed by the Political and Security Committee, a permanent body of the Council of the EU.

¹⁵ Political and Security Committee Decision (CFSP) 2020/1541 on the appointment of the Head of Mission of the European Union Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS), *Official Journal of the European Union*, L353/8, 13 Oct. 2020.

¹⁶ Council of the European Union (note 1), p. 9.

¹⁷ Smit (note 11).

¹⁸ Smit and Tidblad-Lundholm (note 12).



together accounted for 47 per cent of all seconded women. All these countries have increased their contributions of women personnel since then, especially Germany. As a result, by August 2020, these four member states accounted for 60 per cent of the seconded women in missions. When the contributions by Denmark and the Netherlands are also included, the number rises to 72 per cent. If the number of women seconded by Denmark had not decreased but remained the same, it would have been 75 per cent. Almost two years into the compact implementation process, there are still several member states with low numbers and shares of women in their respective national contributions, including some that are providing zero women.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

One key area in which significant progress has been achieved is the availability of gender-disaggregated data on the composition of civilian CSDP missions. As recently as 2016, an EEAS baseline study on integrating human rights and gender into the EU's CSDP noted that the absence of such data on job functions and national contributions was an obstacle to analysing women's representation in missions, and thereby an obstacle to improving it.¹⁹ This obstacle was partially removed in 2019 when the CPCC started breaking down more data on mission personnel into men and women. This has led to a better

understanding of which roles men and women have in missions and where imbalances between them persist.

However, there is still room for improvement and the insights from the new data have raised additional questions that require answers in order to develop and tailor effective measures to increase the representation of women in missions. First, how many men and women are nominated and recruited each year or for each position? The available data shows how many men and women are deployed in missions, by whom and in which positions, but much less is known about the recruitment processes and outcomes that lead to these situations.

Second, which national authorities are seconding the personnel in the national contributions and under what conditions? The ability of member states to scale up the number of (women) candidates for missions or to extend the deployment of women depends on many issues. One important factor is whether member states can second to missions so-called freelancers, who do not have a career in a national civil service.

Third, what are the turnover and retention rates for men and women personnel in missions? It is not known how long men and women are deployed in missions or when they leave. This is quantifiable with human resources statistics. Nor is it known why men and women extend their deployment in missions or why they leave. Increasing women's representation in missions is more effective when efforts to recruit more women are coupled with measures or incentives that aim to keep them in missions longer.

¹⁹ European External Action Service, Report on the Baseline Study on Integrating Human Rights and Gender into the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy, Working Document EEAS(2016) 990, 10 Nov. 2016, p. 52.

