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Conceptualizing EU Crisis Management

Nikolay PAVLOV*

The main purpose of this article is to contribute to the conceptual framework of EU crisis management. As an evolving and politically sensitive concept EU crisis management still lacks a solid conceptual and theoretical basis which undermines its credibility and performance. The research hypothesis is that the conceptual deficit in EU crisis management is first and foremost an ideological issue. EU crisis management has no adequate ideological basis and, subsequently, no adequate conceptual and strategic framework. The theoretical approach to define EU crisis management within the liberal school of international relations is examined and critically assessed. The main conclusion is that strengthening the ideological basis is a must for more effective conceptual, strategic and institutional development of EU crisis management. Finally, a Methodology for the validation of novel crisis management concepts is proposed. By testing alternative conceptual and governance models the innovative Methodology for strategic-level Concept Development and Experimentation (CDE&E) could provide scientific support for the establishment of the European Union's crisis management system.

1 PRE-CONCEPTUAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Developing the theoretical and conceptual basis of EU crisis management has been an arduous process hampered to large extent by political constraints, but also by conceptual and ideological deficits. Indeed, crisis management in international relations presupposes full-hearted commitment and proactive, even imperial attitudes which are not common in the Union. Unlike the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) which has crisis management as a core task from the outset, the European Union was not designed to play the role of a crisis manager. The ideological rationale behind European integration has little to do with common defence and crisis management. However, changes in the international environment after the collapse of the Soviet bloc and especially after the Kosovo crisis in 1999 have led to a gradual process of opening the Union to crisis management. To great extent this was a reactive and adaptive process which had no conceptual or strategic framework, not to speak of theoretical or ideological foundations. Concrete crisis management missions and operations were carried out without sufficient ideological support and with limited political and strategic

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guidance. A clear example thereof is the terminological confusion on crisis management in relevant EU political and legal documents as well as in academic literature.

The first step to a solid concept is clearly to define the term and to legalize it. Similar to other terms of distinctly abstract nature, such as ‘freedom’ and ‘security’, the term ‘crisis’ lacks a widely accepted definition, not to mention a legal definition. From academic point of view a satisfactory, yet not completely exhaustive definition is provided by Stern.¹ According to this synthetic definition a crisis is a situation, deriving from a change in the external or internal environment, characterized by three necessary perceptions in responsible decision-makers:

- A threat to basic values.
- Urgency – limited time.
- Uncertainty – lack of information or a surplus of information.

In practice, however, there is always a fourth element in a crisis. This is the perception of political decision-makers that this extraordinary situation is a threat to their dominating position. In other words only a situation which is perceived by the political leadership as a threat to its dominating position could be defined as a ‘crisis’. A clear example for the importance of the fourth element is the ongoing conflict in Syria and its relationship to EU crisis management. The conflict in Syria has all three elements of Stern’s definition for ‘crisis’. It entails mass murders bordering on genocide which is by all standards a threat to basic values and human rights. It is marked with urgency and lack of authentic information. In addition, the conflict is in the EU’s Neighbourhood which is explicitly defined in the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) as a clear priority. However, the situation in Syria is not perceived by political decision-makers in the EU as a threat to their position, subsequently it does not constitute a crisis for EU’s crisis management system. In other words, the crisis is not just an objective reality, it is a specific multidimensional political perception of a certain reality.

After the Kosovo crisis in 1999, crisis management has become common currency in contemporary Euro-speech.² Nevertheless, until recently the term ‘crisis’ was not present in ‘high rank’ EU political and legal documents, such as the ESS and the Lisbon Treaty, and respectively it has no appropriate legal status. In most cases the term is used ambiguously – e.g., in the 2010 Work Programme for

¹ E. Stern, *Crisis Decisionmaking: A Cognitive Institutional Approach* 7–8 (Swedish National Defence College 2003).

² J. Eriksson, E. Stern & B. Sundelius, *Bridging Theory & Practice in Crisis Management: The Swedish Experience*, in *EU Civilian Crisis Management* 19–33 (G. P. Herd & J. Huru ed., Royal Military Academy Sandhurst 2001).

Security theme under EU Seventh Framework Programme (FP7). In the Work Programme – which is a legal document – the term ‘crisis management’ is defined as the management of large-scale disasters (man-made and natural), both inside and outside of Europe.³ Equalling crises with disasters is symptomatic of the conceptual deficit in EU crisis management. Indeed, in the context of the Community Mechanism for Civil Protection ‘crisis management’ is almost equivalent to ‘disaster management’. However, within the discourse of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) the term ‘crisis management’ includes the Petersberg Tasks – humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks, tasks of combat forces including peacemaking. Given this terminological confusion it is no wonder that some crisis management studies start and finish with discussing the term ‘crisis’. In this article a comprehensive approach will be implemented to integrate both security/defence policy and emergency/disaster management policy. To put it simply, EU security and defence policy plus EU emergency and disaster management policy is equal to EU crisis management policy. This simple equation could serve as a basic principle for a comprehensive crisis management concept. Of course, the question remains about how to strike the balance between the two elements of the equation.

