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#### INTRODUCTION

The 2018 Civilian CSDP Compact calls on European Union Member States (EUMS) to improve the sharing of good practices and lessons identified. There is clearly a wealth of knowledge, experience and commitment across individual EUMS of considerable potential benefit for other EUMS. Some have developed a functioning legal framework, systems, processes and budgetary envelope allowing them to be efficient in deploying the right experts at the right moment. Others are more specialised in deploying civil servants. Others are better at seconding experts recruited outside of national administration (know as "freelancers", in this report). This issue of human resources management (HRM) is fundamental for strengthening civilian CSDP missions. The women and men participating in CSDP missions are at the core of the EU support to partner countries. They are the visible part of the iceberg and are the ones in daily contact with partner institutions and populations on the ground. This is one of the reasons why a strong commitment has been taken by the EU and EUMS to develop further their own HRM systems and career path development for seconded experts. It has also been recently confirmed by the May 2021 Council Conclusions on the Strategic Compass¹.

Ireland decided to do its part and committed in its National Implementation Plan (NIP) to take an active role in leading a cluster discussion on career path development, with a focus on freelancers. With the support of DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance and, more specifically, its International

Security Sector Advisory Team (ISSAT), Ireland organized three workshops to which all EUMS were invited. Overall, representatives from 17 EUMS and several EU services, as well as the European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management joined the discussion to unpack the key challenges and opportunities of seconding and build career path of freelancers. The participants also explored how to enhance the current practices of EUMS. They shared experience more specifically on the use of roster of experts, certain practices to reach more senior strategic positions, and the use of national administration and EU institutions' HRM system to support career path development.

In parallel to these workshops, DCAF-ISSAT carried out individual interviews with seconding states and active/former freelancers in CSDP missions. The team gathered information from representatives of EUMS units and agencies that administer the deployments to Civilian CSDP missions, from representatives of the EEAS, other EU institutions and the CoE, and from external partners providing services to EUMS for the deployment of seconded freelancers.

The analysis of the information gathered over the last few months is summarized in this report. The intention is not to have an exhaustive mapping of who is doing what and where. The aim is to highlight what works among the EUMS and show some of the good practices that may inspire others to improve the number and quality of freelancers deployed to civilian CSDP missions.

#### WHAT ARE THE ISSUES AT STAKE?



The EU and EUMS committed to reach a total share of seconded experts of at least 70% of the international mission staff (Commitment number 3 of the Compact)<sup>2</sup>. They also recognize the need to develop and provide the capabilities required for the EU to undertake the full range of civilian crisis management missions (Commitment number 4). Those missions are operating in complex settings with large and difficult mandate to implement. The range of expertise needed includes policing, rule of law, civilian administration, SSR and monitoring (the so-called Feira priorities). Since 2017, the expertise needed has increased to tackle the so-called new security challenges such as cybersecurity, hybrid threats, terrorism, radicalisation, border management, irregular migration, maritime security and



https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-8396-2021-INIT/en/pdf

For information, in 2005, the share of seconded staff was 89%. In April 2018, that share was down to 59%. The EEAS estimated that if this trend continued, by 2022, only half of all international staff in CSDP mission would be seconded. The other half would be contracted by the Commission directly. Some EUMS expressed at the time some concerns since they considered that the quality of seconded staff was often higher. Another risk was a potential reduction of EUMS' ownership of those CSDP missions. (source: EEAS (2018) 906 – Civilian Capabilities Development Plan).

the protection of cultural heritage. It clearly puts pressure on EUMS to second more staff, better qualified staff and staff with specialised skills.

According a SIPRI study on the EUMS contributions to civilian CSDP missions<sup>3</sup>, the number of international staff in the 11 civilian CSDP missions has increased since the signature of the Compact in 2018. However, the share of seconded experts compared to the contracted staff is not increasing toward the 70% target. To the contrary, this percentage decreased from 66% in 2018 to 62% in August 2020, while it was at 83% in 2010. Additional recently collected data corroborates this trend for the first half of 2021.

