1. Gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament

The current process to intensify the integration of gender dimension into the parliamentary work of the European Parliament was launched in the resolution of 13 March 2003 on "Gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament", based on the own-initiative report by the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (Rapporteur Lissy Gröner, PSE). In that resolution, Parliament committed itself to adopt and implement a policy for gender mainstreaming.¹

The agreed plan included various elements, but the main goals were (1) the setting up a High-level Group on Gender Equality; (2) mainstreaming gender in the work of the parliamentary committees and delegations; (3) drafting an annual report on gender mainstreaming in the EP committees' and delegations' work (prepared by the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality); (4) appointing a Member from each of the parliamentary committees (the Chair or a Vice-chair) to act as the committee representative responsible for implementing gender mainstreaming in the work of each committee/delegation; (5) prioritising policy questions or policy areas where gender mainstreaming could be especially relevant.

On 25 February 2004, the Bureau of the European Parliament adopted a decision establishing the High-Level Group on Gender Equality. In October 2005 the High-Level Group adopted a formative document on "Establishment of a process for the gender mainstreaming of committee work". Two years later, on 12 November 2007, the Bureau modified the mandate and title of the High-Level Group, now called High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity. The High-Level Group has a role to encourage gender mainstreaming across Parliament's activities (both in process and in policies), and to integrate the gender dimension in the work of parliamentary committees.²

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality has been designated as the lead-committee for the implementation and further development of gender mainstreaming in all policy sectors. The Committee has invited the vice-chairmen in charge of the gender mainstreaming approach within each committee to attend exchanges of views with Members of the committee responsible. All the parliamentary committees were called upon to respond to a questionnaire comprising four main parts: (1) the scope of the committee responsible; (2) the gender equality strategy and short and long-term objectives to be achieved; (3)

¹ P5_TA(2003)0098
² The Group is currently composed as follows: Chairwoman Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (Vice-President of the European Parliament), Members Luisa Morgantini (Vice-President of the European Parliament); Anna Záborská (Chair of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality); Gerardo Galeote (Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairmen); Astrid Lulling (Quaestor); Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez and Mario Mauro (Vice-Presidents of the European Parliament in charge of staff policy); Raimon Obiols i Germà (Chair of the Conference of Delegation Chairmen).
implementation of the equality principle in the context of the committees' work, and (4) expert assessment of equality between men and women, and consultation and cooperation between the committee responsible and other departments inside and outside Parliament.

In order to have a more efficient evaluation of the progress realised, the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality decided at the early stage to adopt a report every two years on the progress in this area. It also produced a "Working Document on the integrated approach to equality between men and women in the work of the committees" (September 2006), which was the first Parliament document devoted to a specific assessment of the implementation of the integrated approach to equality between men and women in the political work of Parliament's committees.3

On 17 January 2007 the European Parliament adopted a resolution on "Equality between men and women in the committees’ work: Gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament", after a preparatory work started in October 2005 (Rapporteur: Anna Záborská, EPP-ED).4 This resolution encompassed a report trying to assess the incorporation of gender dimension in the work of the EP. In February 2008 the Chairman of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality Anna Záborská convened the Chairs and the Vice-Chairs of the committees responsible for implementing gender mainstreaming in the work of their respective committee to start the preparation for the next report on gender mainstreaming. The future report will assess as well as highlight the way in which each committee strives to implement gender mainstreaming in the context of its powers and responsibilities.

2. ESDP and Gender Mainstreaming

Six years after the adoption of the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325, there has been a dramatic bid by the EU to catch up as demonstrated by an explosion of EU related literature on gender mainstreaming in ESDP and Peacebuilding. This has included high level initiatives by the German, Portuguese, Slovenian and now more recently the French Presidency. Key EU reference documents now exist including, inter alia:

- June 2006 European Parliament Resolution on Women in armed conflicts and their role in post-conflict reconstruction" (2005/2215(INI)) and November 2006 European Parliament Resolution on "Women in International Politics" (2006/2057(INI)),


- March 2007, the European Commission issues a Communication entitled "Gender equality and women empowerment in development"6

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3 PE 378.717v01-00.  
April 2008. the Slovenian Presidency commissioned a study entitled "Enhancing the EU response to women and armed conflict with particular reference to Development Policy".\(^7\)

June 2008 Joint German, Portuguese and Slovenian Presidency initiative produces a "Handbook on Human Rights and Gender mainstreaming"\(^8\).

