



Evaluation of EU Support for Security Sector Reform in Enlargement and Neighbourhood Countries (2010-2016)

Executive Summary Final Report

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Evaluation carried out on behalf of the European Commission

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The authors accept sole responsibility for this report, drawn up on behalf of the Commission of the European Union. The report does not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission

Executive Summary

The evaluation of **EU Support for Security Sector Reform in Enlargement and Neighbourhood Countries (2010-2016)** was conducted for DG NEAR/the European Commission (EC) to help strengthen democratic accountability and transparency and improve policy and practice through evidence-based learning. The evaluation's primary purpose has been to provide an ex-post assessment of the performance (*relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence, complementarity and coordination, impact, sustainability and EU value added*) of EU support (political and policy dialogue and financial assistance) to security sector reform (SSR) in the Enlargement and Neighbourhood beneficiaries¹ between 2010-2016, on the basis of the 2006 EU policy framework on SSR.²

The evaluation covered the following thematic areas of SSR: 1) democratic oversight and accountability; 2) defence reform; 3) intelligence and security service reform; 4) integrated border management; 5) police reform; 6) justice reform; 7) prison reform; 8) private security companies; 9) civil society and 10) preventing violent extremism/countering violent extremism/counter-terrorism. The areas of transitional justice and humanitarian mine action were outside the scope of the evaluation.

The evaluation methodology consisted of a comprehensive data collection and analysis approach comprising a desk review of available EU SSR policy documents and related evaluations; a mapping exercise analysing a portfolio of 1,996 EC-financed contracts and TAIEX events (of which 1,189 are EC-financed contracts and 807 are TAIEX events³), and 6 CSDP missions/operations⁴; a detailed review of documents for 39 selected interventions covering the 10 thematic SSR areas; interviews with relevant stakeholders, including EU institutions, EU Delegations/Offices and NATO staff, as well as beneficiaries, civil society, implementing partners and other international actors carried out during field missions in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Serbia, Turkey, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine*.

The evaluation findings confirm that the EU achieved positive effects through its promotion of EU values and interests in the Enlargement and Neighbourhood regions and, in particular, through its support of SSR between 2010 and 2016, notably:

- integration of security sector reform areas into national and regional strategies, action plans and programming tools;
- the use of political and policy dialogue to encourage beneficiary political support for security sector/system reforms, especially in the context of pre-accession negotiations and for beneficiaries with association agreements;

¹ The IPA beneficiaries are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey. The ENI partners are Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Republic of Moldova, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine.

² Council of the European Union, Draft Council conclusions on a Policy Framework for Security Sector Reform, Document 9967/06, 6 June 2006. <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?!=EN&f=ST%209967%202006%20INIT>.

³ https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/tenders/taix_en

⁴ https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/431/common-security-and-defence-policy-csdp_en

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

* This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

- increased achievement of EU SSR intervention outputs;
- improved procedural compliance by Enlargement and Neighbourhood East beneficiaries, such as changes in legislation or the development of sector strategies;
- greater conformity in a number of beneficiaries with respect to higher standards of human rights in the judiciary and security sectors;
- some sustainable results attributable to EU support, such as in visa liberalisation and border management;
- value added of EU support recognised in the SSR areas of rule of law and good governance, human rights protection, integrated border management, prison reform, police reform; and
- existence and utilisation of coordination mechanisms, such as EU Heads of Mission meetings, donor mapping, sector specific working group meetings and joint programming.

The challenge for the EU now is to build upon what has been achieved so that it can further improve its support of SSR by linking policy and instruments together in more coherent, coordinated, and complementary ways. In doing so, the scope of its ambitions to extend the respect for human rights, democracy, the rule of law, and the principles of good governance can be more effectively realised.

To that end, the evaluation has drawn conclusions and identified 16 policy recommendations in four key areas of particular relevance to the EU's engagement in SSR in the Enlargement and Neighbourhood regions: 1) enhancing the EU's Role as a strategic actor; 2) strengthening national ownership; 3) improving the effectiveness of funding modalities; and 4) achieving greater results.