One of the difficulties when conceptualizing EU crisis management is the fact that from strictly legal point of view crisis management as a policy is subject to constitutional law and it is closely linked with the widely debated European Constitution. In the first half of the twentieth century German constitutional jurist Carl Schmitt highlighted the link between the state of emergency, i.e., crisis and sovereignty.⁴ He defined the sovereign as the one who can proclaim a state of emergency.⁵ In his view the state of emergency frees the executive from any legal restraints to its power that would normally apply. In crisis situations the sovereign, i.e., the political, has priority over the legal norm. In its extreme form the decision of the sovereign to declare state of emergency would lead to suspension of the legal order in its totality. Indeed, the strong link between crisis management and national sovereignty must always be taken into account when considering and shaping EU crisis management policy. The principle of EU sovereignty and the proper way to define this ‘new sovereignty’ vis-à-vis national sovereignty of Member States is the key to turning the EU into a credible crisis management actor. In practice this issues always comes to the fore in the complex CSDP

³ European Commission, *Framework Programme 7 Security Theme Work Programme – 2010*, C (2009) 5893, 24–25 (Brussels, 29 Jul. 2009).

⁴ In his original work Schmitt did not use the term ‘crisis’. The original German term *Ausnahmezustand* is best translated as ‘state of emergency’ and it literally means state of exception. Its meaning is close to crisis situation at its extreme.

⁵ C. Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty* 70 (The MIT Press 1985).

decision-making process when traditional national interest-related arguments are used by Member States. In addition, the power balance between Member States, and especially between ‘the big three’ (Germany, France and the United Kingdom) determines the level of ambition and the concrete ‘EU sovereignty’ demonstrated in a certain CSDP mission / operation under the European flag.

The close interrelation between sovereignty and crisis management has considerable theoretical and practical implications. Sovereignty as the legitimate source of state power is *sine qua non* for legitimate crisis management. Sovereignty implies statehood. From traditional Realist perspective it is only sovereign states in international relations that have the ability to exert political and military power, which is the essence of crisis management. The highly disputed nature of EU sovereignty automatically undermines legitimacy and efficacy of EU crisis management. In practical terms political leaders of Member States and especially of those unwilling to share sovereignty, logically, are not prone to support full-heartedly EU crisis management operations. The issue about who is the ultimate constituent power, i.e., the sovereign of the European Union still remains unresolved. Although the peoples of the Member States are proclaimed as such, their practical power is much lower than the power of the European Commission, which, on the other hand, is seen by many EU citizens as being devoid of democratic legitimacy. Hence, the political *and ideological* debates on federalism, regionalism, centralization and the role of nation-states in the Union have direct reflection on EU crisis management. Ideologically speaking, as a concept and idea EU crisis management could be interpreted and conceptualized primarily in constitutional and geopolitical terms. Operational procedures and technical solutions come next.

Crisis management has clear constitutional legal nature and as such it is regulated by the Lisbon Treaty which is successor to the failed EU Constitution. It is, though, a peculiar form of legal regulation. The term ‘crisis’ is used only in the context of EU monetary policy.⁶ It is not directly referred to in the part on EU External Action (where CSDP is situated) or in the special provisions on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) which technically remain part of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU). Actually, crisis management is deduced analytically from the provisions on the EU’s External Action (Part V TFEU) and partly from provisions on cooperation for prevention and protection against disasters.⁷ This form of regulation comes as a result of political compromises during the negotiation process and the fear in some Member States that

⁶ Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Consolidated version 2012), Art. 144, OJ C 326 (26 Oct. 2012).

⁷ *Ibid.*, Art. 196.

mentioning explicitly a crisis management function of the Union potentially could undermine their national sovereignty.

Taking into account this peculiarity one can confirm that the Lisbon Treaty is a step forward to a new EU crisis management system. First, it calls for a firmer establishment of internal security cooperation with the help of the new Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security – COSI and the political obligation to act in accordance with the Solidarity Clause. Second, the Lisbon Treaty provides for a more coherent EU External Action with the establishment of the new function of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission (HR/VP) and the new European External Action Service (EEAS). And third, it provides for a strengthened cooperation in the area of civil protection both inside and outside the EU. Additionally, the Lisbon Treaty envisages a new mechanism called Permanent Structured Cooperation in defence issues, which is designed to allow Member States who are able and willing to do so to enhance their cooperation in the area of capabilities, equipment and forces.

The present legal framework of EU crisis management is based mainly on two principles that are explicitly stated in the Lisbon Treaty. The first one is the principle of subsidiarity which is central to EU crisis management. A crisis or a disaster shall be managed at the lowest possible level, such as the national or the local level. Preventing and responding to disasters is first of all a national responsibility and only after that comes the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. The second main principle is the principle of solidarity which indicates that Member States shall support each other in the event of major crisis or emergency.⁸ What the basic legal framework still lacks is finding the right place for the principle of sovereignty that would allow for more consolidated and effective EU crisis management policy. Therefore, issues related to pooling and sharing of sovereignty become of the utmost theoretical and practical importance for EU crisis management.

Although not having legal power, the ESS which was adopted in 2003 and reviewed in 2008 is still one of the main conceptual documents for EU crisis management. ESS sets the overall framework for EU security policy by identifying global challenges and key threats to the security of the Union and clarifying EU strategic objectives. ESS does not refer directly to crisis management but it provided a wider context for European Security and Defence Policy (as CSDP was named at the time). First, it broadened the scope of the security challenges Europe had to face. Second, it placed ESDP military and civilian crisis management in a wider set of EU instruments. However, as Biscop has put it, there is a missing link

⁸ *Ibid.*, Art. 222.

between the vague yet ambitious goal expressed in the ESS – ‘to share in the responsibility for global security’ and the practice of CSDP operations and capability development (Biscop, 2009: 30).⁹

The other major EU security strategy – EU Internal Security Strategy, which was adopted in 2010 has undergone a positive evolution with regard to crisis management. The Internal Security Strategy ‘Towards a European Security Model’ makes almost no reference to crisis management.¹⁰ It just briefly mentions civil protection and the need for cooperation with CSDP. In practice crisis management has not been placed in the European security model which was declared in the EU Internal Security Strategy. Much more focus on crisis management has been put in the Communication from the Commission on the EU Internal Security Strategy in Action: Five steps towards a more secure Europe.¹¹ Crisis management is explicitly stated as one of the three policy areas for EU’s internal security (along with police and judicial cooperation; and border management). The principle of solidarity is defined as characteristic to EU’s crisis management approach. The Communication identifies European crisis and disaster response capacity as one of the five strategic objectives for EU internal security for the period 2011–2014 and proposes four concrete actions in this direction.

