

Training on Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management

Established upon the initiative of the European Parliament in 1994, the main aim of the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) is to promote human rights, democracy and conflict prevention in third countries by providing financial support for activities supporting these goals.

The European Commission took the initiative in launching the "EC Project on Training for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management" to contribute to the Member States' efforts in establishing personnel pools for rapid deployment in crisis management operations in the areas of rule of law and civilian administration.

Evaluation questions and methodology

The evaluation does assess the effectiveness, impact and relevance of the project as regards the objective to strengthen the EU capability in civilian crisis management, in particular in the domain of rule of law and civilian administration, on the basis of focused training activities. The evaluation involved the study of relevant documents and over 50 meetings and telephone interviews.

Effectiveness and efficiency

- The Project has been largely successful in creating a pool of well-trained civilian experts in the functional areas of Rule of Law and Civilian Administration for deployment in EU and other crisis management missions, as it has succeeded in developing and implementing Core and Specialisation Courses of good quality. It thus can be said to have effectively achieved its main goals.
- The absence of a proper project document – specifying objectives, outcomes, indicators of success, ways of monitoring and evaluation, and risks – makes it difficult to be more precise with respect to the effectiveness of the Project.
- In terms of efficiency, the Project may be said to have performed well, given the fact that it has been possible to conduct all courses planned and even some extra ones, without any budgetary consequences.

This evaluation was carried out by Guus Meijer and Anna Matveeva and finished January 2006

Design and relevance

- It is recommended that a proper project document be developed in case there would be another project phase, to be used as a planning and monitoring tool.
- The absence of a field-based training needs assessment prior to the development of the Project has potentially diminished its relevance, as it has resulted in the courses offered being chosen and developed more on the basis what was possible from the training institutes' point of view ('supply driven'), rather than from what is in reality needed in the field ('demand driven'). This effect has possibly been slightly mitigated by the presence, in many of the courses, of participants with considerable mission experience, as well as of non-EU nationals from conflict areas – although they were often not the most appropriate ones for such a role.
- It is recommended that a thorough assessment of training needs on the ground be conducted with trips to field missions outside of the OSCE region and to the more 'hostile environment' areas. This assessment could also take into account the experiences of and the needs felt by EU Delegations in countries and regions that are recovering from conflict, prone to political violence or otherwise affected by serious crises.

Impact and relevance

- An important achievement has been the establishment, and maintenance of a European network of professional training institutes and organisations specialising in training for civilian crisis management, the further development and sharing of professional expertise, and the elaboration of standard curricula for the training courses in question.
- The Project has made an invaluable contribution to raising awareness and generating political support in the EU and its Member States with regard to the importance of civil aspects of conflict prevention, crisis management and peacebuilding.
- A factor which has diminished the relevance as well as the positive impact of the Project is the absence of an institutional link to actual deployment in missions.

Role and functioning of the EGT

- In the remaining year of Phase IV, the EGT should continue its efforts towards improving its relationship with the CivCom and Member State focal points, focusing on more effective formal and informal, written and verbal, communication and seniority of representation.
- Internal communication, especially with regard to financial matters, should be improved and full transparency be practiced.
- Relationships with other EU or non-EU organisations or institutions could be strengthened, with a view of improving the quality of training as well as the visibility of the Project and the dissemination of information about courses on offer (e.g. ISS, OSCE, EPLO).

Content and format of training

- The training format, consisting of a Core Course followed by one or more specialised courses, should in principle continue, with the Core Course curriculum being adjusted and modified as already planned. It is recommended to modify the Core Course towards a 'conflict awareness and sensitisation' course together with the 'hard skills' needed in hostile mission environments, and to integrate more of the *Do No Harm* approach. Training on EU norms, policies and institutions, as well as on ESDP missions, is an area for further strengthening.
- The number and range of specialisation courses can be reduced considerably. More mission-specific courses or (short) seminars should be organised instead, provided that there is a clear link between training and deployment. The latest trend towards 'liaison & coordination' as a focus for specialisation courses (Civil-Military, EU-UN) merits strengthening, if possible in combination with substantive areas such as DDR or Human Rights (as piloted by Sant'Anna)
- Training methods should adhere more rigorously to adult learning principles and include lectures only when absolutely essential. Use of break-out sessions, role plays, practical problem-solving, simulation exercises and one-to-one interaction with trainers are all important. Continuity among trainers should be ensured. While it is not essential that the same trainer stays for the whole duration of a course, there should be a presence of a substantial (non-administrative staff) person throughout a

course and overlap between trainers if one of them has to leave – to ensure coherence and connection between various subject matters. This would be ever so more important if personal assessments at the end of each course would be formally introduced.

