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# Exploring EU Member States' Good Practices

## Incentives for More Secondment into Civilian CSDP Missions



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Civilian CSDP missions rely on EU member states to staff them with skilled experts via the instrument of secondment. But the rate of seconded personnel in missions has decreased notably over the last ten years. The key to reversing this trend is addressing obstacles at the national level that hinder the recruitment and deployment of civilian experts with specialized profiles. Targeted incentives could help overcome some of these obstacles.

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- Although member states face different obstacles to seconding, a structured exchange of good practices supported at the EU level would benefit all.

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  - Motivating national authorities with a domestic core mandate, such as ministries of the interior, to release staff for secondment remains a central challenge in most member states. Frequent cooperation and coordination between the ministries for foreign affairs and those actors is essential to foster understanding for the relevance of civilian crisis management abroad.

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  - Incentives for the individual experts needed for increasingly specialized missions must be better understood and tailored.

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  - Although no single financial measure could trigger stronger personnel contributions, member states should explore options to collectively fund more training activities for seconded staff at the EU level.
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Civilian missions in the framework of the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) are staffed with international seconded personnel from member states and international personnel contracted by the EU. The share of secondments, however, has decreased notably over the past ten years. Member states want to reverse this trend and have committed to increase the share of seconded staff in the Civilian CSDP Compact of 2018. This measure aims to foster the effectiveness of civilian missions and increase member states' engagement and interest in the missions after a period of standstill and inactiveness of many. In order to support the implementation of member states' political commitment, incentive mechanisms need to be changed. Qualified staff for civilian CSDP missions faces increasing competition for specialized profiles, even among different EU actors.**

- Different national levels must interact in order to facilitate a larger number of secondments. National governments must support secondments politically and with a sufficient budget; ministries for foreign affairs must motivate line ministries, which need to release their staff for the time of a mission; and individual experts need to find the secondment conditions attractive. In addition, the EU should provide transparent application and recruitment processes as well as support for exchanging good practices.
- Member states face different obstacles when seconding. Still, many good practices exist, which can be relevant to other states. A structured exchange of good practices would, therefore, be highly beneficial.
- Diplomats in ministries of foreign affairs need to lay the foundation for secondment by securing solid legislation, budget, and political support for stronger contributions. Strategic communication can be of high value for achieving all three.
- Operationally, ministries should broaden the pool of potential secondees and develop strategies to sensitize line ministries for the purpose of secondment.
- In order to motivate candidates to go on a mission, incentives for individual experts need to be better understood and tailored. Outreach to candidates and human resource management need to be professionalized.

- So far, there is no unanimity among member states on providing financial incentives to member states through the budget of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). There is clearly not one specific financial measure that would be effective in triggering stronger personnel contributions. But talks about possible measures have shown that member states should explore options to collectively fund more training activities for seconded staff at the EU level.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CfC</b>	Call for Contribution
<b>CFSP</b>	Common Foreign and Security Policy
<b>CPCC</b>	Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability
<b>CSDP</b>	Common Security and Defence Policy
<b>DoC</b>	Duty of Care
<b>EEAS</b>	European External Action Service
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FBA</b>	Folke Bernadotte Academy
<b>FPI</b>	Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (in the EU Commission)
<b>HEAT</b>	Hostile Environment Awareness Training
<b>MFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>MoI</b>	Ministry of the Interior
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental Organization
<b>SSR</b>	Security Sector Reform
<b>ToT</b>	Training of Trainers
<b>ZIF</b>	Center for International Peace Operations

## 1. INTRODUCTION: THE NEED TO THINK ABOUT INCENTIVES

Since the inception of the civilian Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in 2003, it has been a challenge to get the right and enough personnel into missions. While one could expect that recruitment for civilian missions would have become less of an issue over the past 17 years, the opposite is true. In the CSDP's first few years, larger missions were staffed with personnel with diverse and more generic profiles. But especially after 2010, missions have become incrementally smaller and more specialized in their tasks. This has gone together with the need for very specialized personnel profiles, which are harder for EU member states to find and spare. In addition, many member states have not yet professionalized their recruitment and secondment structures accordingly.

Secondment means the process by which a member state nominates a qualified national expert to fill a vacant position in a mission, after which that nominee undergoes the recruitment process of the European External Action Service (EEAS). Member states nominate candidates in reaction to a Call for Contributions (CfC) issued by the EEAS, which contains the specific expert profiles to be filled. If the candidate is selected, the sending member state will thereafter cover all secondment-related costs, including the expert's salary. The EU mission will nevertheless pay per diems to the expert. If a position cannot be filled with a seconded expert, the position can be transformed into a contracted position. In this case, the EEAS and the mission can recruit a skilled expert directly via an EU-wide vacancy announcement.

Over the past decade, the share of seconded personnel in civilian missions has steadily decreased from 83 percent in 2010 to 65 percent in 2019, despite the shrinking overall number of mission personnel.<sup>1</sup> Gaps in seconded positions are not evenly distributed but are most often found in specific functional areas that include, inter alia, combating cyber and hybrid threats as well as management and logistics. Also, the secondment rate is much lower in missions in Sub-Saharan Africa than, for example, in the EU's eastern neighborhood. One main reason for this is the lack of French-speak-

ing personnel with the required functional expertise in most member states. Lastly, a large share of personnel is seconded by a few member states: By June 2019, eight member states contributed 69 percent of seconded personnel in missions.<sup>2</sup> This shows that a strong burden is currently on a few member states. More evenly distributed engagement among member states would increase ownership of the instrument for all and have positive consequences for the efficiency of missions.

CSDP is intergovernmental and EU member states exercise strategic and political control over the missions. Article 42 (3) of the Treaty of the European Union stipulates that "Member States shall make civilian and military capabilities available to the Union for the implementation of the common security and defence policy, to contribute to the objectives defined by the Council."<sup>3</sup> Sending personnel from their national realms is, therefore, one component of the political ownership of CSDP by member states.

Beyond the political message, there are three additional reasons why it makes sense, in principle, to use seconded and not contracted personnel. First, the core mandate of civilian CSDP, which includes tasks such as security sector reform (SSR), state capacity building, and policing, requires specialized capabilities that can only be found in the national civil services of member states. Second, if member states do not propose (qualified) candidates, it can take many months until a position is subsequently transformed into a contracted position. Meanwhile, the mission must cope without this expert. And third, more contracted personnel mean a higher burden on the budget of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as seconded staff are mostly paid by member states.

In November 2018, EU member states agreed to increase the share of their secondments to at least 70 percent of the international staff in civilian missions. This was just one of 22 political commitments that EU member states, the EU Commission, and the EEAS made in the framework of a Civilian CSDP Compact at that time after a year of political discussions on how to best strengthen the EU's civilian missions.<sup>4</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> See Timo Smit, "Towards a more capable European Union Civilian CSDP," November 2019, p. 3: <<https://www.sipri.org/publications/2019/sipri-policy-briefs/towards-more-capable-european-union-civilian-csdp>> (accessed July 9, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the European Union: <<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12012M%2FTXT>> (accessed June 4, 2020).

<sup>4</sup> See 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," November 9, 2018: <<http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14305-2018-INIT/en/pdf>> (accessed July 9, 2020).

### THE CIVILIAN CSDP COMPACT

A political process was initiated by 8 member states in late 2017 to breathe new life into the EU's civilian missions.