Along with the two EU security strategies a number of other EU operational strategies, concepts and guidelines on different aspects of crisis management must be taken into account:

- Civil-Military Coordination (CMCO) of the European Union (2003).
- Civilian Headline Goal 2010 (2004).
- EU Concept for Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) for EU-led Military Operations (2008).
- EU Concept for Military Planning at the Political and Strategic Level (2008).
- EU Concept for Force Generation (2008).
- EU Maritime rapid response concept (2007, not published).
- EU air rapid response concept (2007, not published).
- EU Battlegroups concept (2009, not published).

Very importantly, the term Crisis Management Concept (CMC) in EU operational documents is interpreted too narrowly. It denotes the strategic-planning document which is prepared by the Crisis Management and

⁹ *The Value of Power, the Power of Values – A Call for an EU Grand Strategy*, 33 Egmont Paper 30 (S. Biscop ed., Egmont – The Royal Institute for International Relations 2009).

¹⁰ Council Document, *Internal Security Strategy for the European Union: Towards a European Security Model*, 5842/2/2010 (2010).

¹¹ European Commission, *Communication from the Commission on the EU Internal Security Strategy in Action: Five Steps Towards a more Secure Europe*, COM (2010) 673 (2010).

Planning Directorate (CMPD) at the EEAS and presents options on ‘what to do, why, where and with whom’ with regard to a concrete international security crisis situation. CMC is proposed to EU Ministers for approval and forms the basis for the further operational planning and the conduct of a mission or an operation. The CMC is just the main operational document for a concrete operation / mission and not a strategic conceptual framework for EU crisis management.

This brief overview and document analysis shows an evolving, yet fragmented pre-conceptual basis covering only some aspects of crisis management and rather loose legal framework for this specific EU policy. Conceptual deficit and the lack of ‘Grand Strategy’ do have negative effect on the performance of the still fictitious EU crisis management system. This, in turn, leads to many operational gaps which are seen in concrete missions and operations. Indeed, crisis management implies conceptual, political and institutional *totality* – a totality which would correspond to the declared EU comprehensive, integrated and holistic approach to crisis management. And this totality could only be provided by a solid ideological basis.

2 DEVELOPING AN IDEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

So far, the only attempt for conceptual and, partially, for ideological justification of EU crisis management has been done within the frameworks of the liberal school in international relations studies. The best example of this approach is the notion of the EU as a ‘positive’ and ‘humanitarian power’, as a new category of international actor which has no enemies and doesn’t play traditional power politics.¹² Understandably, this approach tends to focus on EU’s commitment to international peace and security and on promoting the European social model worldwide. A positive aspect of this approach is that it admits the importance of European interests in the context of CSDP and EU crisis management. However, the liberal approach fails to address the constitutional foundations of EU crisis management and is lenient to threats such as terrorism. It underestimates the fact that actually Europe has enemies and some of them are even Brussels based groups. It does not provide scientifically based recommendations for strengthening European capabilities for the fight against terrorism. This theoretical weakness is evident especially after the terrorist attacks in Madrid (2004), in London (2005), in the Black Sea town of Burgas, Bulgaria in July 2012 and in the context of a number of investigated terror plots in several Member States (e.g., in the UK and Belgium). Last but not least, after the gradual decline of the European social model the liberal approach fails to provide adequate ideological and conceptual basis for EU crisis management.

¹² Biscop, *supra* n. 9, at 19–24.

EU crisis management is a high-order social science concept which is only partially subject to direct observation and measurement. Empirical data for this area is considerable and data interpretations can easily be manipulated for political purposes or twisted by subjectivity. Moreover, both intended and unintended consequences of EU crisis management missions and operations are difficult to gauge. In this context ideology – in the sense of ‘a system of values’ – is a suitable framework for concept development in the area of EU crisis management. The consistency between concrete crisis management operations and a prospective ideological framework could be an important criterion for evaluating and shaping EU crisis management policy as a whole. Of course, the development of this ideological framework can make use of research findings on European strategic culture and European security identity which are relevant to the ideological aspects of EU crisis management.

As suggested by the term itself – at the heart of ideology stands the ‘ideal’, i.e., the ultimate goal. From historical perspective, survival of the fittest on the international arena would have been impossible without a strong ideology – most typically under the form of religion. This holds true especially with regard to crisis management institutions, such as the Army – which is historically the prototype for a crisis management organization. The ideal for defending the Fatherland, and even dying for it, has always been the ideological basis and the source of legitimacy for any Army. In this sense properly defining the ‘ideal’ is one of the essential aspects of EU’s crisis management policy. Defining the ‘ideal’ is the next important step in the process of conceptualizing EU crisis management after defining the term ‘crisis management’ itself.

Presently, the two main goals of EU crisis management are seen in terms of supporting international peace and security; and turning Europe into a global actor. These are fully credible and inspirational goals, which, though, have often not been taken into account as the major criterion for EU crisis management operations. Especially the second goal has been formulated and pursued only half-heartedly and could have been taken one step beyond.