- For the further consolidation and credibility of the Project, it is essential that the impasse with regard to personal assessment is being broken and that a simple, workable yet credible system of assessment is being developed, agreed by all stakeholders and put into practice. In order for these assessments to be credible, it is highly recommended that they are conducted by people with extensive field experience. In order to preserve confidentiality and overcome political sensitivities, it is suggested that the outcome of such a personal assessment be given only to the participant in question, and that any agency or organisation recruiting people for deployment may request this information and that it is up to the person in question to release it or not.
- The current system of course evaluations (by participants) can and should be considerably simplified, as should be the procedures for reporting on courses by the course organisers (to the Project coordinator, the other EGT members and the EU institutions).

Nomination and deployment

- After initial problems with the nomination and selection of appropriate candidates, resulting in many wrong people attending the wrong courses, these procedures have been considerably improved in later stages – yet there is scope for further tightening the application of agreed criteria for admission.
- The main shortcoming of the Project lies not in its own functioning, but in the lack of an institutional link to actual deployment in missions – substantially diminishing its relevance and threatening the political support it requires. Few, if any, trainees have been recruited in missions after having passed through the training, and those that have been recruited were either already part of the relevant circuit or found their way in on the basis of their personal initiative and contacts.
- The links to Pillar II (Security and Foreign Policy), the CivCom and the Council Secretariat's efforts towards developing an ESDP training pro-

gramme need to be nourished and merit strengthening, both for closing the gap between training and field requirements and for increasing the likelihood of establishing, in due course, an institutional link between training and mission deployment. The joint development of the CRT concept, including training, may serve as an inspiring experience.

- A genuine pool of civilian crisis management experts should be created and a corresponding database be set up and properly maintained, if possible linking national databases to a unified one at European level.

Gender and children's issues

- For many training institutes, gender issues were often experienced as problematic, either because of inappropriate handling by trainers or because of strong resistance from participants, or both. As far as gender is concerned, it is recommended to stay away from too ideological feminist perspectives, and not treat it as a stand-alone subject, but to make a serious effort to mainstream it into all other possible themes, and especially to integrate it in practical exercises, role plays, simulations and the like.
- Children's issues were adequately covered during training, mostly within the theme of human rights; where particularly salient, as in the specialisation courses on DDR and Re-integration of Ex-Combatants, Rule of Law, and Organising Civilian Administration, the subject is being dealt with more extensively than in other courses such as Press and Public Information – Media Development, or Democratisation and Good Governance.

Future institutional options

- In terms of future developments, there are a number of options, some more conservative, other more radical. One would be to allow the EGT to expand and integrate new members (training institutes) according to interest expressed by Member States. Another would be to constitute a core group of experienced and proven training institutes which would have a recognised EU quality stamp and will exclusively provide EU training courses for civilian crisis management. A middle route is also possible, with a core group responsible for curriculum development, quality control, etc. and a second tier of training providers, which would work in close collaboration with and under the supervision of the core group. Finally, a completely open market situation might be contemplated, in which the EU/ESDP or the EC would put courses out for tender and current EGT members as well as others could apply for a service contract, either for a one-off or for a certain period and/or certain courses. Under this last possibility, the network created by the EGT and all its benefits would only survive as an historical legacy of the Project and not as a living and evolving mechanism; it would also put a much larger burden on the 'clients' (Member States, EU/ESDP, EC, Missions) to define training needs, strategies and programmes.
- Whatever its future shape, it is quite possible that the Project (and the EGT network) will not survive in its present form. In order to prepare for new realities, in which market forces and more open competition may well come to play a bigger role, EGT members with less institutional capacity and not disposing of their own training facilities, should look to partner with more established institutions in their country. Member States are encouraged to promote such partnerships and provide support where necessary.
- It is worth looking into the possibility of asking Member States to pay a contribution towards the costs of their nationals participating in training courses. In addition to generating some extra funds, the main advantage of such a provision would be that nominations will be taken more seriously and that Member States will have a bigger stake in actually using the capacity in the development of which they have invested.

The evaluations are carried out in partnership with the Netherlands Humanist Committee on Human Rights and The Danish Institute for Human Rights.

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