Two documents laid the groundwork: a concept paper on civilian CSDP and a Civilian Capability Development Plan developed by the EEAS.

One year of discussions culminated in the signing of the compact, which consists of 22 political commitments, by all member states in November 2018.

Implementation by early summer 2023 should make civilian CSDP missions more capable, flexible, and joined up.

commitment to increase secondments is a key pledge for making such missions more capable in the future.

Lasting changes, however, cannot be triggered by political declarations alone. During the compact negotiations, the idea came up that financial incentives from the CFSP budget for member states could support stronger contributions. This side discussion resulted in commitment 15, which invites the EEAS and EU Commission to explore incentives within and beyond the CFSP budget.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, it is still unclear what exactly a measure – financial or otherwise – that has the potential to impact member states' ability and willingness to second would entail.

Generally, it is a very worthy idea to explore incentives that could help to make a lasting change to the decreasing number of secondments. The issue needs and deserves a much closer look to determine if and how incentive structures beyond financial incentives are used in national procedures for secondments in to civilian missions and which obstacles exist.

This study explores incentives that could ultimately help to fulfill the Civilian CSDP Compact's commitment to more secondments and contribute to solving this long-standing issue. It analyses whether EU

member states already use incentives in their national procedures in a targeted way, what has been successful for them for certain target groups, and their largest challenges. The study also highlights good practices and positive examples from member states that could be interesting for others.

## 2. UNPACKING THE SECONDMENT BLACK BOX

A political commitment at the EU level through the Civilian CSDP Compact is only the first step toward increasing the number and rate of secondments in mission. The more complex task is to implement this commitment. Political commitments at the EU level, such as those in the compact, are made by the foreign ministries of EU member states, which have the lead on national positions on CSDP advocated at the EU level. Nevertheless, MFAs are dependent on other ministries and agencies for most of the national contributions to missions. Thus, three different levels must interact to make a higher number of secondments happen at a national level:

- First, individual candidates with the necessary qualifications must be willing to go abroad on a mission for a limited period of time. Experts will only be interested in doing so if they deem the conditions of their secondment favorable for their career and compatible with their personal situation.
- Second, there are usually different national authorities involved in civilian CSDP secondments. Seconded experts either have a domestic career in the national civil service – for example in the police or justice system – or they are recruited from the private labor market with the aim of sending them into mission (they are hereafter referred to as freelancers). For ministries or national authorities sending their civil servants into mission, incentives are very important. For those institutions, contributing to international missions is not part of their core mandate and understanding for the relevance of these missions is not a given. Sending staff into missions abroad usually binds capacities needed for domestic tasks, such as policing and border management, often without a replacement for the relevant office. For specialized institutions that exclusively second freelancers (such as the German Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF)),

<sup>5</sup> See 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," November 9, 2018, p. 8: <<http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14305-2018-IN17/en/pdf>> (accessed July 9, 2020).

## SECONDED PERSONNEL IN EU CIVILIAN CSDP MISSIONS – DIFFERENCES

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

incentives are not as important because seconding experts into international missions belongs to their core mandate. Thus, each expert deployed is a proof of success. For them, incentivizing individuals is more important.

- Third, the support of national governments is needed in order to second any number of experts, but especially to achieve an increase in numbers. Governments shape political priorities and strategic targets and often allocate or demand the funds that are needed to second experts into missions. Conflicting national priorities are also mitigated on the political level.

An examination of possible incentives for experts to go on mission could broaden the pool of potential candidates for missions. Exploring the interests of line ministries,<sup>6</sup> which more often than not provide a large chunk of the secondees from a country, can help clarify the conditions under which it can become more bearable for those authorities to make their employees available for missions. And examining why some EU member states find it politically relevant to contribute to missions could help find

convincing arguments for more skeptical national governments to reshuffle priorities and increase their contributions.

All three levels must successfully function and interact for numbers to increase sustainably. Therefore, all levels should be assessed for incentives or improvements in the national secondment process. A more targeted way for using incentives on the national level can be one step to answering the overarching question of how to bring more qualified personnel into civilian missions through secondments.

### 2.1. Defining and Measuring Incentives

An incentive is a motivational factor that can trigger a change in behavior of a targeted person or institution. In the case of CSDP missions, incentives impact the decision-making of that person or institution, e.g. when it comes to allocating resources.

It is very difficult to measure the actual impact of incentives or obstacles for secondment for three reasons. First, as mentioned above, because different levels must interact to realize a secondment, it is

<sup>6</sup> In this study, the term “line ministries” refers to national ministries that contribute seconded personnel other than the national ministries for foreign affairs (MFAs). While MFAs are responsible for the national positions and engagement in CSDP, their work relies on close cooperation with the line ministries, e.g. ministries of interior, justice, and defense.

hard to tell precisely how much a particular incentive contributed to it. Second, there is no “one size fits all”: the backgrounds of secondees are diverse, as are national secondment systems and the strategic considerations that underlie member states’ involvement in civilian CSDP. There might be incentives that can have a positive impact in one national context but that will not work in another. Third, although member states have understood the necessity of thinking about incentives and making secondments more attractive, they do not yet use them in a very targeted way, nor do they usually measure what works. While this study has asked for systematic approaches and findings – e.g. from feedback and surveys of secondees – there is not enough data for it to provide proof of causal relations.

Therefore, this study strongly relies on results from interviews with practitioners from EU member states and EU services. It explores what works for some member states. Conclusions are drawn from practitioners’ experiences, especially when they are

similar in several member states, as well as the feedback that these practitioners have gotten from their national secondees.

## 2.2. Study Design and Data Collection

For this study, the researcher conducted interviews in 12 EU member states with diplomats in foreign ministries, other national ministries contributing personnel to missions, and experts from national seconding agencies, as well as with representatives from EU institutions. In all, the researcher reached out to 19 different EU member states, but 7 chose not to respond or participate in the interviews. The aim was to include a selection of member states from different geographic regions, larger and smaller, with different national approaches and capacities in secondment.

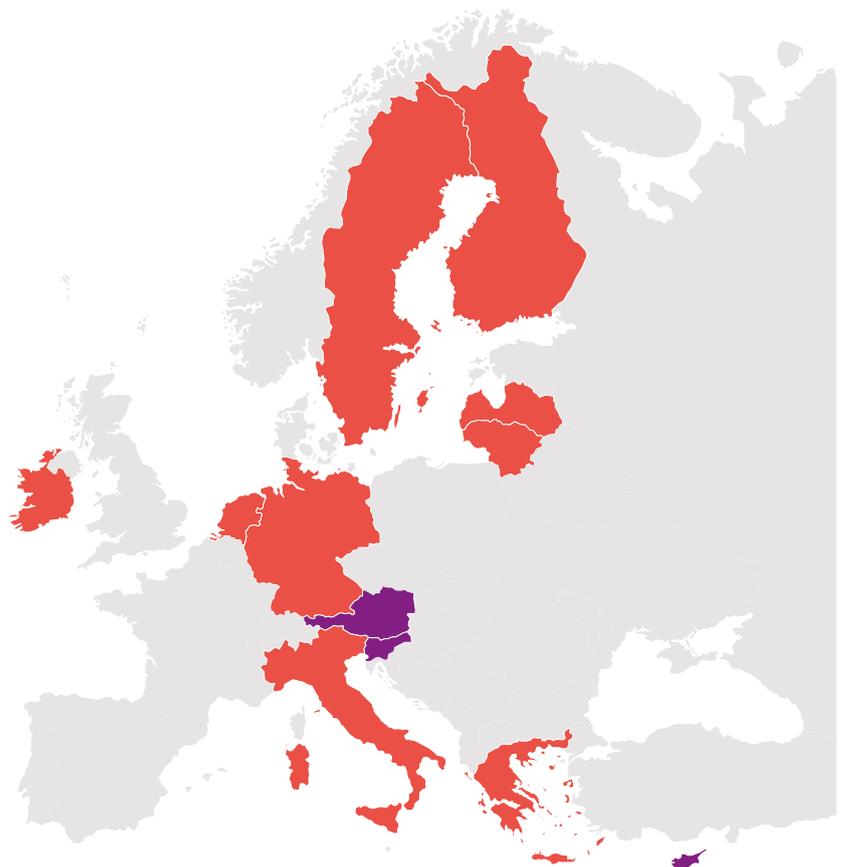
All interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner, based on a set of predefined questions. Semi-structured interviews fit the explorative nature of the research topic. They allowed the practitioners