Enhancing the EU's role as a strategic actor

Recommendation 1: The EU should review the existing SSR portfolios and needs in each IPA and ENP beneficiary. This assessment should form the basis of the development of an EU SSR strategic approach towards the beneficiary in question. The EU strategic approach to SSR for each beneficiary should: 1) provide a strategic vision for coupling technical and political aspects of reform so that the synergies between political dialogue and technical assistance are capitalised on. This includes synergies between bilateral and regional support, between EU Delegations/Offices and CSDP missions/operations and between EU support and Member State support; 2) draw on the principles of the 2016 Joint Communication on an EU-wide strategic framework for SSR as well as relevant IPA and ENI policy and programming documents; 3) define common SSR objectives to be achieved in each beneficiary and how EU support would help achieve those objectives; 4) be grounded in national ownership; 5) identify key challenges on the part of beneficiaries and the EU itself, including EU Member States (MS); and 6) indicate how such challenges to the achievement of the EU's strategic objectives could be overcome. The EEAS and Commission should utilise the inter-service SSR task force to determine the most efficient and effective way forward of implementing this recommendation, such as utilising the new Security Sector Governance Facility.⁵

⁵For information on the Security Sector Governance Facility, see <https://issat.dcaf.ch/Learn/SSR-in-Practice/Countries-Regions/European-Union/Delivering-the-European-Union-Security-Sector-Governance-Facility>.

Recommendation 2: The inter-service SSR task force should ensure that regular monitoring and evaluation is conducted on the uptake/implementation of the EU SSR strategic approach in beneficiaries where SSR is a priority area of engagement.

Recommendation 3: The inter-service SSR task force should develop guidelines and provide additional training to EU Delegations/Offices about how to operationalise the 2016 Joint Communication on an EU-wide strategic framework for SSR in their SSR programming and implementation to ensure momentum and positive results, while taking into account the specificities of the accession process in the Enlargement region.

Strengthening national ownership

Recommendation 4: To address one of the major risks to EU support for SSR – insufficient national political commitment – and to promote national ownership, the EU should identify ways of strengthening synergies between political dialogue intended to build commitment to reforms, on the one hand, and EU financial and technical assistance, on the other. This process would both draw on and reinforce the development and implementation of coordination matrices foreseen in the 2016 EU-wide strategic framework for SSR and the EU SSR strategic approach at beneficiary level proposed in Recommendation 1 in the context of established Enlargement and Neighbourhood policies and procedures. This would require EU Delegations/Offices, supported by operational units in DG NEAR and EEAS as well as CSDP missions/operations where relevant, to identify the level of commitment or resistance to change among key beneficiary SSR actors, their connections, positions and interests. It would also involve developing clear but flexible pathways for employing all relevant EU tools and members of the EU family to foster greater commitment to reform processes on the part of these key SSR actors.

This process would include determining how best to engage with actors that the EU currently does not routinely engage with in the defence, security and intelligence spheres and how best to bolster the capacity and influence of governance and oversight actors (discussed further in Recommendation 7 below). This would involve continuously assessing key security and justice areas and actors to ensure that EU SSR support is grounded in political realities, and that emerging blockages to such support can be identified and neutralised where possible.

Recommendation 5: In providing SSR support to Enlargement and Eastern Partnership⁶ beneficiaries, the EU should be sufficiently flexible so that its support addresses the broader EU SSR agenda and alignment with Chapters 23, 24 and 31 of the *acquis*⁷, and also provides a strong foundation for sustainable change. The EU – particularly EEAS and DG NEAR operational units and EU Delegations/Offices – should ensure that it identifies the broad range of SSR needs in beneficiaries and that the problems that could undermine the ability of beneficiaries to implement EU and international standards are addressed on a priority basis.

Recommendation 6: In order to develop national ownership, the EU should acknowledge that there are multiple paths to achieving EU SSR objectives. EU Delegations/Offices, supported by DG NEAR and the EEAS, should pursue an iterative approach to the provision of EU support to SSR that takes into account beneficiary political will and technical and financial absorption capacity. This approach would be built on dialogue with beneficiaries to

⁶ https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/eastern-partnership_en

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/conditions-membership/chapters-of-the-acquis_en

identify specific priorities in the SSR area(s) that the EU is ready to support and would use those priorities as entry points for meeting broader reform objectives. Theories of change would help identify pathways for achieving broader reform objectives. This would enable the EU to work with beneficiaries to identify a series of steps that would take the beneficiary along a path leading from addressing their concrete priorities to implementing the *acquis* and EU/international standards or meeting EU security objectives.