At the same time, there is increasing national demand and pressure on EUMS police and justice services. Police officers and judges are less available for deployment in international missions. And when there is availability, the priority is often to deploy them in more operational settings with a clear return on investment for internal security issues (e.g. Interpol, Europol, embassies and other international organisations' HQs). Compared to these missions, civilian CSDP missions are not considered as strategic by many contributing EUMS because the link with domestic security issues is less straightforwardly apparent.

The numbers of available civil servants are also decreasing among many EUMS. Resources are scarce in public service and ministries are not keen to see their staff leave for international deployments. Taking deployments in civilian CSDP missions is mostly not



considered a useful or even legitimate step in public servants' career path in most countries. Furthermore, the visibility of CSDP missions is limited within the public service. The processes are not clear and incentives are not available to promote the deployment to CSDP missions. Overall, the practices for seconding public servants remain ad hoc, based on individual interests and a good network.



For the secondment of experts to CSDP missions, most EUMS rely on their civil servants. Those experts have an active domestic career in the national civil service as police officers, gendarmes, judges, prosecutors, corrections, military, and diplomats. EUMS usually have one or several systems in place to deploy them with specific units within the police or the ministries dedicated to international deployments. CSDP missions are usually one of many other opportunities for civil servants interested in an international career. However, it is not the most attractive one and EUMS have difficulties in reaching the target numbers and in fulfilling all the positions required for a functioning mission. In addition, not all positions require the experience of a civil servants and other profiles are requested by the mission leadership. Those are for examples, political advisors,

analysts, human rights and gender experts, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), mediation and conflict advisors, SSR and governance experts, project managers and others.

Some EUMS have therefore developed their own systems to second those experts recruited outside the national civil service, also called 'freelancers'. Most of them have previous experience in international organisations, NGOs, humanitarian organisations, research centres, think tanks, private companies, or are on leave from their national administration. The figure below summarizes well the main differences between those two categories of seconded personnel to EU CSDP missions:

https://www.sipri.org/publications/2020/sipri-policu-briefs/increasing-member-state-contributions-eu-civilian-csdp-missions

#### **SECONDED PERSONNEL IN EU CIVILIAN CSDP MISSIONS - DIFFERENCES**

#### **CIVIL SERVANTS FREELANCERS** Domestic career outside civil service or career Career in national civil service in EU member **CAREER** from cumulative international assignments states (police, justice, corrections, diplomatic **PATH** service...) Recruiting by an EU member state temporarily Temporarily go on mission abroad and return **JOB** for a CSDP mission. No following employment to their job afterwards **SECURITY** (unless candidate applies for a new mission) Usually need home authority's consent to Other apply for missions via a national pool or leave. Experts mostly find vacancies in internal roster membership. Different ways of outreach RECRUITMENT networks of home authority, and advertisement for secondment in member no strong advertisement states Contractual conditions and social security nets Often face issues regarding career develop-**STRONGEST** ment upon return, as abroad missions are not vary strongly among member states; strong **CHALLENGE** common in their fields competition for specialized profiles

Source: DGAP, Exploring EU Member States' good practices. Incentives for more secondment into civilian CSDP missions, July 2020

Through the information collected in the workshops and interviews, the team understood that 11 out of 27 EUMS are seconding freelancers. Out of them, seven are seconding a rather large number of freelancers on a regular basis (Germany, Sweden, Finland, Ireland, The Netherlands, Czech Republic and Denmark). The four other states are seconding on a more ad hoc basis and the current numbers are lower (France, Belgium, Austria and Latvia). Most of the other EUMS are interested to learn from other states on how to deploy those freelancers, as shown by the number of participants to the workshops. The reasons why they are not deploying them is not clear and straightforward. There might be some legal issues, budgetary issues, little capacity in the ministries to manage freelancers or just no employment market for international missions.