### MAP OF EU MEMBER STATES WHERE INTERVIEWS WERE CONDUCTED

Austria  
Cyprus  
Finland  
Germany  
Greece\*  
Ireland  
Italy  
Latvia  
Lithuania  
Netherlands  
Slovenia  
Sweden

States that second only civil servants

States that second civil servants and freelancers



\* In addition to active civil servants, Greece seconds retired civil servants

to highlight the special features of their national approaches and the researcher to include relevant new ideas in the analysis. Some interview partners chose not to answer all questions. Also, due to the different national systems, not all questions were applicable to all of the interviews.

For all levels of incentives, the study describes the obstacles that limit the number of secondments. It then summarizes the main observations from the interviews on how member states treated the obstacle and how they tried to cope with it. Thereafter, the study highlights good practices in surmounting the obstacle, if possible.

### 3. INDIVIDUAL INCENTIVES: INCREASING ATTRACTIVENESS FOR EXPERTS

Individual incentives target the potential candidates who can apply for positions in civilian missions. Experts who want to serve in a civilian CSDP mission usually apply for postings via their competent national authorities and then take the route of a secondment.

None of the member states systematically assesses the incentives that work to attract experts to apply for missions. In order to explore individual incentives on the basis of practitioner experience, the member state representatives were asked about:

- their mechanisms for reaching out to possible candidates;
- factors that make it more attractive or less attractive to become a seconded expert in their countries;
- obstacles on the individual level to increasing secondments;
- factors through which member states try to incentivize more applications.

Seconded experts are either from the seconding member state's civil service, or they are freelancers with a career outside the civil service in the private sector – working, for example, for NGOs, as researchers, or in international organizations. The latter type of secondees is recruited exclusively to second them to a mission for a limited period of time. Member states that can second freelancers include e.g. Germany, Finland, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Lithuania.

So far, other EU member states lack the legal foundation to second freelancers. Those member states

recruit individuals exclusively from their civil service. Several have confirmed plans to reform national legislation in order to allow them to second freelancers.

#### 3.1. Outreach to Candidates

Incentivizing experts starts with informing them about the opportunity to go on a civilian crisis management mission. Targeted information campaigns via different channels can broaden the pool of potential candidates. In order to recruit experts with very specialized profiles, it can be useful to consider unusual measures such as reaching out to networks of practitioners that one might not initially consider for deployment in international peace operations. Experts in forensics or logistics, for example, might not even be aware of such an opportunity since international missions are not an obvious option for their careers.

EU member states take various approaches to targeted outreach. In many, there is room for improvement.

In most member states, it is at the discretion of line ministries to distribute CfCs internally to civil servants. In such cases, the ministries often have no strong interest in advertising the opportunities. Vacancies might just be posted on an internal platform. Thus, it depends on individuals in the ministries to apply. This points toward some potential for improvement. Ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs) could, for example, encourage line ministries to do more or include civil servants in their own outreach measures. MFAs could also appoint returnees from mission as informal points of contact in line ministries. In addition, information about the possibility to go on international missions could be included in the training for a career in some branches of the civil service, such as the police.

For freelancers, the mechanisms for outreach vary. Several member states have a preselected group of experts in a pool or roster that receives notifications of vacant positions. Others openly advertise vacancies on the websites of MFAs or seconding agencies. Some countries already go beyond this with broader information campaigns. They use social media, newsletters, different internet platforms (such as job platforms or NGO networks), and short films that tell stories from mission life.

Several member states often recruit from fixed circles or are currently building such networks. These circles often include NGOs and universities with a

fitting academic focus. Some find it useful to build networks early in the careers of skilled candidates, for example through partnerships with university departments. Also, it could be useful if some suitable positions in missions were open to candidates with less professional experience. In some states, younger skilled candidates demonstrate high interest in missions but are not eligible to apply.

The Latvian MFA, beyond using its roster, is constantly searching for additional qualified candidates with specialized expertise. For example, representatives from the MFA talk to institutions – both governmental and private – about where they might find these experts. In addition, they offer retired experts from the civil service the opportunity to go on mission as freelancers. Both approaches are also taken by Germany's seconding agency, ZIF. In addition, when ZIF recruits for its roster, it openly communicates capability needs (e.g. French language skills, rule of law expertise) and spreads them widely over social media and other tools. In the subsequent selection process, ZIF prioritizes candidates with these skills. ZIF also collaborates with private sector companies that work in the field of international cooperation on personnel exchange and reaches out to experts in development and international politics at career fairs. Moreover, ZIF offers retired police officers and reserve officers of the German Army the opportunity to be seconded to peace operations as freelancers in civilian functions.

In the Netherlands and Germany, civilian experts are eligible to receive medals for their service in international missions. There, civilians are included in medal ceremonies along with soldiers and police officers in order to recognize their efforts. These festive occasions are then also used as an opportunity to promote secondments.

An additional resource for outreach that currently seems underexploited by many is peer-to-peer recruitment, which the Netherlands has recently used quite successfully. Its MFA used its channels to active and former secondees as well as its regular newsletter to not only forward vacancies, but to also ask recipients to pass them on to qualified candidates. Equally, it asked MFA colleagues to spread the message through their professional networks to reach qualified candidates. In the most recent round of applications for the Dutch expert pool, more highly qualified candidates applied.

### 3.2. Strongest Incentives for National Secondees to Go on Mission

The motivation mentioned most often – by seven member states – was a certain curiosity to discover new places, an open-mindedness and a “sense of adventure” in positive terms. The notion of “making the world better” and making a change through one's own highly educated background was a motivation that pointed in a similar direction cited by two. Six different member states mentioned that secondees often go into mission for reasons of professional development, either to broaden their skillset or to gain valuable field experience. Another incentive raised by five was a competitive financial package tied to the assignment. Other reasons were special interest in a region or policy field (three), or, in the case of some countries, the particular status as a mission member and the temporary affiliation with and connection to diplomatic services (three). An incentive that is especially valued in times of uncertainty on the international stage was access to the social security net of the home country and grounding in its system through the secondment (two). With a view to freelancers, three member states added that their main reason to apply was building a career from secondments and contracts in international missions and organizations.