A potential ideological competitor of the mainstream liberal approach could be found in strategic reflections of representatives of the intellectual school of the ‘European New Right’.¹³ In line with this school of thought the main objective of EU crisis management could be defined as the development of a genuine European power, with borders demarcated by geopolitics that could serve as a pole for the regulation of the globalization process. This approach overcomes the focus on the European social model – which under the present economical and financial conditions can no longer be considered as an ideal state or Europe’s

¹³ See, A. de Benoist, *The European New Right: Forty Years Later*, 9 Occidental Q. 61, 74 (2009).

competitive advantage. And the ambition for developing genuine and independent European capabilities in all policy areas provides much more ideological support to EU crisis management as compared to reliance on the transatlantic link.

The evolving concept of Europe as an empire may serve as the wider conceptual framework for CSDP and EU crisis management as a whole. In Zielonka's view following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the last wave of Eastern enlargement the European Union has evolved into a kind of neo-medieval empire which shows similarities with the Holy Roman empire of the Middle Ages.¹⁴ In this empire the EU acts as a 'meta-governor', mediating between a complex web of interlocking levels of governance, territorial units and democratic polities. The concept for Europe as an empire has been further developed by Chandler within the context of European crisis management and peace-building operations.¹⁵ He noted that before World War II empire was not yet a 'dirty word'. In his view the EU is an empire in denial as it has the aims of an empire to develop states in its own likeness, to turn them into European 'look alike' but does not admit this secret aim. The denial of power which has been demonstrated in most ESDP operations undermines the legitimacy and effectiveness of EU crisis management. Therefore, developing a more coherent conceptual framework with focus on European geopolitical interests could considerably increase the assertiveness and ideological consistency of EU crisis management. It is possible to carry out EU crisis management missions and operations which have real impact in international relations only against the background of clearly defined and strictly European geopolitical interests. One of the consequences of setting EU crisis management strictly within the frameworks of European geopolitical interests would be lowering the intensity and the use of resources for geopolitical projects of mixed nature such as Euro-Atlantic or Euro-Russian projects.

3 THE INSTITUTIONAL SUPERSTRUCTURE: IDEATIONAL ASPECTS

The existing underdeveloped ideological and conceptual basis and the lack of political will on EU level in a natural way determine a fragmented institutional superstructure. The generation and transformation of EU crisis management institutions after year 2000 is the most clear example for the difficulties in establishing effective interaction between ideational factors (concepts, ideas and ideology) and material factors (resources and institutions).¹⁶ EU crisis

¹⁴ J. Zielonka, *Europe as Empire: The Nature of the Enlarged European Union* (Oxford U. Press 2006).

¹⁵ D. Chandler, *Empire in Denial: the Politics of State-building* (Pluto Press 2006).

¹⁶ On the interaction between material and ideational factors, see C. Meyer & E. Strickmann, *Solidifying Constructivism: How Material and Ideational Factors Interact in European Defence*, 49 J. Com. Mkt. Stud. 61–81 (2011).

management practice, i.e., concrete ESDP missions and operations preceded a strategic concept. Therefore, these missions and the institutions established to support them are pre-conceptual in essence. Development of EU crisis management institutions is a typical bureaucratic process which has no sufficient ideational dimension. For example, it is very difficult to find the link between the ideal for 'Europe as a global actor' and institutional developments in EU crisis management. Even the process of consolidating some CSDP structures after 2006 has little to do with ideational aspects but is to large extent the outcome of internal bureaucratic processes within EU structures and power games between major EU Member States. Specifically, the development of the EEAS is devoid of ideological substance in terms of 'Europe as a global actor', not to speak of 'Europe as an empire'. Although EEAS incorporates CSDP structures, the basic idea of EEAS is that it is explicitly neither a foreign policy, nor a security and defence establishment.

Shortcomings in the ideational dimension can be found in the whole institutional architecture for EU crisis management. There is a large body of literature on the institutional set-up for EU crisis management which shows these shortcomings but mostly from the perspective of Institutional Theory. Some of the most recent examples are two reports from crisis management projects coordinated respectively by Fraunhofer INT and by Istituto Affari Internazionali.¹⁷ Both studies demonstrate a very complex set of intra-EU institutional relations whose dynamics determines EU activities as a crisis manager. The record from the first decade of the twenty-first century shows that the relations among different EU crisis management institutions may vary from partnerships to competition and even rivalries.¹⁸ 'Negative coordination' among different EU actors and contradicting political views of Member States are additional constraints to EU crisis management. There is fragmentation of authority in EU crisis management which determines a very specific intra-EU institutional architecture – an 'institutional conundrum' as Drent and Zandee name it.¹⁹

With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 three different crisis management subsystems on EU level took shape. The first subsystem is the Council of the European Union. The Council – in its configuration as 'Foreign

¹⁷ See, ACRIMAS (Aftermath Crisis Management System of Systems Demonstration) Report on Current Crisis Management Framework (Fraunhofer INT, 2011); and *EU Crisis Management: Institutions and Capabilities in the Making* (E. Greco, N. Pirozzi & S. Silvestri eds., Istituto Affari Internazionali 2010).

¹⁸ U. Schroeder, *Governance of EU Crisis Management*, in *Evaluating the EU's Crisis Missions in the Balkans* 17–41 (M. Emerson & E. Gross ed., Centre for European Policy Studies 2007).

¹⁹ M. Drent & D. Zandee, *Breaking Pillars. Towards a Civil-Military Security Approach for the European Union* 25 (Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael' 2010).

