If the ENP cannot contribute to addressing conflicts in the region, it will have failed in one of its key purposes.

Introduction

In the 2015 review of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), one message clearly stood out: the security dimension needs to be strengthened. This message was timely considering that the EU’s neighbourhood has undergone a thorough destabilisation since 2010. As of 2017, eleven of the sixteen ENP partners were subject to some form of frozen, intra- or inter-state conflict. The repercussions of these conflicts have been felt throughout the region and in the EU, as demonstrated by unprecedented migratory flows.

Fostering peace and stability in the neighbourhood have been core objectives of the ENP from the beginning. But despite tireless declarations of intent, the track record of the first decade of implementation is meagre. As Crombois (2008: 2) argues: ‘the ENP has contributed for little if anything in the EU actions in conflict management in the neighbourhood’. The literature identifies a range of underlying reasons. Some scholars blame the principle of joint ownership, which has allowed the partners to marginalise sensitive conflict-related issues in their bilaterally agreed Action Plans (Wolff et al. 2007). Others argue that there has simply been a lack of clarity regarding the actions required to foster peace and stability (Crombois 2008). Perspectives differ, but most scholars directly or indirectly refer to the difficulties of ensuring coherence across the EU’s institutions and with the Member States (Noutcheva 2014; Sobol 2015; Wolff et al. 2007).

Policy coherence can be defined as the consistent and synergetic use of common instruments and resources geared towards overarching objectives (de Coning 2008). The ENP represents a ‘composite policy with multiple objectives (security, economic prosperity and democracy)’ that cut across different functional areas and governance levels (Noutcheva 2014: 22). It thus raises horizontal, institutional and vertical coherence challenges (Nuttall 2005). In this chapter,
horizontal coherence is understood as the synergetic interaction between the ENP and other EU policies within a broadening scope of comprehensive EU crisis management. Relevant policy areas include: the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP); humanitarian aid; and less conventional crisis management fields, such as migration management and counter-terrorism. A sub-category of horizontal coherence, institutional coherence, refers to collaborative interaction between the responsible EU-level institutional actors. Vertical coherence designates the extent to which national neighbourhood and crisis management policies are in line with (consistency) and positively contribute to (synergy) the EU-level ones.

This chapter analyses the coherence challenges the EU has faced in the implementation of the ENP’s security dimension. It focuses on two relevant cases, namely Libya and Syria between 2011 and 2015. Both countries have remained at the margins of the ENP, though having a different formal status. Hopes raised by the Arab uprisings were destroyed by years of violence and continuous or intermittent civil war. Syria and Libya have thus been situated at the intersection of the ENP and comprehensive EU crisis management. Both cases show that the EU has gradually learned its lessons in terms of strengthening horizontal and institutional coherence. However, vertical incoherence and the Member States’ inability to agree on collective action are likely to remain important obstacles to the effective implementation of the ENP’s security dimension.

Libyan crises: a limited role for the ENP

In the 2000s, the EU was eager to include Libya in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) and the ENP. The Commission initiated negotiations for an EU–Libya Framework Agreement in 2007, with the aim of formalising bilateral relations. However, the negotiations concentrated on economic development and migration management, and less on issues related to human rights and democratisation (Joffé 2011; Zoubir 2009). Libya was thus part of a broader pattern characterising the Union’s relations with its southern neighbours, which consisted of prioritising stability and security over sustainable democratisation (Hollis 2012). The 2011 Libyan crisis challenged this pattern.

The 2011 crisis: divided on high politics

The crisis started on 15 February 2011, when human rights activist Fethi Tarbel was arrested in the Eastern Libyan city of Benghazi. The resulting anti-regime protests rapidly spread across the country and were met with massive repression and violence by the regime of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi. On 5 March 2011, Libyan opposition forces established the National Transitional Council (NTC), which they presented as Libya’s sole representative. The situation turned into a civil war between opposition forces and pro-Gaddafi loyalists, which caused thousands of casualties and massive internal displacement.

In response to the Libyan crisis, the EU activated a broad range of crisis management instruments. The then High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission (HR/VP) (Ashton 2011a) was quick to condemn the use of violence against civilians on behalf of the EU. The EU suspended all technical assistance under the ENP and froze the negotiations on the EU–Libya Framework Agreement. Its response in the fields of humanitarian aid and economic sanctions was rapid and substantial. Collectively, the EU became the largest humanitarian donor in the Libyan crisis and gradually established a strong sanctions regime (DG ECHO 2011). The EU implemented the sanctions foreseen by UN
Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973 and agreed additional autonomous measures targeting Gaddafi’s regime, including a *de facto* oil and gas embargo in April 2011.