### 3.3. Recruitment for Particularly Hostile Environments and Duty of Care as Incentive

In recent years, the demand for staff in civilian CSDP has decreased in Eastern Europe but increased in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>7</sup> With this shift, missions are confronted with more hostile operating environments that require stronger measures to guarantee the security of the mission staff. More hostile security environments often mean compound life. All civilian CSDP missions are non-family duty stations. These reasons could potentially discourage suitable candidates from applying for mission postings.

It is questionable whether duty of care (DoC) measures are enough for experts to consider a difficult mission environment in the first place and, therefore, whether they count as a strong incentive. But such measures might reassure experts that seconding authorities have an understanding of their environment and their doubts and worries are seen.

In five member states, it is not a problem to find candidates who are willing to go into high risk missions.

<sup>7</sup> See Timo Smit, “Towards a more capable European Union Civilian CSDP,” November 2019, p. 7.

Others confirmed that knowing a local security situation is particularly tense presents an obstacle for many candidates to apply. In some member states, there is less experience with such concerns because they focus their secondments on the relatively calm operating areas in the EU's eastern neighborhood. This could, however, change as more of them might geographically diversify their contributions as a result of the compact's implementation.

Six member states do not have any incentives in place to make high risk missions more attractive for experts. Others have intensive DoC mechanisms and other specific measures for such missions. Most commonly, seconding authorities provide additional or obligatory training – most often Hostile Environment Awareness Training (HEAT) – to experts deployed to high risk missions. Three member states set additional financial incentives that compensate for high risk and harsh living conditions. DoC measures include, if possible, seconding several experts into one mission to look after each other, appointing a point of contact for security matters for the experts on mission in the seconding authority, having a telephone staffed 24/7 at the seconding authority for emergencies, and thoroughly informing experts about what exactly will be expected of them in mission before they are deployed. Finland, for example, appoints national “contingent leaders” in missions who serve as focal points for the worries and questions of their compatriots. The MFAs and seconding agencies of several member states (Finland, Sweden, and Germany) conduct regular mission visits to inform themselves about the conditions on site and talk to national experts to counter doubts or attend to grievances.

### 3.4. Career Path Development

Enabling experts to build career paths around or even through a secondment into a mission remains a central challenge. The issues differ between civil servants and freelancers.

For civil servants, serving in a civilian mission abroad is often not a natural choice to make during their careers. As a first obstacle at the outset of the process, it can be difficult to get their superior's consent for the leave. After their time in mission, some civil servants see their period of absence from their domestic jobs as a reason for non-promotion. Often, the time on mission is not included in their subsequent evaluation, which can be a disadvantage compared to

colleagues who pursued their jobs at home. Others experience tensions with colleagues or superiors after their return, for instance because the lack of a replacement resulted in extra workload for them.

It remains a strong challenge to better integrate a civilian crisis management assignment into the career of civil servants. It is encouraging how many member state representatives underlined that this is a central issue for them to work on in the implementation of the Civilian CSDP Compact. Nevertheless, no successful examples of good practices – or even promising ideas on how to approach the topic – could be identified so far. Starting points mentioned include integrating times abroad into the promotion system and creating preselected personnel pools for international missions in line ministries.

For freelancers, obstacles to career path development are rather related to job security and the duration and timing of contracts. These experts tend to be more mobile as they often build their careers through different stations at several places. But since they have less job security than civil servants, they might apply for the pools of seconding agencies as one option of many that they pursue to secure their next assignment. This does not necessarily mean that they are available for secondments most of the time. If the possibility of a secondment into a suitable position comes up, freelancers weigh their options. Often, the short mission assignments of a few months to one or two years lose against longer-term contracts elsewhere or against assignments in the private sector that are financially more rewarding. Also, lengthy recruitment procedures lower the chance that a freelancer is still available.

There are two broader, divergent ways in which EU member states try to support the career paths of freelancers.<sup>8</sup> In the first model, the secondee has a domestic career that he or she continues to pursue after return. In this case, it is important for the seconding authority that experts do not go from mission to mission without a break. Instead, experts should not lose their footing in the domestic labor market and should refresh and deepen their expertise at home after a mission. Thus, the challenge is to ensure that these experts can find their way back into the labor market after return.

In the second model, experts are encouraged to build their careers on the pool membership with subse-

<sup>8</sup> The two different ways to support the career paths of freelancers do not apply to all member states in an exclusive manner.

quent secondments into different missions and organizations. In this approach, it is seen as an advantage to carry specialized knowledge from one mission into the next. This approach can make it easier to build careers that lead experts into middle management and leadership positions.

The German ZIF strongly supports that secondees build a career that includes regular work at home to refresh knowledge and not lose integration in the national or European labor market. To this end, it has established some good practices to support career paths. After return, experts can make use of reintegration aid provided by ZIF, for example career coaching. Also, ZIF has started to approach potential partner institutions that employ experts with the skills needed in peace operations. In talks, the agency tries to lobby the management of these institutions about the value that an experience in the peace operation of a multilateral organization can add to their profile and the career development of their staff, deepening their skills and knowledge in field assignments. This could potentially open a new pool of secondees who would otherwise not apply, as they do not want to give up their current positions or permanent contracts. The implementation by ZIF is still in its early stages, but the first experts have already gone on missions based on such partnerships. ZIF also uses its network of former secondees who returned successfully to the German or European labor market to connect them with returnees in similar fields of expertise.

### 3.5. Contractual Conditions

Despite many experts drawing motivation from curiosity and openness to different cultures, as reported in section 3.2., contractual conditions of secondment matter. Conditions to get seconded are very attractive to national experts in some member states, while in others, the salary and other conditions might not be so competitive compared to other international assignments. This situation is due to the fact that every member state defines the contractual conditions for their secondees based on national regulations. Member states in which most national experts deem their secondment conditions favorable, especially in combination with the per diems paid by the CSDP missions, also confirmed that they usually receive enough applications for vacant positions.

Favorable conditions can, for example, include an attractive salary that compensates for harsher living conditions far away from one's family, temporary contractual affiliation with the civil service or the

seconding authority, and a comprehensive social security package. In some remuneration systems, the salary of a political advisor without managerial responsibility in a mission can correspond to that of some of the highest-ranking civil servants on a national level. In several member states, freelancers are employees of the sending authority (usually the MFA or seconding agency) for the time of their secondment. The tight connection to the national system is strongly valued by most secondees. It seems to play a positive role that secondees become full employees for the time of mission with all rights and duties, for example access to internal complaint mechanisms, etc. A good security net is a plus for many as well. The social security package attached to a secondment contract can vary considerably between member states. In most cases, it includes health insurance. This is sometimes supplemented by payments into a national pension fund or the entitlement to receive unemployment insurance upon return.

In some member states, national regulations strictly limit the time experts can spend on mission or the number of contracts they can have in a row. For candidates who build their careers from international deployments, this can mean a break in their career planning and a risk of unemployment. For member states, it can be an obstacle to bringing candidates into higher positions. It could, therefore, be beneficial to review or abolish regulations strictly limiting secondment periods.