Out of the seven main seconding states, **Germany, Sweden and Finland** have created dedicated state agencies to manage the secondment of freelancers to civilian CSDP missions (and to other international missions). Those are respectively the Berliner Zentrum für Internationale Friedenseinsätze (ZIF), the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) and the Crisis Management Centre (CMC). They are based on a similar model with a clear mandate, responsibility, political support and a budgetary envelop to perform their tasks. They have dedicated personnel to select, recruit, train, prepare, follow, debrief and learn from the freelancers. On average annually, ZIF deploys around 160 freelancers, FBA 80 and CMC 60<sup>4</sup>.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Figures changes every year and are not exact numbers. They are not only for EU civilian CSDP missions but include the freelancers to other international civilian crisis management missions as well as election observation. But all interviews contacted mentioned that the majority of those freelancers were on EU civilian CSDP missions.

Among those three agencies, CMC has the particular role of managing the secondment of freelancers as well as civil servants. This is a unique case in the EU. Overall, they manage the deployment of around 120 experts yearly to all civilian crisis management missions.

**Denmark** has set up a unique system within the EU for the management of the seconded freelancers. Denmark alone uses a private company to handle all the main tasks for the deployment of the freelancers. This system was established in 2008 through a project called the Peace and Stabilization Response (PSR) with a multi-annual budget, open for international tender, and won since then by NIRAS. Denmark is deploying around 45 freelancers annually to civilian CSDP missions mainly. NIRAS manages all the administration aspects of the deployment, providing support for the identification of experts, training, contracts, travels, in-mission support, briefings and de-briefings as well as lessons learning.

Regarding the three other main freelancer seconding states, **Ireland, The Netherlands and Czech Republic** have a similar system whereby a specific division within their respective foreign ministries handles the deployment of freelancers. These divisions work on both the implementation of the national strategic decisions in terms of contribution to civilian CSDP missions in general, as well as, the daily management of administrative and logistical issues of freelancers. They are responsible for the selection, recruitment, training and monitoring of experts. On average, Ireland's International Security Policy unit deploys annually 20 freelancers to EU civilian CSDP missions alone, while other divisions

with the MFA handle other international deployments. The normal annual figure for The Netherlands to all crisis civilian missions stands at around 40. The Czech Republic has a National Seconding Authority seconding staff to all crisis civilian missions, including on average 20 freelancers per year to EU civilian CSDP missions. A similar system is used by **Belgium and Latvia**, deploying around 10 freelancers annually each.

Finally, **France** uses another model for the deployment of freelancers. France's Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs uses Expertise France, the unique public French operator responsible for the design and implementation of international cooperation projects worldwide, to manage seconded national experts to EU HQ, EU Delegations as well as the freelancers to CSDP missions. Although none of them are currently deployed to CSDP missions, some have been in the past.



### SYSTEMS IN PLACE FOR FREELANCERS IN 11 EUMS AND NUMBER OF FREELANCERS DEPLOYED PER YEAR

#### State Agencies for Crisis Management

±160 ZIF in Germany

±80 **FBA in Sweden** 

±60 CMC in Finland

### Specific Divisions within MFA

±40 The Netherlands

±20\* ±10 Ireland Latvia

±10 Belgium Austria

±20 Czech Republic

### Outsourcing to Private or Public Operators

±45 NIRAS in Denmark

Expertise France

Figures provided are not exact numbers. They include all freelancers deployed per year to all civilian crisis missions (EU, UN, OSCE with EU missions representing a large majority).

### ESTABLISH STRONG LEGISLATION AND A COMMON POLITICAL ENGAGE-MENT FOR INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS, BACKED-UP BY SENIOR LEADER-SHIP OF LINE MINISTRIES AND INSTITUTIONS LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Interviews with EUMS representatives suggest that establishing the concept of international deployment as a public good within line ministries, with political commitment and policy support, eases the path to secondment. This is evident in Sweden where legislation requires that applications from within the civil service are supported by line ministries and successful applicants are provided career breaks from national responsibilities. In certain states, there appears to be a greater appreciation of the value of international deployments both intrinsically, and in terms of the value added by personnel returning to domestic duties. Some of this has been built though senior leaders having experience of international mission and others such as Finland where the CMC includes a specific Research, Situational Awareness and Development Department which supports gathering and interpreting information from returning experts and releases regular publications.