Affairs Council' – is the key decision-making organ for EU crisis management. Within the Council the Political and Security Committee (PSC) was established as early as year 2000 to ensure coordinated EU crisis management action and to serve as the main point of reporting to by EU actors in the field. PSC is described as a 'linchpin' of the CSDP. Its responsibilities include drafting of opinions for the Foreign Affairs Council, exercising political control and strategic direction of EU crisis management operations. PSC is assisted by the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) which is a working group at expert level in the EU Council Secretariat. The military counterpart of the CIVCOM is the European Union Military Committee (EUMC) which is composed of the Chiefs of Defence of the Member States, who are regularly represented by their permanent Military Representatives. EUMC is the highest military body set-up within the Council. It directs all EU military activities and provides the PSC with advice and recommendations on military matters.

The second subsystem is the newly established EEAS which is headed by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission (HR/VP). The EEAS is one of the main innovations introduced by the Lisbon Treaty. The new European 'diplomatic' service was created in 2010 and incorporated former CSDP structures. It is seen as the key institution to help the EU become a more visible and effective foreign policy, security and crisis management actor, but in practice its policy remit is limited. EEAS incorporates two important structures – CMPD and EUMS. The CMPD was created in 2008 to take the EU quest for comprehensiveness in crisis management a step further: it merged civilian and military aspects of the planning for EU missions. Specifically, it is responsible for the CMC and its main value is seen in facilitating progress in areas such as strategic planning, mission and operation reviews and reporting, lessons identified and concept development at strategic and operational levels. Alongside the CMPD, operational planning and the implementation of civilian missions is supported by the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC). The European Union Military Staff (EUMS) provides in-house military expertise for the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and performs early warning, strategic planning and situation assessment. The EUMS is the only permanent integrated military structure of the European Union. Indeed, CMPD also shares a part of the strategic planning capability and can be seen as the civilian counterpart of the EUMS. Furthermore, the EUMS runs the EU Operational Centre, a skeleton Operational Headquarter (OH) for CSDP missions that can be upgraded to an active OH, if needed and requested by a Member State. EEAS incorporates also the EU Intelligence Analysis Centre (EU INTCEN), the intelligence agency of the EU which provides 24/7 intelligence, analysis and early warning. Geospatial

intelligence is provided by the European Union Satellite Centre (EU SATCEN) which functions under the operational direction of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

The third subsystem is the European Commission with its main crisis management structure – DG Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection – ECHO. Two of the main instruments for EU crisis response are found within DG ECHO and consist of the Civil Protection Community Mechanism and the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC). The ERCC constitutes the basis of cooperation within the area of Civil Protection. It is a structure through which participating states (mainly EU Member States) voluntarily may pool their civil protection capacities to crisis-stricken countries inside or outside the EU that have requested help. The ERCC serves as the focal point for the participating states' national contact points and it is accessible 24/7. The ERCC serves as a forum for access and sharing of information between the participating states, it provides early alerts and information on interventions carried out through the Mechanism. The ERCC's state-of-the-art crisis situation centre provides advanced monitoring and analytical capacity. In general, DG ECHO has considerable financial resources – approximately 1 billion EUR for year 2013 (mainly for humanitarian aid) but its operational capacity is considered limited. It is worth noting that for some experts DG ECHO cannot be considered as a crisis management tool since humanitarian aid cannot be subsumed to the political logic of crisis management.²⁰ This view artificially sets disaster management apart from crisis management which is unacceptable given the comprehensive security approach the EU is trying to demonstrate.

Apart from the three subsystems two additional potential elements should be mentioned – the European Defence Agency (EDA) and EU Battlegroups. EDA was established in 2004 to address European military capability development by improving European armaments policy in a structured way. However, its success was limited. Although the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy is Head of EDA the role of the Agency in EU crisis management is still not clearly defined. EU Battlegroups were set up in 2007 as rapid response units composed of national or multinational contributions under the responsibility of a framework nation. Although the initiative is considered a success story, in fact the EU has never deployed the EU Battlegroups.

Although the Lisbon Treaty removed the outdated pillar system, there are still two major challenges for intra-EU institutional partnerships in the area of crisis management. First, it is the ESDP-old problem with achieving civil-military

²⁰ I. Ioannides, *EU Civilian Capabilities and Cooperation with the Military Sector*, in *EU Crisis Management: Institutions and Capabilities in the Making*, 36 (E. Greco, N. Pirozzi & S. Silvestri eds., Istituto Affari Internazionali 2010).

synergy. The problem with civil-military cooperation in EU crisis management has been highlighted on multiple occasions since 2003 when ESDP became operational. The EU has developed two concepts which sum up efforts to interconnect civilian and military approaches to crisis management: Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and Civil-Military Coordination (CMCO). CIMIC is mainly an operational concept for force protection which aims to ensure the coordination and cooperation between EU military missions and civil actors (external to the EU), including the local population and authorities. CMCO addresses the internal coordination of EU structures in crisis management – both civil-civil and civil-military coordination at all levels. CMCO is a case in point as it is the key to the solution of the second major problem – enhancing ‘civil-civil coordination’ in EU crisis management.²¹ After the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty this is primarily the issue about enhancing cooperation and coordination between the newly established EEAS and the Commission – especially with DG ECHO but also with other Commission DGs (in particular home affairs, enlargement, development and trade).