**TABLE 1 – OVERVIEW OF EXEMPLARY GOOD PRACTICES AND POTENTIALS IDENTIFIED AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL**

ISSUE	GOOD PRACTICES/POTENTIALS		
	BOTH	ONLY REGARDING CIVIL SERVANTS	ONLY REGARDING FREELANCERS
OUTREACH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition ceremonies to honor secondees' service and advertise for secondment</li> <li>• Peer-to-peer recruitment over (former) secondee networks</li> <li>• Recruitment campaigns that openly communicate capability needs and prioritize specialized profiles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential: MFAs could encourage line ministries to do more or include civil servants in their own outreach measures</li> <li>• Appoint returnees from mission as informal points of contact in line ministries</li> <li>• Recruit in networks for retired civil servants, such as police officers, who could be interested in going abroad after retirement</li> <li>• Include information on the possibility of going on international missions in civil service training, e.g. in police academy training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach institutions that employ specialized experts for partnerships in order to send their experts into temporary missions for their professional development</li> <li>• Potential: Review job profiles in missions for suitable positions for junior candidates as early mission experiences could introduce and tie candidates to CSDP work</li> </ul>
HOSTILE ENVIRONMENTS/ DUTY OF CARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide obligatory Hostile Environment Awareness Training</li> <li>• Appoint "contingent leaders" in missions as focal points for compatriots</li> <li>• Before they are deployed, inform experts thoroughly about what will be expected of them on mission and about local conditions ("informed consent")</li> <li>• Conduct regular mission visits so seconding authorities can check and learn about the conditions on site, talk to national experts, and listen to grievances</li> </ul>		
CAREER PATH DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide professional career planning advice and support experts in making their way into the middle and upper management of missions</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give experts the possibility to build a career from roster membership</li> <li>• Or promote secondment as a temporary alternative to a domestic career and support experts with reintegration at home</li> </ul>
CONTRACTUAL CONDITIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquire more knowledge about what is important/attractive to national secondees through surveys</li> <li>• Provide competitive conditions</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associate freelancers with the foreign service for the time of mission or make them temporary employees of the secondment authority</li> <li>• Review legislation that limits the time of deployment or the number of contracts in a row</li> </ul>

## 4. INSTITUTIONAL INCENTIVES: CONVINCING NATIONAL AUTHORITIES TO MAKE EXPERTS AVAILABLE

It is not part of the core mandate of line ministries, such as interior ministries or national police services, to contribute to international responsibilities of the state. Their core mandates are related to upholding and protecting public order internally, which they must accomplish with a limited number of employees in service. Simultaneously, the strategic priorities of many civilian CSDP missions in recent years have evolved to require skilled national civil servants to implement their mandates. For example, police officers are needed to support host states of missions in reforming their civilian security sector or combating organized crime. Hence, there are conflicting priorities between fulfilling the core mandate of national police services and making police officers available for a civilian CSDP mission. For line ministries and police authorities, there is often no incentive to provide staff to civilian crisis management missions.

If EU member states want to increase the number of secondments, such conflicting priorities need to be overcome.

### 4.1. Sensitizing Partners for the Purpose through Close Cooperation

At the national level, it is a persistent challenge to motivate line ministries to release their personnel for missions. Often, nominations from line ministries are the result of the interest and proactive engagement of individual candidates rather than the promotion of secondment by the line ministries. Thus, it is important for MFAs to continuously work with line ministries to sensitize them to the issue of secondment.

Regular contact through fixed meeting formats and good personal relationships among counterparts can help diplomats to promote their message. To date, mechanisms for cooperation and coordination among MFAs and the other ministries involved – to talk about not only priorities and procedures in secondment, but also specific contributions – vary considerably. Some member states rely exclusively on informal but almost daily ad hoc contact on a working level; others have formal coordination with regular meetings ranging from weekly to annually. Still others have both formal and informal coordination mechanisms. Several member states have installed new mechanisms for cooperation – such as inter-ministerial working groups – in the compact implementation process or plan to do so. Aim-

ing toward a better understanding of the need for secondments is clearly a success of the compact process. For the member states that said it was less of a problem to motivate line ministries, very regular cooperation and trusting, personal relationships with counterparts in other institutions was a key to success.

### 4.2. Strategies to Incentivize Line Ministries to Second

All but five member states have developed strategies to convince line ministries to release staff for civilian missions or make secondment more attractive to them. They argue that deployments are beneficial for the professional and personal development of staff and that they can gain valuable training experiences. Another argument used is the value secondments add to national reputations abroad. One MFA generally tries to spread a positive culture around secondments, which, they admitted, can be difficult. One member state tries to incentivize candidates from the civil service directly instead of negotiating with the line ministries.

A good practice has been established in Finland. There, civil servants are legally entitled to leave for going on a civilian crisis management mission. Supervisors or line ministries cannot block this. An initiative to also install this leave entitlement for candidates from outside the civil service was not successful. Sweden relies on a similar practice for candidates who apply for a secondment via the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA), a seconding agency. In Sweden, employees of state institutions that do not second into missions themselves have the right to go on leave for a mission and later return to their job. This rule does not, however, apply to civil servants from national authorities that second Swedish nationals themselves, such as the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency or the police.

Ireland has also found good strategies for fostering cooperation with its department of justice and national police service. The Irish experience shows that regular personal contact with counterparts in line ministries can improve understanding for the instrument of secondment. As soon as a new police commissioner was appointed, the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade took the initiative to inform him about the advantages of seconding and the reasons to do so. The resulting understanding at a political level has since helped to foster the willingness to second on a working level. Additionally, Ireland promotes exchange and understanding through

an inter-departmental committee on peacekeeping that meets annually and serves as a point of information and coordination for relevant colleagues from the departments of justice, foreign affairs, and defense as well as from the police and defense forces.

It is also beneficial if the line ministries see reasons themselves that motivate them to release staff, although the general appetite to lose skilled people is low.<sup>9</sup> In two member states, granting civil servants mission leave is used as a strategy to keep them motivated and stay in the service in a time of shortage of skilled personnel on the national labor market. In two other member states, line ministries value broadened skills of mission returnees in topical areas like border management and organized crime that relate to work at the national level. Also, in two member states, line ministries see the prestige resulting from international deployments and get recognition for the good work their secondmentees do in missions. One mentioned that the national MoI sometimes strategically complements the country's bilateral engagement in a crisis area with secondments into international missions such as CSDP.

#### 4.3. Importance of Budgetary Rules for the Willingness to Second

Potentially, budgetary regulations could also be a determinant for line ministries' willingness to second. There are different national regulations in place in this regard. In half of the member states asked, line ministries bear the costs for secondment from their own budgets. In the other countries, the MFA has a dedicated budget line to cover all secondment costs.

Contrary to expectations, in the majority of the member states it is not a determining factor if the line ministries have to pay for secondments themselves. In three member states, the national budget for secondments is generally scarce or there was no indication that future budgetary envelopes could allow for more secondments in the future. Others do not exploit the available budget fully. Problems can arise when line ministries only step in for secondment costs on a case by case basis, when the MFA budget is exploited, or when MFAs and line ministries must plan for envisaged secondments long ahead of time with no flexibility to fill positions that come up at short notice throughout the year.

#### 4.4. Political Guidance for Ministries

Missing political guidance and prioritization can also be an obstacle toward more cooperation on secondments at the national level. They can lead to lengthy negotiations at the working level about single nominations. To make competences and priorities clear, it can be helpful to have documents such as a dedicated strategy for civilian crisis management or a national implementation plan that sets concrete targets for ministries.