Finland has passed legislation ordering its contribution to civilian CSDP. This gives its contribution the highest level of backing and provides a practical set of policies to support its deployees. The legislation delineates the roles of the institutions involves and defines all the benefits for deployees, who all receive equal treatment based on post - be they civilian or police. It also guarantees that deployees can return to their former post in the sense that their employer is not able to terminate their contract. This covers both public sector posts and private sector jobs. According to a Finnish interviewee, this policy framework grew out of an appreciation of the value of civilian CSDP to Finland, which is based on a shared understanding that the civilian CSDP can help mitigate international threats before they arrive in Finland. The strength of this policy framework and appreciation of the Civilian CSDP in Finland is demonstrated by the fact that the director of the national police deployed to European Union Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories for three years.

## DEDICATE RESOURCES TO MANAGE A LARGE POOL OF POTENTIAL CANDIDATES FOR DEPLOYMENT AND ALL SECONDED FREELANCERS

As explained above, various systems to deploy freelancers exist within EUMS. Some have created specialised state agencies, others have dedicated divisions within foreign ministries and some outsource to public operators or private companies. The choice of the best system depends on legal issues, political and strategic intentions, and budgetary envelopes available for civilian crisis management provided by each EUMS. But what they have in common is that the level of investment is commensurate to the number of freelancers deployed.

Looking at the current investments from several EUMS deploying freelancers, it can be said that roughly, one full time staff member can manage 10 seconded freelancers spending a total amount of €1m per year. That budget would include the salary of the seconded freelancers and all important benefits such as insurance, pension, travels, duty of care as well as training opportunities. It would also include all the costs for the management of those freelancers including the salary of the staff, the administration and recruitment costs, visibility, communication, knowledge management and lessons learning. This is more or less the case for Denmark with



four and a half full time staff working in NIRAS for the management of 45 freelancers deployed a year and an overall budget of €4m. At the FBA, six full time staff are working with 80 freelancers with a budget of €11m. In the CMC, 16 full time staff are employed for the management of 120 seconded personnel (freelancers and police) with a total budget of €16m in 2020. Finally, Ireland has one and a half full time staff managing 22 freelancers with a budget of €1.5m in 2021.

# 3.

## USE AN OPEN, NON-RESTRICTIVE ROSTER OF EXPERTS AS A TOOL FOR MANAGING THE POTENTIAL CANDIDATES AND THE FREELANCERS DEPLOYED

If in full compliance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679, the use of a roster system is a good practice. A roster is generally more efficient if it is open and non-restrictive in order to be flexible enough to recruit known experts as well as new comers, and accommodate the widening range of profiles that the civilian CSDP requires. A large live roster is a good tool to manage and store professional data, information on availability, deployment history and other HRM dimensions. A roster can store and display the skills, experience and general capabilities of potential candidates, and deployment history of seconded experts. It can also offer functions to facilitate contact with roster members so that the right members can be contacted for relevant opportunities. It can be used for statistical purpose and gap analysis between available and needed skills. Some EUMS have been proactive in developing their roster and headhunting specific categories of people with the required skills with a specific focus on gender balance.

Sweden, Finland, Ireland and others also **widely advertise all jobs openings to civilian CSDP missions.** Making job opportunities in EU missions visible is clearly important in attracting the best freelancers. Using social media platforms, recruitment websites and other tools is also important for making international career through EU CSDP missions more attractive.

Most of the 10 EUMS deploying freelancers use a combined roster system for all type of international crisis management missions including the EU, as well as the UN, OSCE, and sometimes election observations. Most interviewees consider it good practice to have a multi-mission roster because it creates synergies and economies of scale. It can also support career paths for freelancers by providing them wider employment opportunities, allowing transition between mission types. Both Germany and Denmark have very good



examples of freelancers having started their international career in election observation missions and ending it at a senior strategic position in a civilian CSDP mission.