The EU should adjust its expectations on the pace of change. Working at the pace of the beneficiary is likely, in the long term, to create the capacity and conditions that will facilitate moving beyond procedural compliance. It therefore makes good sense where political will and absorption capacity are shown to be limited to slowly build the foundation for change, in both Enlargement and Neighbourhood contexts. This could perhaps be facilitated by the application of a limited 'more for more' approach, where meeting agreed benchmarks would be tied to modest incentives.

Recommendation 7: The EU should increase its support for the involvement of the wider citizenry in security sector reform in Enlargement and Neighbourhood beneficiaries. EU Delegations/Offices should clearly indicate the EU's interest in hearing perspectives from the broadest range of societal actors on areas related to SSR. EU Delegations/Offices should systematically and frequently consult with independent actors who can articulate the diverse views of different social groups to prepare for the EU's political/policy dialogue with governments and seek ways to enable these actors to engage in that dialogue as well, for example through meaningful consultations on the development and implementation of the government's SSR-relevant strategies. In particular, the EU should give more attention to working with public intellectuals, academics, journalists and other civil society actors to generate innovative proposals and foster momentum for promoting change and to maintain pressure on governments to create better, more humane societies and to adhere to their commitments to comply with EU and other international standards and practices. EU Delegations/Offices should also actively encourage the involvement of these actors throughout the entire management cycle of interventions, including at the early stages of project design. EU Delegations/Offices should also work closely with other members of the international community, including EU Member States, to help capacitate parliamentarians to oversee the security sector/system.

Improving the effectiveness of funding modalities

Recommendation 8: In order to maximise the effectiveness of EU financial assistance for SSR, EU Delegations/Offices should base their choice of funding modality and management mode on the nature of the intervention and on beneficiary capacity and context. Developing a strategic approach to SSR in each beneficiary (Recommendation 1) would facilitate this process by providing the detail on beneficiary context and capacity in the addressed SSR area, including political will that is necessary to determine which funding modality and management mode is likely to be most effective. EU Delegations/Offices should consider recent experience with different funding modalities in different beneficiary institutions to assist their decision-making process. EU Delegations/Offices should also consider how best to combine different funding modalities into a package that provides the most appropriate assistance to SSR in a given beneficiary capacity and context.

Recommendation 9: In order to maximise the effectiveness of sector budget support programmes, which disburse large amounts of funding and have significant expectations in terms of policy reform, DG NEAR and EU Delegations/Offices should assess beneficiaries'

understanding of sector budget support (how it functions, the tight linkage to policy reform, what constitutes sound indicators) and its readiness to implement budget support programmes in order to provide technical assistance as required in a timely fashion before the design and during the implementation of budget support programmes. EU Delegations/Offices should also ensure that they have the staff capacity to help design and manage budget support programmes.

Recommendation 10: The EU should seek opportunities to mobilise complementary funding for interventions from EU Member States in order to maximise a coherent approach within the EU family to agreed EU SSR objectives and priorities. At the senior political level, the EU should reach agreement with its Member States as a matter of priority on the use of ongoing joint mapping, analysis and programming processes, including coordination matrices, to promote closer coordination on financing. This should include joint financing of EU interventions to the extent possible. EU Delegations/Offices should work closely with EU Member States to identify opportunities for complementary funding from EU Member States.