In this regard, Sweden has established a good practice. Its several seconding institutions all receive an annual letter from the MFA, which defines their mandate, budget allocation, and secondment priorities including targets per mission. All secondment decisions during the year are still subject to close discussion between the seconding authority and MFA, and there is some flexibility. Yet this practice can help to mitigate tensions or simplify negotiations between different national authorities involved in secondment.

In addition to coordination on the working level, Slovenia set up a format on the minister level between the ministry of defense, MFA, and MoI to discuss contributions to international crisis management operations and missions. The ministers or their deputies meet once or twice per year. This can help provide political guidance and policy coordination as well as settle differences not resolved on the working level.

#### 4.5. Returnees as Role Models for Secondment in their Home Service

A potential raised by many member states, but not yet exploited to the fullest, is how role models can incentivize potential candidates to apply for a civilian mission. Recruitment often seems to function well in line ministries when there are well-known experts who made a career after coming back from missions with positive experiences. These individuals pass on their experiences to colleagues. This fact should make focal points in secondment think about how to systematically use returnees as role models and points of contact to spread the word in civil service. Possibilities are numerous. It could, for example, be worth keeping in contact with civil servants returning from missions in order to pass CfCs on to them for distribution in their networks. Returnees could also be appointed as informal points of contact within their own ministries and to which MFAs could

<sup>9</sup> The majority of interviews was conducted with representatives from MFAs; therefore, they were asked if they could observe any inherent motivation in their national MoIs to release staff for missions.

refer questions and ask about experiences. Or they could be encouraged to provide testimonials in information campaigns and preparatory trainings.

While the Finnish interview partner said that there was still potential in the outreach activities of its MFA, Finland contributes strongly to civilian missions and receives enough applications for vacancies. In the Finnish case, it helps that many national experts in the civil service and beyond have now gone on a mission. Other candidates interested in field experience hear about the opportunity from colleagues, which makes a strong advertisement from the side of the MFA less important. This shows how role models can, from a certain point, make it much easier to find candidates for missions.

#### 4.6. Broadening the Pool of Civil Servants Eligible for Secondment

In many member states, secondment efforts concentrate exclusively on MoIs or staff from just one or two other national authorities. While civilian missions do strongly rely on skilled personnel with qualifications in internal security matters, there are also many other job profiles that need to be filled – for example, in human resources, finance, and political advising. Therefore, many member states have an unused potential to broaden the pool of potential secondees and recruit in other ministries and national agencies.

Many MFAs do not second from their own staff at all or do so in a very limited way. This fact is nota-

**TABLE 2 – OVERVIEW OF EXEMPLARY GOOD PRACTICES AND POTENTIALS IDENTIFIED AT THE INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL**

ISSUE	GOOD PRACTICES/POTENTIALS
SENSITIZING LINE MINISTRIES FOR THE PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular fixed cooperation formats for in-person meetings</li> <li>• Trusting and personal relationships with counterparts in line ministries</li> </ul>
STRATEGIES TO INCENTIVIZE LINE MINISTRIES/MAKE PERSONNEL AVAILABLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight prestige of secondments for the international image of the country, for example the reputation for high-standard policing</li> <li>• Entitle civil servants or employees in public administration to leave for missions without the consent of their supervisor</li> <li>• Foster understanding for secondment at the political level through early contacts to sensitize high ranking supervisors to the instrument</li> <li>• Use temporary mission leave to keep and motivate employees in times of competition for skilled staff on the national labor market</li> <li>• Promote the broadened skills of mission returnees in topical areas such as organized crime that relate to work at the national level</li> </ul>
BROADEN THE POTENTIAL SECONDEE POOL IN CIVIL SERVICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential: Second more personnel from MFAs</li> <li>• Potential: Include additional national authorities in secondment</li> <li>• Strengthen capabilities of available staff, e.g. through French language classes</li> </ul>
POLITICAL ADVISING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formulate goals and targets on the political level to help make negotiations on the working level easier</li> <li>• Supplement cooperation formats on the working level with a high-level political format to provide guidance or resolve disputes</li> </ul>

ble and can have an impact on the willingness of line ministries to release their most qualified employees. It does not strengthen the MFA's position vis-à-vis line ministries. While diplomats cannot fill some of the very specific job profiles in missions, the nature of their profession certainly allows them to relate more easily to the idea of going abroad to foster peace and stability. In addition, diplomats more often possess the language skills that member states have a hard time finding in candidates from other ministries. The promotion of secondment in MFAs could, thus, open a good pool of people. A limited time in an EU mission can help diplomats better understand how peace operations run; they can also learn more about the functioning of the EEAS and gain regional experience. All of which can directly benefit them upon their return in their next position, which, in turn, should be an incentive for MFAs.

Some member states are already trying to reach out to other national ministries and agencies to include them in secondment. For example, other ministries could also provide experts in administration, finance, or human resource management to missions.

Another possibility for broadening the pool of secondees is to strengthen the capacities of the available staff. This is most important in regard to the general shortage of French-speaking experts in many EU member states. Here, Ireland is taking the initiative: currently, its MFA is exploring options to provide French language classes to potential and current secondees with some background in French who could profit from the offer. For this purpose, the MFA has partnered with the French Embassy. While Ireland seconds mostly freelancers, this could also be a potential model to strengthen the capacities of candidates from the civil service in member states.

## 5. POLITICAL INCENTIVES: GAINING NATIONAL SUPPORT FOR STRONGER CONTRIBUTIONS

Political incentives are less tangible than incentives for individuals or line ministries. Moreover, they are difficult to reproduce because they strongly vary among member states and depend on the political and strategic culture in the respective member state.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, the political motivation of a national government is key to supporting an increase in personnel contributions to civilian missions.

### 5.1. Political Considerations to Second

All interview partners underlined the need for political support of civilian CSDP at a national level and their ongoing national efforts to implement the Civilian CSDP Compact. Often, several political reasons for engagement came together:

- Want to be active members of the EU or the international community and carry their share in international missions (six responses)
- Aim to manage crises abroad and promote stability and peace in mission areas (three)
- The nature of civilian missions aligns with their foreign policy tradition and strategic culture, as well as with public opinion in the country (three).
- Aim to train their own staff and provide them experiences in crisis management, also at the national level (two)
- Want to contribute with the added value of their national capabilities to the operations and use their specific niche expertise for the common cause (two)
- Other reasons include wanting to provide for one's own security and to contribute to a whole-of-government approach to international crises by participating in civilian CSDP missions.

Geographical proximity to the operating areas of missions was also an important reason for four member states to send staff. This was especially mentioned by member states that focus their contributions on missions in the EU's eastern neighborhood. A strong geographical focus can, however, undermine burden sharing among member states if too many countries only focus their contributions on a few missions. Therefore, it is especially positive that several member states signaled that they are working with decision-makers to widen the geographical scope of their contributions. To support

<sup>10</sup> For further reading: Carina Böttcher and Marie Wolf, "Divided in Diversity. Overcoming Europe's Incoherence in National Approaches to Civilian CSDP," DGAP Analysis, June 2019: <[https://dgap.org/sites/default/files/article\\_pdfs/2019-03-dgapanalyse.pdf](https://dgap.org/sites/default/files/article_pdfs/2019-03-dgapanalyse.pdf)> (accessed May 27, 2020).

these efforts, it could be highly useful to provide them with success stories about the achievements of current and previous missions. This could be a first concrete target for the current effort among the EEAS and EU member states to strengthen strategic communication to different target audiences.