On the one hand, the institutional set-up of EU crisis management follows the internal bureaucratic dynamics of EU institutional evolution. On the other hand, it reflects the ideational explanation of ‘Europe as a humanitarian power’ with special focus on external action, humanitarian aid and shows stable demilitarization trend in operations. ‘Power’ structures, such as EU Battlegroups or the Crisis Management & Fight against Terrorism Unit within DG HOME are still underdeveloped. Although highly disputed at times, the idea for common European Army does not seem realistic in the near future. The ideological and political support for centralized EU crisis management and for the use of force is still weak both in Brussels and in capitals. And, although EU crisis management is widely recognized as reactive and ineffective, the deeper conceptual and ideological reasons for the present state are not sufficiently addressed. One of the few exceptions is a policy report by Hynek. He suggested that EU’s use of the concept of crisis management is underdeveloped and overused simultaneously.²² From the perspective of traditional ‘institutional approach’ he argued that the EU Chain of Command is too convoluted and analyzed three options for consolidating EU’s crisis management structures. This and other studies from Institutional Theory perspective carry merit but could be further developed under a wider ideological framework. This new framework must take into account

²¹ C. Gourlay, *Civil-Civil Coordination in EU Crisis Management*, in *Civilian Crisis Management: The EU Way* 103–120 (A. Nowak ed., EU Institute for Security Studies 2006).

²² N. Hynek, *Consolidating the EU’s Crisis Management Structures: Civil-Military Coordination and the Future of EU OHQ* at iii (European Parliament, DG for External Policies 2010).

both the ideational aspects of EU institutional development and the need for strengthening ideological support for EU crisis management.

4 THE ROLE OF CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT AND EXPERIMENTATION

The development of scientifically based novel concepts in the area of EU crisis management requires rigorous methodological tools for testing and validating these concepts. Similar to other social sciences, research on EU crisis management lacks an experimental phase. The purpose of this section of the article is to address that major problem by examining the potential role of Concept Development and Experimentation (CD&E) in EU crisis management. As already explained the development of strategic concepts and conceptual models for EU crisis management shall begin with the ideological, constitutional and geopolitical foundations. All those categories come from social sciences and are not typical subjects of experimentation. In fact, historically speaking ideological and geopolitical solutions have been applied only in practice under the form of social engineering which is not acceptable nowadays. State-of-the-art technologies, especially systems for modelling and simulation are suitable tools for testing and experimenting social science concepts under real-life scenarios. Applying these tools and experimental techniques can be helpful for bridging the gap between policy and technology in the area of crisis management on EU level.

The CD&E approach, which originates from the military domain is the application of the structure and methods of experimental science to the challenge of developing future military capabilities. CD&E methodologies are implemented by NATO Allied Command Transformation (ACT) and are considered valuable tools for the transformation of the Alliance. The NATO CD&E process is one of the tools that drives NATO's transformation by enabling the structured development of creative and innovative ideas into viable solutions for capability development.²³ The inclusive and iterative nature of CD&E aims at capturing the best ideas and enabling potential solutions to be thoroughly explored through Concept Development and tested and validated through Experimentation. As noted by de Nijs CD&E has evolved over the years to be the primary tool in finding solutions to conceptual gaps identified within NATO's capability shortfalls.²⁴

²³ The principles of CD&E and how it supports the NATO's Transformational Programme are set out in Policy for NATO Concept Development and Experimentation, MC-0583 (NATO Military Committee, September 2009).

²⁴ H. de Nijs, *Concept Development and Experimentation Policy and Process: How Analysis Provides Vigour* (RTO-MP-SAS-081), 2 (Research and Technology Agency 2010).

Outside NATO research that links CD&E with crisis management is very limited due to its highly complex and interdisciplinary nature. One of the few research endeavours in this direction was done by Shalamanov and Pavlov who argued that CD&E and Computer-assisted exercises could be used not only as a tool to enhance crisis management capabilities but also to experiment concepts and conceptual models.²⁵ Scenario development was seen as ‘the heart’ of the experimentation process and a specific methodology for scenario development was proposed. Schmitz and Beer proposed a methodological approach for validating security concepts by the process of concept development, experimentation and exercises supported by modelling and simulation.²⁶ They applied the approach in the area of critical infrastructure protection with the support of a software model. Five important steps for concept development, experimentation and exercises were identified:

- Development of new concepts.
- Coordination of experiments (invitation of experts, scenarios and script development, etc.).
- Execution of experiments.
- Evaluation and realization of results.
- Modification of concepts.

The main rationale behind the proposed approach is that we have to experiment in order to find the pros and cons of the concepts to be tested.

On EU level only one research project has addressed the role of CD&E in crisis management. This is the FP7 Security theme project ACRIMAS (Aftermath Crisis Management System-of-systems Demonstration) which was coordinated by Fraunhofer INT. ACRIMAS was the first research project to demonstrate the CDE approach in the area of crisis management on EU level.

The CD&E approach developed under the ACRIMAS project was tested in March 2012 in a Crisis Technology Workshop which took place in the European Crisis Management Laboratory (ECML) of the Joint Research Centre in Ispra, Italy.²⁷ The experiment focused on the technical interoperability of mobile devices

²⁵ See, V. Shalamanov & N. Pavlov, *The Role of Computer-Assisted Exercises for Effective Crisis Management*, in *Proceedings from the International Conference ‘Security Structures in the Balkans. Crisis Management’*, 70–83 (Balkan Security Forum 2006); and V. Shalamanov & N. Pavlov, *Computer-Assisted Exercises and Scenario Development as a Tool for Security Concepts’ Experimentation*, in *Proceedings from the International Conference ‘The Balkans, NATO and EU. Transformation of Security Systems’* 622–636 (Balkan Security Forum 2007).