Rosters can also offer strategic advantages in harnessing civilian CSDP policy more effectively to foreign policy goals. The Netherlands deploys to EU, NATO and OSCE missions using the Civilian Mission Pool (CMP), run by the Department of Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid (DSH) and the Department of Security Policy (DVB). An ISSAT review of the CMP in 2019 showed that the CMP is an effective driver of The Netherlands' Foreign Policy Goals because it generates a high number of seconded experts for international missions whose expertise align with the thematic areas in the strategic plans<sup>5</sup>.



## OFFER FREELANCERS THE SAME WORKING CONDITIONS AS TO CIVIL SERVANTS AND RECOGNIZE THE DIFFERENCES IN TERMS OF JOB SECURITY AND LIFE-LONG CAREER PATH

With regards to tiered remuneration, some contributing states provide a similar salary package, insurance, pension plan, return trips back home for freelancers as those for civil servants. This is the case for example, in Sweden, Germany and Finland, where freelancers become full employees of FBA, ZIF or CMC, respectively.

Existing legislation in The Netherlands has also been adapted to offer the same advantages to freelancers as those provided to civil servants. In addition, The Netherlands allows personnel to adopt temporary national civil service status (including benefits such as pensions) for a specific period of time. Although this does not provide

long-term job security, it provides a status within the institutions and allows personnel to benefit from the development opportunities.

Some other EUMS have not been able take this direction. As such, they cannot provide these aspects of employment benefits. Some are even blocked by legislation and/or their budget to provide only entry-level and junior

positions for freelancers. In addition, they face the issue of limitations to contract extension to a maximum of two years. These issues limit the attractiveness of freelanced position and career path development. It also creates frustrations and perceptions of unfair treatment between freelancers and civil servants on the same mission.

## 5.

### ENSURE A PROPER PREPARATION FOR FREELANCERS BEFORE AND DURING THE DEPLOYMENT

When it comes to mission preparation, Denmark has a very systematic approach. The pre-deployment process includes briefing on the Danish position on the mission country and instruction in which areas to feedback on during the mission. In addition, there is a briefing on mandate implementation, how to do Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat analysis, special Danish priorities, updates from a security department and practical advice on secondment, including living conditions, salary and wellbeing. Denmark also provides a midterm briefing at six months, as well as a post-deployment briefing.

Prior to recruitment, Sweden's Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) places candidates in a two-day training as part of the on-boarding process that includes generic and mission specific components. A desk officer works closely with each deployee on administrative as well as content/context matters. They receive three to four tickets home annually and are invited to 'contingency' meetings around once a year organized by FBA on specific topics (gender, leadership, etc.).

Another good practice for preparing deployees is to provide basic training on civilian crises to potential candidates. For example, Belgium partners with the Egmont Institute to provide biannual general training for potential candidates to international missions (EU, UN, OSCE, etc.), i.e. the Belgian Generic Training on civilian crisis management. It also includes the Ministry of Justice and the Belgian Federal Police.

When it comes to capturing and using information flowing from deployees on mission, Finland is particularly systematic and effective. The CMC has a department that supports gathering and interpreting information from in-mission and returning deployees. This information is turned into products reflecting on the impact of missions, informing deployees on challenges and conditions, and contributing to wider strategic processes



of learning. The CMC's publications are of widely noted quality and relevance<sup>6</sup>. The CMC also convenes returned deployees for similar purposes.

Denmark, Sweden and Finland also prepare and coach the candidates for seconded positions on job interviews technique. Their success rates are high and this preparation technique is appreciated by freelancers, mainly those who are applying for their first posting in a mission. Successful candidates also receive HEAT trainings. Some of them are also offered the opportunity to participate to specialised training on advising, SSR, leadership, gender, etc that are provided by EUMS Training institutions and the The European Security and Defence College (ESDC).