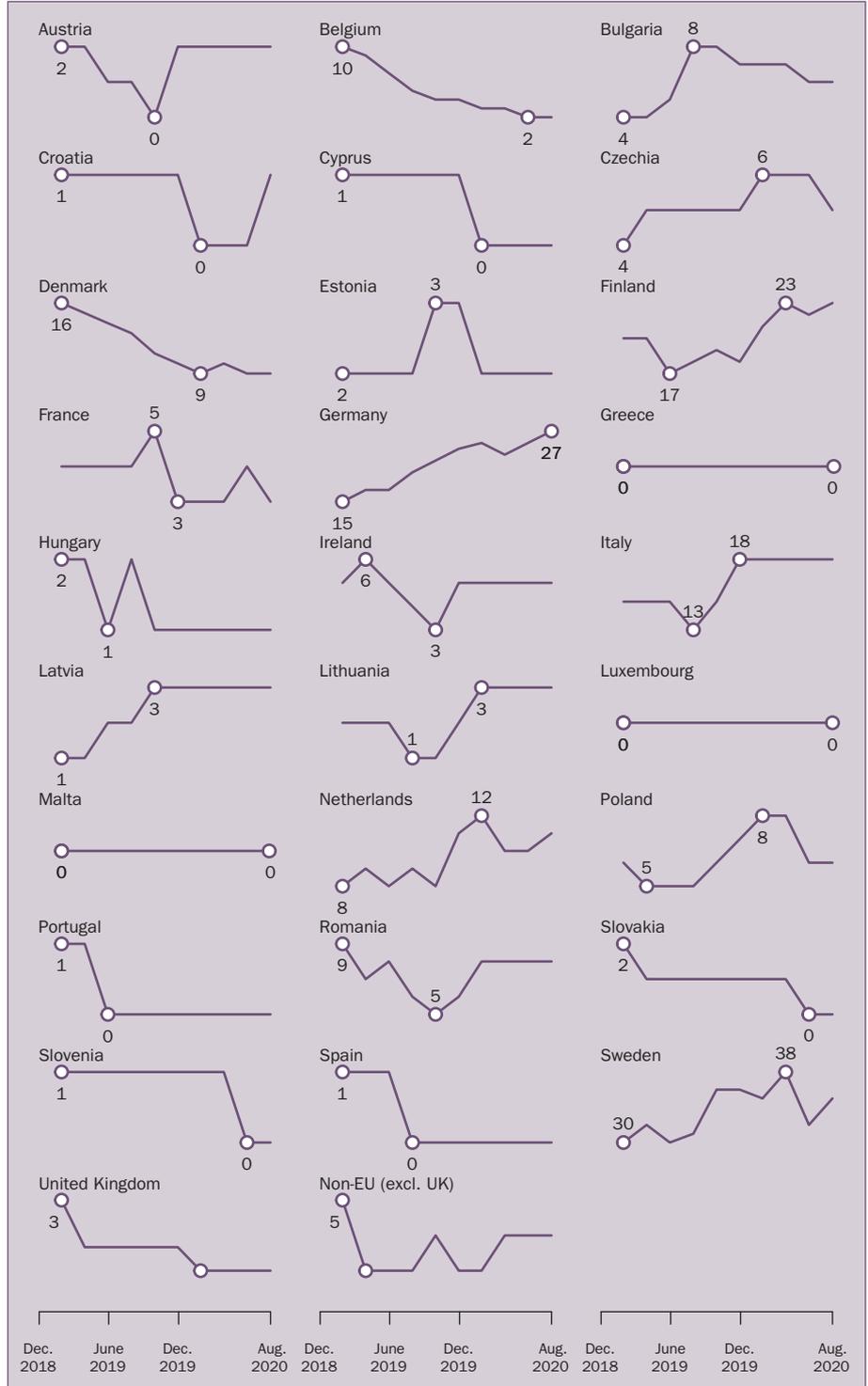


Figure 4. Number of women personnel in national contributions to civilian CSDP missions, by EU member state, Feb. 2019–Aug. 2020

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 heads of mission or personnel from the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor’s Office.

Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, Oct. 2020.