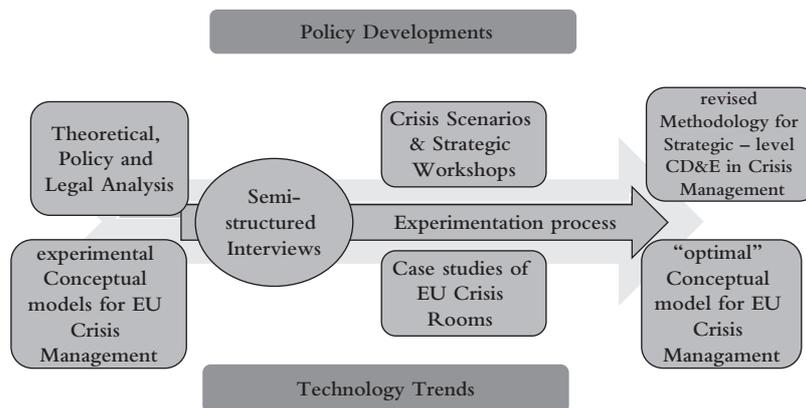
²⁶ W. Schmitz & T. Beer, *Methodological Approach for Holistic Security Concepts*, in *Establishing Security and Stability in the Wider Black Sea Area* 203–225 (P. Volten & B. Tashev ed., IOS Press 2007).

²⁷ See, *Interoperability of Mobile Devices for Crisis Management: Outcomes of the 1st JRC ECML Crisis Technology Workshop* (Joint Research Centre Scientific and Policy Reports, Institute for the Protection and Security of the Citizen 2012).

for crisis management. The main purpose was to measure the added value of mobile assessment technology for rapid situation assessment in international emergency operations. Seven mobile assessment systems participated in the experiment in a simulation scenario of a major earthquake. Mobile systems provided in an interoperable way, real-time data to a single electronic On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (eOSOCC). The performance of the systems was benchmarked against a traditional paper-based assessment that was conducted simultaneously (pOSOCC). The outcome showed some advantages of the electronic OSOCC in comparison with the paper-based OSOCC, especially in terms of producing sharable electronic maps and documents. Overall, the workshop demonstrated that controlled experiments are a useful way to assess and advance crisis management technologies.

This first application of the CD&E approach to EU crisis management on the tactical level is a useful first step which must be further developed on the strategic level. The experiment was technology-oriented but policy-oriented experiments with a view to novel EU crisis management capabilities are also needed. The operational (or strategic) concept to be tested must be clearly defined which will allow for finding the pros and cons of the tested concepts. By further developing the ACRIMAS approach a Methodology for strategic-level CD&E for EU crisis management could be proposed. It is an innovative four-step interdisciplinary methodology (as shown in Figure 1) with CD&E as a central component:

Figure 1 Methodology for Strategic-Level Concept Development and Experimentation (CD&E) for EU Crisis Management



The Methodology must be applied in four consecutive steps:

Step 1: In-depth theoretical, policy and legal analysis of EU crisis management. The ‘analytical phase’ will cover the most important policy and legal documents. Mostly mature theoretical models, such as the Swedish crisis management theory must be taken into account. Some US homeland security theoretical approaches could be examined especially in terms of the fight against terrorism.

Step 2: Development of experimental Conceptual models for EU crisis management. This is the ‘development phase’ of the CD&E process. Conceptual models should have clear strategic nature and three main interrelated features:

- Ideological framework – basic terms, definitions, values and strategic objectives of EU crisis management. The ‘ideal’ of EU crisis management must be defined as clearly as possible.
- Governance models – alternative options for high-level political / strategic guidance and operational management of EU’s crisis management system. Different governance models will represent different institutional architectures, decision-making and coordination mechanisms and modes of centralization / decentralization. Resources for feeding the system must be considered under the alternative governance models. Presently resources for EU crisis management amount approximately to 1.5–2 billion EUR (the highest portion – 1 billion is managed by DG ECHO and the administrative budget of EEAS is 490 million). Different models could represent different distribution of funding between stakeholders.
- Situation assessment – options for information flows management, data fusion and integration of information from geospatial intelligence (GEOINT), open source intelligence (OSINT) and human intelligence (HUMINT) for EU crisis management.

Step 3: Iterative process of experimenting, testing and validating the Conceptual models. This is the core ‘experimental phase’ of the Methodology. The initial testing and validation of experimental models could be carried out by semi-structured interviews with stakeholders’ representatives from competent EU authorities, such as the EU Council General Secretariat, the EEAS, DG ECHO and DG HOME. The interviews could be conducted by a Questionnaire following the structure of the experimental models which allows for evaluation of its components by the respondent. The next step would be to test the experimental models in at least three crisis scenarios. The first scenario could be a CSDP scenario (e.g., a peace-keeping operation) in a fictitious country outside the EU, the second one – a natural disaster scenario

affecting two EU Member States, and the third one – a mixed scenario with two parallel crisis situations – a CSDP-related crisis and a large disaster. By experimenting alternative governance models in simulation scenarios the viability and effectiveness of the models will be validated. All three scenarios must focus on strategic governance, operational management, coordination and information flows in EU's crisis management system. In the experimentation process modelling and simulation software must be applied to simulate the system's behaviour and resilience under the respective conceptual models. Apart from testing institutional links and interdependencies within the system, modelling and simulation tools could be utilized to experiment alternative solutions for the 'constitutional' foundations of EU's crisis management system. As a minimum three constitutional models could be tested – the 'three pillar' model under the Maastricht Treaty with ESDP as the second pillar, the failed European Constitution's model and the current Lisbon Treaty model. This would allow for a scientifically based comparison between the three 'constitutional' models and their respective decision-making mechanisms. The greatest research challenges in this phase would be experimenting with the organizational legal norms and assessing the consistency of the 'optimal' conceptual model with the 'ideal' of EU crisis management as defined in the development phase.