### 5.2. Information Gain through Secondment

An important incentive that is largely shared by EU member states (ten responses) is the information gain from the field through secondments that are allowed within the legal framework.<sup>11</sup> The formats and regularity in which sending states are in contact with national secondees for the purpose of gaining information varies considerably: from ad hoc contact depending on position and mission to at least quarterly regular contact through consultations and formal reporting. Some member states also have a formal onboarding process and a debriefing after the assignment concludes. Others visit missions regularly to talk to national staff and get an impression of their working conditions and the situation in the country.

The reasons why member states survey secondees vary. In many cases, the reporting by secondees is a measure of DoC. Others find information from secondees important when they are considering mandate extensions and changes to mandates or when deciding which vacant positions to prioritize in a new CfC. In some cases, reporting lines for civil servants in missions are not with the MFA but with their home ministry. In these cases, it can also be interesting for line ministries to gain general information from crisis areas on issues such as border management, organized crime, and the fight against terrorism.

### 5.3. Parliamentary Oversight

Potentially, parliamentary scrutiny could also serve as a political incentive for a national government to provide an adequate number of staff to civilian CSDP missions. Stronger government efforts can especially be motivated if there is a national strategy or fixed annual targets for secondments by which the parliament can measure national engagement. Also, because parliamentarians usually decide on the budget for secondments, it can be important to involve them in topical issues that concern civilian missions throughout the year. A lack of understanding for the cause will make it harder to argue for a budget increase in the secondment envelope. The representatives of three member states stated that, in their

national system, the budget envelope can be a limiting factor for secondment or does not allow for an increase in numbers. For this reason, it is important to secure support for and a good understanding of civilian crisis management among parliamentarians.

Six member states have varying forms of parliamentary oversight in place. In one member state, individual secondments are authorized through a parliamentary committee decision. In two member states, parliament decides on contributions to new missions (although in one of them, only for missions with executive mandates). In two others, parliamentarians decide on the maximum number of annual secondments into CSDP missions. In two member states, the government reports annually on plans and targets, which are discussed and evaluated in parliament. In addition, representatives from three member states responded that their MFA can be invited to parliamentary briefings on secondments into civilian missions or that he or she answers written parliamentary questions occasionally.

In Germany's parliament, the Sub-committee for Civilian Crisis Prevention regularly questions the government on its accomplishments toward implementation of its 2017 Strategy "Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace."<sup>12</sup> In these cases, representatives from the involved ministries issue statements and get questioned in the session. Parliamentarians use the sub-committee not only to question government decisions, but also to gain information for the work of their party, e.g. in the form of formal inquiries that they can address to ministries.

In the Netherlands, the MFA has made it a practice to draft a sort of mandate decision and inform parliament when seconding into a civilian mission. The mandate contains a maximum number of experts that the government wants to second to the mission. Failure to meet the targets could, therefore, result in questions from parliamentarians.

### 5.4. Recruitment Capacities on the National Level

Several member state representatives pointed toward limited working capacities on civilian CSDP at the national level, which make it difficult to improve and extend recruitment and selection processes. Thus, a political commitment to increase the number of secondments must be backed by sufficient and professionalized dedicated staff, at best human resource

<sup>11</sup> For the time of their assignments, seconded experts have to abide by the rules of the mission, which include restrictions on the sharing of information.

<sup>12</sup> Federal Government of Germany, "Strategy on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace," September 2017: <<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/blob/1214246/057f794cd3593763ea556897972574fd/preventing-crisis-data.pdf>> (accessed July 9, 2020).

experts. The competent national entity must not only advertise at the political level for more secondments, but also for sufficient own capacities to process the secondments. For example, for the quality of candidates forwarded to the EEAS, it can be very helpful if national recruitment managers have the chance to visit missions, be in touch with their HR department, and learn more about the needs in the field.

## 6. EU SUPPORT TO MEMBER STATES

While it is important to strengthen national procedures and capacities in member states, an increase in secondment numbers cannot happen without work in EU institutions, especially the EEAS.

**TABLE 3 – OVERVIEW OF EXEMPLARY GOOD PRACTICES AND POTENTIALS IDENTIFIED AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL**

ISSUE	GOOD PRACTICES/POTENTIALS
POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS TO SECOND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential: Widen the geographical scope of own engagement, e.g. as a consequence of strategic interests</li> <li>• Use strategic communication (e.g. relating mission achievements) to promote more secondment vis-à-vis political decision-makers</li> <li>• Make use of legally permitted information gain from secondment as an argument in support of stronger engagement in political discussions</li> </ul>
PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve parliament in not only budget negotiations, but also topical discussions on civilian CSDP</li> <li>• Make it a practice to let parliament discuss/decide contributions to civilian missions</li> </ul>
CAPACITIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL IN SUPPORT OF SECONDMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install sufficient and dedicated/professional staff capacities for the recruitment of secondees</li> <li>• Constantly learn and improve the system</li> <li>• Give national HR staff the opportunity to get in touch with missions to learn which candidates to look for</li> </ul>

### 6.1 Financial Incentives from the EU Budget

In the negotiations leading to the agreement of the compact, some EU member states raised the idea of financial incentives from the EU's CFSP budget. While it was unclear exactly which measures were meant, the general idea was to support member states in providing capabilities and potentially compensating them for the absence of a deployed expert.

In the Civilian CSDP Compact, the question of incentives was included in a rather abstract formulation that can comprise a variety of different measures:

"15. [...] Invite the High Representative and the Commission to explore, in full respect of their respective mandates and budgets, concrete incentives to support Member States in their capability development including by considering synergies with or contributions from relevant EU instruments in addition to the CFSP budget."<sup>13</sup>

Technically, it is possible to install new budget lines in the CFSP budget that aim to incentivize more secondments. But important questions have to be answered before the EU Commission can act:

**1. Which measure should be financed and does the envisaged measure really lead to an increased number of secondments?** A number of financial measures are possible: Should the travel costs for seconded experts be financed from the CFSP budget? Should pre-deployment training for experts be paid? Should the CFSP budget allow missions to pay higher per diems to experts? Should seconding authorities receive money to recruit a substitute for the expert on mission? While no agreement has been reached on any particular measure so far, they should each be considered according to their effectiveness in increasing the number of secondments. This includes awareness of who is incentivized by the measure.

**2. Are member states willing to increase the CFSP budget accordingly?** If the EU Commission should create a new budget line, the CFSP budget must be increased. Otherwise, the measure would come at the expense of the flexibility to react to unforeseen events. Financial incentives via the CFSP budget would constitute a redistribution of money: in any case, the additional money would have to come from member states. Those who have sufficient national budgets at their disposal would have to be interested

in stronger burden sharing among all member states to support this. In order to sustain motivation and pay for the measure, it must be clear that it will really lead to higher secondment in those countries that currently contribute smaller numbers.

One year after the compact was signed, the positions of EU member states on the possibility of financial incentives differ considerably. Some of the member states present when the notion was first written down recall that, even then, there was barely a vague common understanding of what an incentive could be. Since that time, the discussion has not been taken forward, resulting in different ideas about the possible measures and the usefulness of such incentives.