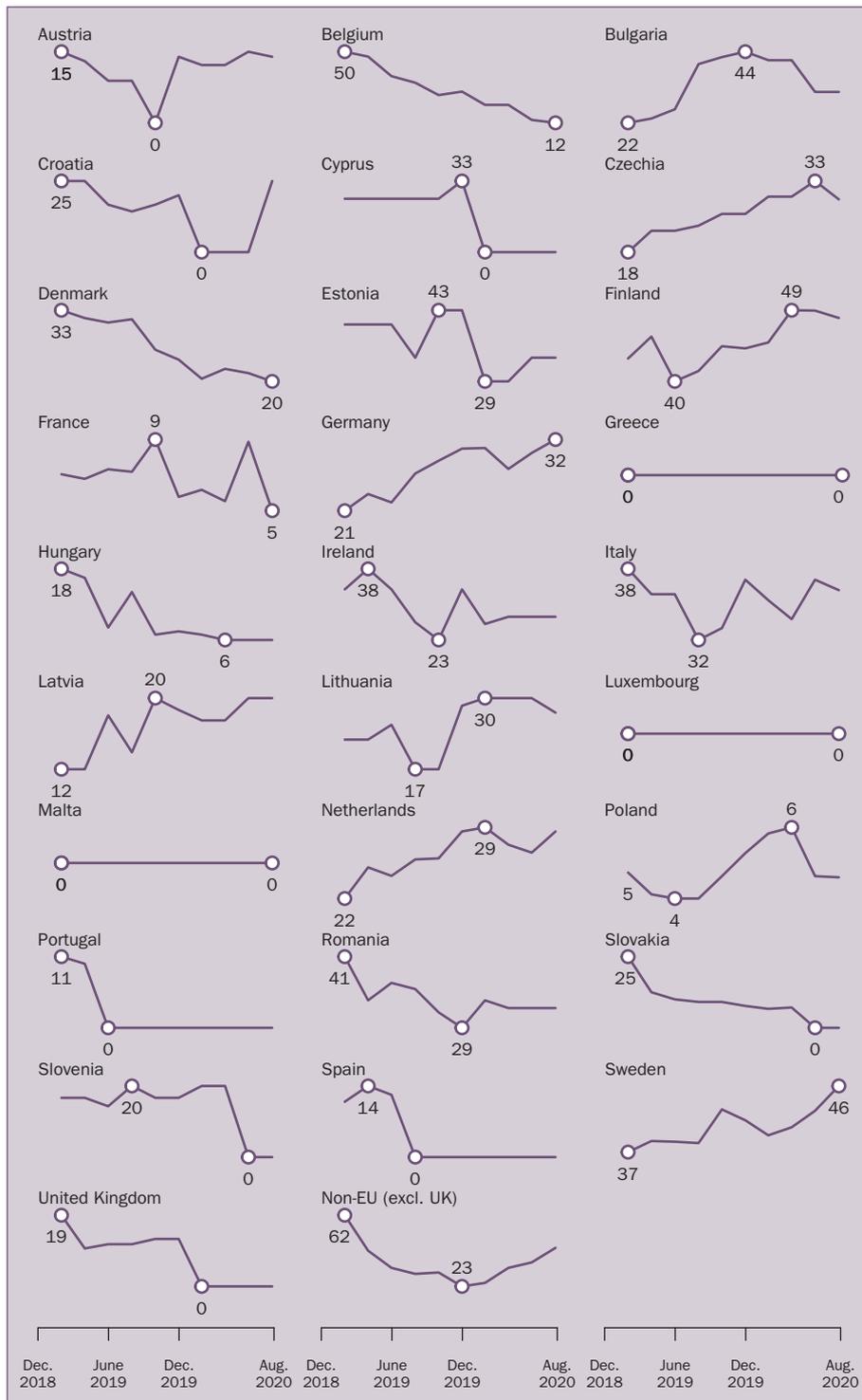


Figure 5. Share of women personnel in the national contributions to civilian CSDP missions, by EU member state, Feb. 2019–Aug. 2020

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 heads of mission or personnel from the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor’s Office.

Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, Oct. 2020.



Fourth, why do eligible women candidates in member states not pursue opportunities in civilian CSDP? There is no systematically gathered body of knowledge about whether this is by choice or because they are not aware of the opportunities that exist. However, in recent years there has been a surge of research into the barriers to increasing the number of women military and police peacekeepers, which could be replicated in contexts more specific to EU member states and civilian crisis management.²⁰

Recommendations to European Union member states

1. EU member states should revise their NIPs of the Civilian CSDP Compact, if needed, and consider setting national targets for the number of women among nominated and seconded personnel.
2. EU member states should agree on concrete medium-term and long-term targets for the representation of women in missions, as per the 2019 EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.
3. EU member states should commit to the goal of gender parity in the future appointments of heads of mission and other key leadership positions, with the aim of achieving gender parity in these functions by 2025.²¹

²⁰ Ghittoni, M., Lehouck, L. and Watson, C., *Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations* (DCAF: Geneva, July 2018).

²¹ As suggested in Kruse, P. and Pietz, T., 'Why so few women in EU missions?' *Euobserver*, 3 July 2020.

4. EU member states should share best practices regarding the identification, selection, nomination, deployment and career path development of women candidates for missions—with other member states, with the EEAS and within the framework of the COE for civilian crisis management.
5. EU member states should nominate more women candidates for positions in civilian CSDP missions, especially for operational positions in which the representation of women is relatively low.

Recommendations to the European External Action Service

1. The EEAS should approve the new CPCC gender strategy and action plan and signal that increasing women's representation in civilian missions is an important priority of the EEAS, in line with the 2018 EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security.²²
2. The EEAS should conduct an analysis of the nominations received from EU member states during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. The EEAS should produce and analyse gender-disaggregated statistics on the recruitment and retention of seconded and contracted personnel, including on the length of their deployment.

²² Council of the European Union, Women, Peace and Security: Council Conclusions, 15086/18, 10 Dec. 2018.



4. The EEAS should support the COE in the mapping of national secondment mechanisms and systems, and request it to conduct, coordinate or commission country-specific barrier assessments of women's participation in civilian crisis management missions.
5. The EEAS should conduct or commission a study on the reasons why men and women are joining and leaving civilian CSDP missions, by means of exit interviews or other methods, and on the reasons why men and women who are eligible for deployment are not pursuing opportunities in civilian CSDP missions.

**ABBREVIATIONS**

CAR	Central African Republic
COE	European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CPCC	Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC)
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
EEAS	European External Action Service
EU	European Union
EUAM Iraq	EU Advisory Mission in Iraq
EUAM RCA	EU Advisory Mission in the CAR
EUAM Ukraine	EU Advisory Mission in Ukraine
EUCAP Sahel Mali	EU Capacity Building Mission Sahel Mali
EUCAP Sahel Niger	EU Capacity Building Mission Sahel Niger
EUCAP Somalia	EU Capacity Building Mission Somalia
EULEX Kosovo	EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo
EUMM Georgia	EU Monitoring Mission Georgia
EUPOL COPPS	EU Police and Rule of Law Mission for the Palestinian Territories
FPU	Formed police unit
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NIP	National implementation plan
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe



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