The EU’s initial crisis response was characterised by tensions between the European Commission and the newly established European External Action Service (EEAS) on the one hand, and within the EEAS crisis management structures on the other (Koenig 2011). Tensions arose due to competence overlaps, contested leadership and resource dependencies. While the EEAS was supposed to provide political guidance, most of the resources were in the Commission, which often refused to be coordinated by the EEAS. Yet the cooperation between the HR/VP and the Commissioner for Enlargement and ENP worked reasonably well (EEAS official 2011). A senior Commission advisor (2011) explained that an informal division of labour between the HR/VP and the Commissioner soon emerged. The former was in charge of the ENP’s more political aspects, whereas the latter was responsible for the more technical ones.

The biggest challenge during the EU’s initial response to the Libyan crisis was vertical coherence, notably in the diplomatic realm. On the day that Ashton condemned the use of violence by the Gaddafi regime, the former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi told the press that he had not called Gaddafi, as he did not want to ‘disturb’ him in a situation that was ‘still in flux’ (Reuters 2011). Contrasting with the EU’s official position, this statement reflected the preferential relations Italy had maintained with the Gaddafi regime in return for its cooperation on energy and migration-related matters (Joffé 2011). The diplomatic approach towards the NTC also became subject to vertical incoherence. France recognised the NTC as sole representative of the Libyan people on 10 March 2011 – one day ahead of an extraordinary European Council meeting on Libya. It intended to push the other Member States closer to its position. The European Parliament (2011) issued a resolution on the same day calling on the Member States to grant the NTC full diplomatic recognition. However, on 11 March, the European Council (2011) merely welcomed the NTC as *a*, and not as the *sole*, representative of the Libyan people. The EU’s full diplomatic recognition only followed months later after the UN had given the green light.

The most divisive issue was the use of force. France and the UK were among the main proponents of UN Security Council Resolution 1973, authorising all necessary means ‘to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack [. . .] while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory’ (UN Security Council 2011). However, Germany – then non-permanent member of the UN Security Council – broke ranks with its European partners and abstained during the respective vote – together with Brazil, Russia, China and India. The EU Member States were also divided on a military contribution in the framework of the CSDP. Some, such as France and Italy, were in favour; others, including Germany and Poland, were reluctant. After difficult discussions, the Member States settled for the lowest common denominator, which was operation EUFOR Libya (European Council 2011). The CSDP operation would have been mandated to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Libya. However, its deployment was made dependent on a call by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which never came.

The EU’s crisis management in Libya became more coherent in the course of 2011. Despite divisions on the status of the Libyan opposition, the EEAS established an EU liaison office in Benghazi in May 2011, which amounted to a *de facto* recognition of the NTC. The EU Member States eventually endorsed the Franco-British lead of the NATO operation in Libya. With support by the latter, the Libyan rebels seized Tripoli in August 2011 and Gaddafi fled the city. In October 2011, the rebels held most parts of the country and Gaddafi was captured and killed. The successful termination of the NATO operation on 31 October 2011 marked the transition to post-conflict reconstruction.
**Libya and Syria**

**Constrained support of complex transition**

Hopes were high that the EU would compensate for its relatively incoherent crisis response during transition. At the Paris conference on 1 September 2011, the international community and Libya’s transitional authorities agreed that the UN should take the lead in coordinating reconstruction and consolidation. The EU was tasked with border management, civil society and the media (Gottwald 2012).

With a package worth EUR30 million, the ENP initially focused on civil society support, public administration capacity-building and the management of migration flows (European Commission 2012). In parallel, the EU reactivated its diplomatic efforts to integrate Libya in the ENP. The Commission repeatedly underlined that it was ready to resume negotiations on the EU–Libya Framework Agreement. The Libyan authorities made a step towards the ENP when they decided to opt for an observer status in the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) in January 2013.

In the field of border management, the EU faced two obstacles. The first was the absence of legitimate and experienced Libyan interlocutors (EEAS official 2013). The EU conducted several needs assessment missions to identify priority sectors with the transitional authorities. However, the latter did not clearly articulate their needs (Gottwald 2012). The second obstacle was the difference in Member State preferences concerning the scope of the envisaged EU Integrated Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) Libya. France wanted the mission to concentrate on the south-western border whereas others – such as Greece, Malta and Italy – were more interested in a focus on the maritime border (EEAS official 2013). The compromise was a ‘crawl–walk–run’ approach with an initial focus on the capital and a gradual extension to border ‘hotspots’. The EU launched EUBAM Libya in May 2013. However, the mission neglected the south-western border where terrorists, fighters and arms continued to move freely between Libya and the Sahel. The quest for vertical coherence thus produced a collective measure with limited impact on regional stabilisation.