June 2008 European Commission sponsored report entitled "Improving EU Responses to Gender and Peacebuilding".\(^9\)

October 2008 conference (and background studies) organised by the French Presidency, UNIFEM and the European Commission and entitled "From Commitment to Action – The EU Delivering to Women in Conflict and Post-Conflict. Implementing SCR 1325 and 1820 in EU missions: Improving immediate and long-term security for women".\(^10\)

The combination of all this reflection at the EU level is a rich raft of recommendations for improving the mainstreaming and implementation of gender issues in ESDP and Peacebuilding.

Whilst there is a veritable oasis of political reflection and practical recommendations on improving gender mainstreaming at the conceptual, decision-making, implementation, operational, and lessons learned levels; there remains however a serious problem in systematic implementation of these ideas and recommendations in ESDP operations and Peacebuilding activities. There is also an almost obsessive discourse on check-lists and counting the number of women in ESDP operations (such as in presentation to SEDE by Council officials) and no focus upon understanding the socio-economic context where ESDP missions are deployed (i.e. areas of conflict) and gender-sensitive concerns in implementing operations/programmes.

A recent study commissioned by the French Presidency, UNIFEM and the Commission highlights that whilst a breakthrough has been made with the appointment of Gender Advisers to ESDP operations, nevertheless:

"The main challenges that emerged were: the lack of a concrete EU gender policy, particularly a policy tailored to address security aspects; a lack of understanding gender and gender awareness and/or an unwillingness to consider its importance; and a lack of pre-deployment training on gender. There also remains a paucity of gender balance in missions at all levels."

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\(^8\) See: [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/hr/news144.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/hr/news144.pdf)

\(^9\) Barns, K & Lyytikainen, M., "Improving EU Responses to Gender and Peacebuilding", Initiative for Peacebuilding, International Alert, June 2008

Until a general understanding of a gender dimension and an understanding of translating a gender dimension to the operational theatre (as there is always a gender dimension) is achieved across all staff and personnel, implementation of UNSCR 1325 and relevant Council documents (such as the Checklist on implementing UNSCR 1325 in ESDP and Council Conclusions on gender mainstreaming) will not be achieved.\textsuperscript{11}

Similarly experts have identified the same problem in findings on gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding activities, for example:

"Real progress in integrating gender into peacebuilding policy is less a question of "new ideas" and operational guidance , and more a question of genuine attention, prioritisation and demonstrable political will at all levels". Monitoring and accountability mechanism must be a priority for showing improvements in the response of the EC."\textsuperscript{12}

There is quite clearly a need for more substantial progress to move beyond the creation of policy documents, check-lists and head-counting to mainstreaming a gender aware and sensitive approach into the security and defence culture of ESDP decision making and operations. Whilst many of these activities will help in moving towards a more gender sensitivity in ESDP, the European Parliament is well placed to provide the political awareness and direct the debate to areas where this gender sensitive approach can become a natural reflex in our ESDP decision making and operations rather than a "mechanical task" to do before an operation begins. There is also a role for the European Parliament to play in helping to join up the various EU instruments for crisis management and Peacebuilding e.g. by ensuring an ESDP operation is designed consistently with the overall coherence of the EU's approach and activities in the country of operation (see on problem of ESDP coherence with overall EU approach to a country and region see Policy Department Notes on EUFOR RD Congo and EU SSR Guinea Bissau).