A useful supporting approach in the experimental phase could be case studies on existing EU Crisis rooms. Case studies must include a comprehensive comparison of Crisis rooms in the EU in terms of functions, capabilities and approaches to situation assessment. Case studies should focus on three existing Crisis rooms – the Emergency Response Coordination Centre of DG ECHO, the Situation room of the EEAS and the Crisis room in DG HOME. Case studies of existing Crisis rooms could be useful especially with regard to the validation of the third component of conceptual models, namely situation assessment. As a separate experimentation module for situation assessment the theoretical crisis response situation model developed by Aligne and Mattioli could be tested.²⁸ This is one of the very few situation assessment models developed so far which could be used for optimizing present situation assessment in EU crisis management especially in terms of information contextualization.

Step 4: Lessons learned phase – following the experimentation process a refined Methodology for strategic-level CD&E in crisis management could be prepared and an 'optimal' conceptual model out of the experimented models

²⁸ F. Aligne & J. Mattioli, *The Role of Context for Crisis Management Cycle*, 13 *Annals of Information Systems* 113–132 (2011).

could be proposed. Further on the refined Methodology could be used as a tool for safe experimentation of novel EU crisis management conceptual models.

The Methodology for strategic-level CD&E could be regarded as an alternative research approach to EU crisis management compared with the ‘official’ Demonstration Programme (so-called *demo*) on crisis and disaster management.²⁹ The Demonstration Programme is funded by the European Commission under FP7 Security theme and sets the framework for research and development in the area of crisis management on EU level for the next few years.³⁰ As a result from political constraints within the Commission and lobbying by the industry the Demonstration programme is focused primarily on crisis management technologies and tools. Although the link to EU policies is declared, the *demo* is not supposed to test and validate governance models. It is oriented to integration of promising approaches and solutions into existing systems and mechanisms, as well as to interoperability between existing technology and its users. The Demonstration programme does not address the ideological, constitutional and geopolitical foundations of EU crisis management.

The Methodology for strategic-level CD&E could be implemented in a research facility with state-of-the-art information technologies, in particular modelling and simulation tools. An appropriate test-bed is the newly established European Crisis Management Laboratory (ECML) which is part of the Institute for the Protection and Security of the Citizen (IPSC) at the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre (JRC). The European Crisis Management Laboratory was officially inaugurated in March 2012 as a research, development and test facility in support of EU crisis management needs. It is a fully equipped ‘Crisis room’ with state-of-the-art information technologies, providing a dynamic situational awareness for crisis and disaster preparedness and response on any location or event in the world. The ambition of ECML is to provide backup for European Commission Crisis Rooms. The above-mentioned CD&E experiment under the ACRIMAS project was carried out in ECML in March 2012.

Another suitable research facility for implementing the Methodology for strategic-level CD&E in EU crisis management is the newly established Centre of Excellence in Crisis Management and Disaster Response. The Centre of Excellence was established in 2013 in Sofia, Bulgaria by the Bulgarian Ministry of Defence and is presently undergoing the accreditation procedure conducted by

²⁹ Framework Programme 7 Security Theme Work Programme – 2013, 55-59 (Brussels: European Commission C (2012) 4536 of 09 July 2012).

³⁰ The Programme is implemented by the DRIVER demonstration project (Driving Innovation in Crisis Management for European Resilience) which was launched in 2014. For more information on the DRIVER project see the project’s web-site at: <http://www.driver-project.eu>.

NATO Allied Command Transformation. The mission of this CoE is to enhance NATO and NATO Nations crisis management capabilities in support of NATO transformation. One of the main objectives of the CoE is to support closer cooperation between NATO and the EU in the development of an international comprehensive approach to crisis management and disaster relief with the application of both military and civilian means. The Centre of Excellence is built-up as a research and training facility for computer-assisted exercises. It could be a useful facility for transfer of knowledge and CD&E approaches from NATO to the European Union and for implementing the strategic-level Methodology, especially in civil-military scenarios.

5 CONCLUSION

Conceptualizing EU crisis management under an ideological framework is a necessary step towards making this important EU policy area more legitimate and effective. Ideational aspects of EU crisis management have been addressed in academic literature on EU strategic culture, but the need for a sound ideological basis remains still underestimated. The ideological and conceptual dimension, however, have direct practical implications as seen in the functioning of EU crisis management institutions. The underdeveloped ideological basis determines an underdeveloped and not very effective institutional superstructure of EU crisis management. Crisis management is not merely an operational concept. It is an important public law phenomenon which can have great impact on the transformation of national sovereignty within the EU and on the nature of the emerging EU sovereignty. Crisis management stands firmly in the realm of 'high politics' which cannot be formulated and effectively implemented without sound ideological and scientific support. Just like the traditional Realist term 'interest', 'ideology' is also not a dirty word, and it could serve as a methodological framework for concept development in the area of EU crisis management. The proposed ideological framework and conceptual models must be tested and validated by a rigorous and scientifically based Methodology for strategic-level Concept Development and Experimentation. This would allow for finding the pros and cons of alternative conceptual and governance models *before* they are implemented in practice by political decision-makers. In this context the mission of European science is not to wait and see for new socio-political experiments, but rather to provide robust research support for the development of a more effective EU crisis management system under strict democratic *and* scientific control.