Initially, the EU’s activities in the realm of the CFSP and the ENP were largely disconnected. In 2013, there were attempts to raise the degree of horizontal coherence by pooling ENP resources towards security-related goals. ENP funds were used to support activities in the realm of civilian SSR including, for instance, reintegration training into the police forces or the development of the concept for a National Security Strategy (Council of the European Union 2014). In 2013, the Commission programmed a EUR25 million package under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) to complement activities in the fields of security and border management (Council of the European Union 2014). This package was to support alternative livelihoods and sustainable employment, protect vulnerable people and foster the development of a rights-based migration management and asylum system. The respective activities were to start in 2014, but most had to be suspended due to the worsening political and security situation.

**The resurgence of violence: back to crisis mode**

Violence escalated again in June 2014, when the Islamists suffered an important defeat in the parliamentary election. In mid-August an alliance of Tripoli-based Islamists joined forces with militias from Misrata and launched an offensive on Tripoli’s airport. Within weeks, they took control of the capital and forced the internationally recognised government to relocate to the Eastern Libyan city of Tobruk. From August 2014 onwards, the country has had two rivalling governments. In January 2015, UN Special Envoy for Libya Bernardino Leon, former EU
special envoy for the Southern Mediterranean, initiated peace talks between rivalling factions to reach a lasting ceasefire and form a national unity government.

The relapse of conflict severely curtailed the Union’s activities in Libya. EUBAM Libya was downscaled and transferred to Tunis and Brussels. Most aid programmes directed towards governmental authorities were suspended. Only EUR8 million was spent under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) in 2014, with a focus on capacity building, key democratic institutions and the reconciliation process (European Commission 2015). The ENP implementation report of March 2015 stated that ‘it would be unrealistic to expect any progress on the EU agenda’ in Libya considering the deterioration of the security situation (European Commission 2015: 2).

Libya thus slipped off the ‘ENP radar’ as the EU shifted back into a short-term crisis response mode. In October 2014, the Council published the Political Framework for Crisis Approach for Libya, a planning document that was supposed to guide the EU’s overall engagement in the country. The document did not even mention the ENP. It explicitly refrained from formulating a medium-term strategy, which would depend on the evolution of the political and security conditions (Council of the European Union 2014). The Framework identified the assistance to the UN-led mediation efforts as the EU’s main political priority.

In practice, the EU’s focus shifted towards the symptoms of the Libyan conflict. In 2014–2015, Libya was among the main transit countries for migrants and refugees heading towards the EU. In April 2015, the EU and the southern neighbours received an important wakeup call as hundreds of migrants destined for Europe drowned in front of the Libyan coast. At an extraordinary meeting on migration on 23 April, the European Council (2015) decided on a broad package of measures. As part of this comprehensive package, the Council of the European Union (2015a) launched the maritime CSDP operation EUNAVFOR Sophia on 22 June. The operation was mandated to combat human trafficking and smuggling in the Southern Central Mediterranean. With 22 participating Member States and an estimated strength of 2,000 troops, it is among the largest and potentially costliest CSDP operations to date.

Summing up, Libya has been a difficult case in terms of both the ENP and comprehensive EU crisis management. When ENP-related activities and funds were frozen during the 2011 crisis, intergovernmental dynamics prevailed, leading to an incoherent crisis response. Between 2011 and 2013, ENP and CFSP measures co-existed. The level of ENP funding suggests that the EU did not put its full economic weight behind the country’s stabilisation. Meanwhile, the lack of experienced local interlocutors, and diverging Member State priorities, prevented substantial CFSP engagement. Subsequent efforts to link the CFSP and ENP activities stalled due to the deteriorating security situation. When violence resurged in 2014, the EU presented a strategic concept for a comprehensive crisis response, which excluded the ENP. In practice, it focused on the conflict’s symptoms while it outsourced the more political crisis-management tasks to the UN.