3. European Parliament and Gender Mainstreaming in ESDP

The European Parliament already highlighted the importance of women and armed conflict in a resolution adopted in 2000\textsuperscript{13} and has followed this up with a dedicated Committee (FEMM) as well as in appointing gender focal points in all relevant committees. The security and defence aspects have been followed by the Sub-Committee on Security and Defence (SEDE) under the guidance of its Vice-President Ana Gomes. SEDE has participated in a pilot project leading to the adoption, by its Enlarged Bureau on 23 March 2008, of an Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming. SEDE pursues its gender action plan by ensuring the

\textsuperscript{11} Executive Summary of the Report on ESDP missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), authors: Giji Gya, Charlotte Isaksson and Marta Martinelli, UNIFEM, October 2008 see: http://www.unifem.sk/index.cfm?Module=articles&Page=ArticleShow&ArticleID=93

\textsuperscript{12} Barnes, K & Lyytikainen, M., "Improving EU Responses to Gender and Peacebuilding", Initiatives for Peacebuilding, European Commission, June 2008

\textsuperscript{13} Resolution of the European Parliament on "Participation of women in peaceful conflict resolution" (2000/2025(INI))
relevant issues remain high on the Sub-Committees agenda and in discussions with Presidency, Council Secretariat and operation commanders and force commanders and troops in the field. The main points of the action plan are set out in the following two paragraphs:

The Subcommittee on Security and Defence will mainstream gender perspective into its work as follows:

- It will continue to actively promote gender equality in its work whenever possible.
- It will endeavour to promote and incorporate relevant gender issues in its reports and opinions.
- It will continue to raise the issues in exchanges of views with invited speakers as well as during its delegations.

The Subcommittee will focus its activities as regards the scrutiny of gender issues in ESDP as follows:

- It will invite regularly the staff responsible in the Council Secretariat or the EU Presidency for the gender perspective in ESDP (at least once per EU Presidency), in order to report on progress in the field.
- It will ensure that the subject is addressed during its relevant future delegations, esp. those sent to monitor ESDP operations. It should include opportunities to debate gender issues with the relevant interlocutors.  

Recommendations

Whilst there has been a lot of energy spent on articulating an EU approach to gender mainstreaming, this has not been transformed into a genuine gender-sensitive approach to the development, deployment and lessons learned process for ESDP. The same weakness can be extended to the design, development, implementation lessons learned for peacebuilding programmes. The European Parliament could draw attention to this challenge and encourage a strategic debate to ensure gender mainstreaming is an essential part of decision making and policy implementation (including accountability and monitoring mechanisms) for ESDP and peacebuilding.

Experts have produced a raft of recommendations for taking forward such a debate and ensuring gender-sensitive approach is embedded in ESDP decision making, deployment and lessons learned processes. A short list of priorities could be quickly identified by

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14 Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan Subcommittee on Security and Defence, Presented by Ana Gomes (SEDE Vice-chairwoman responsible for Gender Mainstreaming), Adopted on 19 March 2007 by the SEDE Enlarged Bureau.
bringing together the Rapporteur for AFET and the SEDE Focal point for gender mainstreaming.

4. Additional Recommendations requested by AFET Secretariat on behalf of the Rapporteur:

4.1. Conceptual and Decision-making - pre-deployment phase:

Noting the need for more substantial progress to move beyond the creation of policy documents, check-lists and head-counting to mainstreaming a gender aware and sensitive approach into the security and defence culture of ESDP decision making and operations.

Noting that much effort is under way to mainstream a gender-sensitive approach into the security and defence culture of ESDP including through developing the quantitative dimension of gender mainstreaming in ESDP (such as through questionnaires, development of check-lists, counting the number of men and women in ESDP operations etc), however stresses the need to develop the qualitative conceptual framework for understanding the socio-economic context where ESDP missions are deployed (i.e. areas of conflict) and gender-sensitive concerns in implementing operations/programmes,

Calls therefore for the need to include a gender dimension in risk assessments and fact-finding missions carried out to accompany the decision-making for an ESDP operation and the development of planning phases including the Concept of Operations;