Only two member states signaled general support for installing financial incentives for secondment from the EU budget. Four member states questioned different aspects of the concept or did not have a fixed position but deemed support possible under certain conditions. Their support was either tied to certain measures or to whether financial incentives could be effective in increasing secondments. Representatives from member states that already contribute a larger share of personnel and have sufficient budgets were often rather skeptical. Five member states did not have a national position on the question yet but indicated a rather negative tendency. The non-existent national position of these countries indicates that they do not attach a high relevance to the overall issue.

One consideration mentioned among the more skeptical member states was a low appetite for an increase in the EU budget (two responses). Another counterargument raised was that financial payments as compensation for secondments would not be helpful to improve burden sharing in civilian CSDP (two). While secondments are intended to relieve the EU budget, this would do the opposite. One member state pointed out that such measures could decrease member states' buy-in through secondments. In addition, the question of impact on the quality of the secondees was raised. Two questioned if financial incentives could be effective at all.

Three member states that denied an effect on their own national capacities highlighted they would listen to the arguments of others. If it would help other

<sup>13</sup> See 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," November 19, 2018, p. 8: <<http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14305-2018-INIT/en/pdf>> (accessed July 9, 2020).

member states to increase their secondments, they would be open for discussions.

Only a few member states voiced ideas about what exactly could constitute concrete financial measures in detail. Four pointed out that financial support for training measures from the CFSP budget could improve their capacity to second. Smaller member states that do not possess own training capacities often search for training opportunities for their candidates, which can be limited in the surrounding countries. Providing more training opportunities at a central place and financing them could, therefore, help these countries. Other ideas raised were travel costs, a lump sum payment for the first installment of secondees, equipment costs, administrative costs, or an increase in the daily allowance.

While many EU member states are waiting for proposals by the EU Commission, the commission cannot run cost simulations for a variety of measures without an indication of what member states might be willing to support. Generally, it will be difficult to find a common position on financial incentives among member states. When weighing potential effects and financial implications, financing additional training opportunities from the CFSP budget seems to be the most promising idea that was brought up. Member states could take this idea as a starting point for further discussions in Brussels. Those states that think such measures would help them increase their secondment capacity should bring convincing numbers and arguments into the discussion. As a result, member states could ask the European Commission's Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), which administers the budget for CSDP missions, to provide them with a cost simulation as a basis upon which to make a decision.

### 6.2 Other Support Measures Desired by EU Member States

Moreover, member states expect reform of the selection procedure in the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability in the EEAS (CPCC) and demand more training activities and guidance.

The selection processes can be made more transparent, for example through feedback to member states after non-selection of candidates. Meanwhile, line ministries find it hard to understand the procedures. Especially for candidates from the civil service, longer application deadlines are necessary. To increase

efficiency, both on the national level and in the EEAS, suitable candidates who rank second or third in a selection process could be shortlisted for similar positions without having to undergo the whole procedure again. Also, it could be useful for member states' budgetary and strategic planning to know a longer time in advance which positions will become vacant in the missions. In response to some of the demands, the CPCC has already initiated a review of the recruitment and selection procedures and consulted member states. Another suggestion – especially regarding the recruitment of police officers for missions – is that the EU and UN should try to better synchronize the catalogues of requirements, for example in the area of necessary trainings. Because the same candidates could be eligible for more missions, this could lead to an increase of suitable candidates in the national ministries.

There is a demand for EU services to provide for Training of Trainers (ToT) courses for national preparatory training for missions. Another wish in this regard is training to improve national preparation of candidates to increase their chances in the selection process.

Furthermore, it could prove very useful if EEAS officials would travel to capitals to support and monitor the implementation of the compact. A similar effort was already carried out in the preparation of the 2018 Civilian Capability Development Plan.<sup>14</sup> This time, efforts should also concentrate on supporting the dialogue with national actors in the justice and home affairs sectors.

<sup>14</sup> The Civilian Capability Development Plan of September 2018 is not publicly accessible; it was disseminated to member states.

## 7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

So far, while most member states are not thinking in a targeted way about incentives, most of them are working to remove the strongest obstacles for secondment. Obstacles lie on all different levels and vary widely in different national systems. Because the systems are so different, there is naturally not only one incentive or recommendation that can help all member states to increase their secondment capacity. Consequently, talking foremost about financial incentives is not enough.

Some of the long-standing capability gaps can only be closed in the mid- to longer term through the adoption of more forward-looking capability planning at the national level. Although this is direly needed, initial results would take time. Meanwhile, recruiting must become more targeted and professionalized, and incentives should be used to attract skilled individuals.

There is still a lot of unused potential in the systematic use of incentives in civilian CSDP and the review of recruitment and selection procedures. Many lessons can be learned from each other. Therefore, a more formalized framework for exchanging good practices on secondment among member states is strongly needed. This process should also include actors from justice and home affairs at national and EU levels, as well as the Center of Excellence for civilian crisis management.

Despite the very different problems and obstacles, there are some entry points for continuing work on a further process:

### **Individual Level: Collect Data on Incentives**

There is no reliable data on why candidates choose to do a secondment and which conditions they find attractive or repelling. Only through stronger evidence collected by the member states themselves, an EU institution, or even an independent agent can we better learn which incentives work. This should include collecting data and analyzing feedback from candidates who have resigned from a mission, or who were interested but decided against going on mission. First, the results could be used to improve national processes and incentives. Going further, better data could enable member states to tailor incentives to different groups of secondees based on their level of experience or thematic expertise, or to increase the share of women.

The greatest potential on the individual level is working with role models and word of mouth. EU member states should more strongly explore and exploit strategies to use these tools for recruitment.

### **Institutional Level: Sensitize Partners and Broaden the Pool**

At the institutional level, close inter-ministerial coordination and cooperation on a regular basis seems to be the key to fostering understanding for the relevance of civilian missions in line ministries. It is, therefore, very important that many member states have set up regular cooperation formats in the course of compact implementation – although these formats should be institutionalized beyond the time of its completion. It is also useful to initiate talks at both the political and working levels. The initial efforts in the compact process to better include line ministries in talks on civilian CSDP on the EU level are important. Many MFAs can still improve their strategies in inter-ministerial cooperation.

Member states must include international responsibilities more strongly into their longer-term strategic planning when it comes to personnel. This means recruiting more police than needed at the national level, as international missions will continue to require contributions from member states. Also, it is necessary to prepare a limited number of civil servants in a more targeted way for missions abroad, for example through voluntary French language classes.

### **Political Level: Making Civilian CSDP More Visible**

A sufficient budget, suitable budgetary regulations to ensure secondment as a flexible instrument, the willingness to diversify national contributions geographically, and a solid legislative framework are prerequisites for all member states to adequately contribute to civilian missions. MFAs should, therefore, seize opportunities to make civilian missions and secondment more visible at the cabinet level, in parliaments, and with individual decision-makers by using strategic communication measures. Also, the political level can help to mitigate conflicting priorities either before they arise through strategies and targets or afterwards through settlements.

With the support of political decision-makers, member states should also work to (further) improve and professionalize their recruitment. Sufficient human resource capacities in member states' MFAs or seconding institutions can help enable more secondments. Also, for the successful selection of candidates and contributions that are needed in missions,

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it is important to keep contact with the missions and know their needs (e.g. through regular consultation or visits with mission HR). Furthermore, with enough and professional HR staff on the national level, it is possible to better prepare suitable candidates and maintain regular contact with national experts on mission.

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