Achieving greater results

Recommendation 11: The EU should recruit more personnel with appropriate SSR backgrounds, bring in more external expertise, provide additional SSR training for staff and, where possible, utilise more expertise from EU Member States. Further to this point, the EU and its Member States should address human resource constraints at the HQ level and in EUDs by implementation of some/all of the following solutions:

- Increased Member State national secondments (i.e. military advisers, Counter-terrorism/Countering Violent Extremism advisers, integrated border management advisers, prosecutors, etc.) to EU Delegations/Offices that require enhanced SSR expertise because there is a large SSR portfolio and/or a thematic area of targeted importance in that beneficiary setting;
- Additional personnel allocated to DG NEAR's Centre of Thematic Expertise Crisis Reaction and Security Sector Reform so that it can better support the EU Delegations/Offices in the Enlargement and Neighbourhood regions as well as effectively cooperate with relevant EEAS counterparts;
- Enhanced cooperation and pooling of resources among relevant DG NEAR Centres of Thematic Expertise that have a link to SSR (i.e. Rule of Law/Fundamental Rights and Democracy, Civil Society Support, Migration, Public Administration Reform);
- Augmented co-financing by the European Commission and Member States for the placement of seconded national SSR experts in EU Delegations/Offices and/or DG NEAR;
- Secondments of CSDP personnel to the European Commission (e.g. EULEX⁸ or Operation Althea⁹ could recruit a Member State expert to work in DG NEAR or DEVCO) to increase synergies between European Commission and CSDP SSR support;
- Expanded use of EUROPOL¹⁰, EUROJUST¹¹, and FRONTEX¹² liaison officers to more beneficiaries in order to enhance EU Delegations/Offices expertise and increase bilateral engagement.

⁸ <http://www.eulex-kosovo.eu>

⁹ <http://www.euforbih.org/eufor/index.php>

¹⁰ <https://www.europol.europa.eu>

¹¹ <http://www.eurojust.europa.eu/Pages/home.aspx>

Recommendation 12: In rolling out the use of coordination matrices identified in the 2016 Joint Communication on an EU-wide strategic framework for SSR, priority should be accorded to those beneficiaries where there are CSDP missions/operations and evidence of a need for improved sequencing, coordination and coherence.

Recommendation 13: The design of EU SSR support should provide increased attention to defining indicators with baselines and targets. This will require additional training for Headquarters and EU Delegations/Offices staff on 1) the differences among outputs, outcomes and impact; 2) qualitative and quantitative methodologies in SSR; 3) differentiating between types of impact (e.g. strategic, functional, societal, political); and 4) utilising formal conflict sensitive assessments to 'Do No Harm' as well as the use of structured context analysis to avoid unintended negative impacts. The EU Delegations/Offices should increase their collaboration with beneficiary partners to ensure that there is an agreed approach for benchmarking progress, including regular review of both political and policy dialogue and technical assistance, as well as attention on the involvement of civil society in programme design.

Recommendation 14: The EU should introduce a gender lens into SSR programming that moves beyond a mere focus on achieving numerical increases of women in justice and security sector institutions. The EU should develop an operational capacity for enhancing its gender-based approach to SSR in Headquarters and EU Delegations/Offices. Additionally, the EU should provide training on gender mainstreaming in SSR to Headquarters and EU Delegations/Offices staff designing and implementing SSR interventions.

Recommendation 15: The EU should increase its engagement with defence, security and intelligence agencies, as well as counter-terrorism police branches. Relatedly, the EU should give special attention to the quality of design and implementation of Counter-terrorism/Countering Violent Extremism programming, defence and intelligence reform, areas in which the EU is a relative newcomer and in which there have been comparatively few EU SSR interventions. The pooling of resources and expertise among the EU, Member States and CSDP should be explored in these sectors, as well as possible synergies with NATO on the basis of the 2016 EU-NATO declaration¹³ to strengthen their security cooperation in the Western Balkans and the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods. EU support to these sectors should be accompanied by a human-rights risk management mechanism at the level of implementation. Although niche, this expertise can be found within, for example, ombudsperson's institutions, international non-governmental organisations, and other expert networks.

Recommendation 16: In order to enhance the visibility and knowledge of EU SSR support among beneficiary populations, EU Delegations/Offices should give increased attention to SSR in their strategic communications and public relations strategies. The EU should adopt a stronger focus on the benefits that security sector reforms will bring to beneficiary populations, including how such reforms will improve individual security and fundamental human rights. Outreach campaigns - conducted in partnership with civil society – could be a useful tool for improving the public perception of EU support to SSR.

¹² <https://frontex.europa.eu>

¹³ Council of the European Union, *EU-NATO Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, 8 July 2016, Belgium: Press Release. <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/07/08-eu-nato-joint-declaration/>.