4.2. Implementation and coherence

Noting the need for greater coherence between ESDP crisis management operations and Peacebuilding in external relations more generally;

calls for a review of the coherence and continuity in gender mainstreaming approaches, activities and programmes under ESDP and the European Commission's external instruments (in particular Instrument for Stability, European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument, and Development Cooperation Instrument) at the mid-term review of the financial perspectives;

following the outcome of such a review calls for steps to be taken to reinforce the coherence and continuity of gender mainstreaming between ESDP and other external relations polices and instruments including if necessary the appointment of a double-hatted Gender Mainstreaming Coordinator for ESDP/External Relations, a budget line for gender mainstreaming in ESDP and External Relations and a monitoring and accountability mechanisms (including 6 monthly implementation reports from the coordinator) which includes regular reporting to the European Parliament,
4. 3. Operational phase
Noting that a breakthrough has been made with the appointment of Gender Advisers to ESDP operations, nevertheless highlights that key challenges remain including inter alia the extension of gender advisers from the Operational Headquarters to the theatre of operations (including ESDP Force Headquarters), addressing the absence of a concrete EU gender policy and one that is tailored to address security contexts, and addressing a general lack of understanding on gender and gender-sensitive approaches to conflict and crisis management missions;

Calls therefore for the development of an EU gender policy tailored to security and conflict specific contexts and including monitoring and accountability mechanisms at all levels;

Calls for the provision of pre-deployment training on gender-sensitive approaches to conflict for all civilian and military personnel at Headquarters and in the theatre of operations.

Calls for an adequate number of gender advisers to be deployed at all levels (headquarters and theatre) for each ESDP operation and the provision of adequate financial resources (incl. provision of common costs under the Athena Mechanism for Military missions and under the CFSP budget for Civilian Missions) to ensure flexible responses to local needs;

4.4. Lessons learned phases
Noting that a breakthrough has been made with the appointment of Gender Advisers to ESDP operations, nevertheless highlights that key challenges remain including inter alia addressing the absence a concrete EU gender policy and one that is tailored to address security contexts and addressing a general lack of understanding on gender and gender-sensitive approaches to conflict and crisis management missions;

Calls therefore for the development of an EU gender policy tailored to security and conflict specific contexts and including monitoring and accountability mechanisms at all levels;

Calls for the provision of pre-deployment training on gender-sensitive approaches to conflict for all civilian and military personnel at Headquarters and in the theatre of operations.

Calls for gender mainstreaming lessons learned (including the outcomes of consultations with local organisations) to be integral to all ESDP lessons learned exercises and for a presentation on the results to the European Parliament's relevant committees.

4.5. European Parliament:
Having regard to the European Parliament's scrutiny of ESDP including budgetary control of ESDP Civilian Crisis Management Missions and the Commission's external relations instruments such as set out in the relevant articles of the Treaty on European Union, and agreed inter-institutional agreements between the Council Commission and European Parliament and as pursued through the relevant Committees and articulated in reports such
as the Annual Report on CFSP, the Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy and ESDP and through the adoption of the Annual Budget of the European Union;

Reiterating that the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee and its Subcommittee on Security and Defence have adopted gender focal points and are committed to supporting the development of gender mainstreaming in the work of the committee and in ESDP and external relations of the European Union;

Noting the need for greater coherence between ESDP crisis management operations and Peacebuilding in external relations more generally; calls for a review of the coherence and continuity in gender mainstreaming approaches, activities and programmes under ESDP and the European Commission's external instruments (in particular Instrument for Stability, European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument, and Development Cooperation Instrument) at the mid-term review of the financial perspectives;

Calls for steps to be taken to reinforce the coherence and continuity of gender mainstreaming between ESDP and other external relations policies and instruments including if necessary the appointment of a double-hatted Gender Mainstreaming Coordinator for ESDP/External Relations, a budget line for gender mainstreaming in ESDP and External Relations and a monitoring and accountability mechanisms (including 6 monthly implementation reports from the coordinator) which includes regular reporting to the European Parliament,

Calls for gender mainstreaming lessons learned (including the outcomes of consultations with local organisations) to be integral to all ESDP lessons learned exercises and for a presentation on the results to the European Parliament's relevant committees;

Calls for the need to operationalise lessons learned with inclusion of gender issues in pre-deployment fact finding missions and inclusion of gender issues in key operational documents such as the OPLAN;
Calls on the Council and Commission to present proposals to the European Parliament for a training programme for pre-deployment training of all civilian and military personnel (at HQ and theatre level) in gender-sensitive approach to conflict and crisis management;

Calls on the Council to present its procedures to the European Parliament for including gender-sensitive approaches to its risk analysis and fact-finding missions before ESDP missions are deployed and into its lessons learned exercises following the completion of the mission;