In terms of recruitment and selection, one contributing state employs informal techniques to proactively 'headhunt' across ministries for qualified staff while maintaining an unofficial list of potential candidates for high level positions. This is to improve confidentiality around senior civil servants or private sector employees who are considering leaving their roles temporarily or permanently. This is helpful for finding candidates for leadership roles in Civilian CSDP missions.

## KEEP REGULAR CONTACTS WITH THE FREELANCERS DURING AND AFTER THEIR DEPLOYMENT

Sweden, Finland and Denmark have a standard practice of conducting briefings of freelancers at the stages of pre-mission, mid-mission and post-mission briefings. This is usually complemented by other moments of contact. This system contributes to a sense among freelancers of belonging to a larger national effort, deployed on behalf of their state in an EU mission. Denmark started to organize briefings between desk officers, embassies and freelancers working in the same country. Other EUMS request regular reporting from deployees of non-sensitive information from the mission, which is routinely disseminated across regional desks and where appropriate other ministries.

A journal article published in 2017 on the reporting and knowledge capturing practices of states that deploy to police missions offers practical recommendations on capturing and using information from deployees<sup>7</sup>:

- Survey all deployees as part of debrief and return
- Tie the survey questions to a high-level strategic

document to ensure relevance and consistency

- Establish database for survey responses, tracking priority issues
- Encourage deployees to use the database for lessons learned
- Pair a researcher with the deploying department to retrieve policy-relevant data from the database
- Exchange information on the lessons learnt with other deploying countries

ZIF has designed a career development system largely around creating networking opportunities and convening freelancers working across the gamut of international development agencies and organizations. ZIF also supports individuals by providing advice on building a career through these organizations and in exiting into the private sphere<sup>8</sup>. ZIF also provides the new job opportunities in CSDP missions to freelancers with a good track records.



## INVEST IN CAREER PATH DEVELOPMENT FOR FREELANCERS TO REACH MORE STRATEGIC POSITIONS WITH A SPECIFIC FOCUS ON WOMEN

Finland, Sweden, Denmark invest in positioning their candidates for leadership positions, which tend to be more political and influential. Certain states inform and guide their candidates regarding senior positions to which they would like to deploy. Denmark's roster contractor provides a designated team of five who are specialised in training, recruitment and interviews to prepare their candidate, covering leadership and non-leadership roles. When it comes to high senior profiles, it is normally the role of the foreign ministries rather than the agencies to support the candidate.

In terms of specific actions for women, both Finland and Germany regularly reach the Compact target of 40% women deploying to Civilian CSDP missions. Finland attributes the increase in numbers to its internal political level-led gender equality programmes. It also lies in its recruitment of freelancers, where the pool of experienced and senior women is wider than from the national and uniformed services.

Germany has seen the introduction of new legislation and strong political leadership on gender. ZIF has

proactively and consistently trained a high percentage of women for their expert pool and gives preference to female candidates in the case of two equally qualified applicants for the same position<sup>9</sup>.

The FBA of Sweden has reported that training its deployees on gender sensitivity contributes to the enabling environment. In mission, these deployees are able to help leadership appreciate gender aspects and manage accordingly.

The participation of women in CSDP missions has had a numbers focus and not looked sufficiently at the requirement to develop women specifically for the senior positions in missions. Advocating for representation of senior women in state institutions and in the security sector is a regular requirement within international operations, however internal visibility in the senior positions, particularly the more operational posts, is not high enough yet. The EEAS has recently launched a campaign to promote "Women's leadership at the forefront of the civilian CSDP Missions" 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Caparini, M. and Osland, K. (2017) 'Knowledge Management and Police Peacekeepers: Experiences and Recommendations', SSRN Electronic Journal. doi: 10.2139/ssrn.3003843.

<sup>8</sup> ISSAT, 'Mapping of EU Member States' systems of secondment to Civilian CSDP', November 2018.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> ISSAT Mapping Civilian CSDP, 2018

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-Homepage/94414/women%E2%80%99s-leadership-forefront-civilian-csdp-missions\_fr