The Syrian tragedy: towards a more conflict-sensitive ENP

In the 2000s, Syria was more integrated in the ENP than Libya. It was a fully-fledged member of the EMP, negotiations on a Syria–EU Association Agreement were ongoing, and the country was a founding member of the UfM. The priorities of EU–Syria cooperation outlined by the Country Strategy Paper and National Indicative Programme (2007–2010) – namely politico-administrative, economic and social reform – were aligned with the EU’s values (European Commission 2013). Once more, ENP activities were severely curtailed as the conflict unfolded.
The unfolding conflict: few open divisions

Protests in Syria started on 15 March 2011, after the arrest and torture of children accused of anti-regime graffiti in the southern city of Daraa. The protests soon spread as demonstrators called on President Bashar Al-Assad to step down. The regime responded with large-scale arrests, violent repression and torture. In July 2011, a group of defected officers established the Free Syrian Army, marking the beginning of organised armed resistance. Developments at the start of the Syrian conflict resembled the initial months of the Libyan uprising, but the international response did not. The UN veto powers, China and Russia (a traditional ally of the Syrian regime), refused to go beyond diplomatic condemnations of violence. They rejected attempts to invoke the responsibility to protect as they accused the Western-led coalition in Libya of overstepping their mandate and promoting regime change (Tisdall 2011).

The EU’s initial response to the Syrian uprisings was coherent. It reacted to the escalation of violence with diplomatic declarations calling on the regime to protect peaceful demonstrators (Ashton 2011c). Two months into the protests, the EU froze the draft Association Agreement and suspended all bilateral cooperation programmes including those under the ENPI (EEAS 2015). As attempts to impose UN-level sanctions failed, the EU and the US imposed autonomous sanctions and restrictive measures. From May 2011 onwards, the EU gradually strengthened its sanctions regime to include an arms embargo, an oil import embargo, asset freezes and travel bans. In November 2011, the European Investment Bank put all existing loans to Syria on hold. The regime consequently accused the EU (and the US) of waging a ‘diplomatic and humanitarian war’ against Syria and suspended its membership in the UfM (EurActiv 2011).

In the field of diplomacy, the Member States were less openly divided than in the Libyan case. During the initial months of the Syrian uprising, many in the West still hoped that Assad would agree to an orderly transition or some other form of political compromise. This might explain why the US and the EU waited until 18 August 2011 to urge Assad to step down (Ashton 2011b). On 23 August 2011, the Syrian National Council (SNC) established itself as representative of the Syrian people. Once more, France was the first EU Member State to grant full diplomatic recognition, in November 2011. The EU signalled its willingness to engage with the SNC, but only granted full diplomatic recognition on 27 February 2012.

There was little appetite in the EU (or the US) to engage in a military intervention parallel to that in Libya, without a UN mandate and in a country with a more potent army as well as powerful international allies. In November 2011, France proposed the establishment of a humanitarian corridor in Syria to allow aid groups and observers into the country with the aim of protecting civilians. This was the first time that a major western nation proposed some form of military engagement in Syria since the beginning of the conflict. However, the EU did not endorse the French proposal.

Rising stakes and crumbling unity

Until 2013, the EU was relatively united. It became the most important humanitarian donor in the Syrian crisis and backed the UN-led efforts aiming at a political solution. But while the Syrian conflict turned into the ‘worst humanitarian disaster since the end of the Cold War’ (Chulov 2013), the EU’s unity crumbled. In March 2013, France and the UK started to push for a partial lifting of the arms embargo, to allow for weapon deliveries to moderate rebels. They argued that there was a stark imbalance between the rebels and Assad’s forces, which received continuous supplies from Iran and Russia. The easing of the arms embargo was presented as a means to put pressure on Assad ahead of the international peace negotiations.
Other Member States such as Germany, Austria, Sweden and the Czech Republic were sceptical and feared that weapon deliveries would intensify the conflict and turn it into a proxy war (Croft 2013).

France and Britain challenged the EU’s vertical coherence, as they threatened to act unilaterally if the EU failed to ease the embargo. This move could have dismantled the whole sanctions regime, which was set to expire on 1 June 2013. The Member States eventually settled on a compromise, which entailed easing the arms embargo without immediate weapon delivery and while maintaining the other sanctions. They also agreed on a common framework to guide future weapon deliveries with the declared aim of protecting civilians. Despite this compromise, the episode was viewed as a serious blow to the EU’s foreign policy in general and its approach to the Syrian conflict specifically (Marcus 2013).

Shortly after, the EU institutions made an attempt to increase the coherence of the EU’s response to the conflict. On 24 June 2013, the Commission and the HR/VP presented a joint Communication entitled ‘Towards a comprehensive EU approach to the Syrian crisis’. The document sought to bring together the ‘EU and its Member States’ policies and instruments’ to support a political solution, prevent regional destabilisation, address the humanitarian crisis and deal with the consequences for the EU (European Commission and HR/VP 2013). While it mentioned intergovernmental policy areas, such as diplomacy and sanctions, the document’s key focus was on humanitarian assistance to Syria and neighbouring countries. Accordingly, it reallocated ENPI funds worth EUR145 million for 2013.

In August 2013, another ‘high politics’ issue divided the Member States. On 21 August, a chemical weapons attack in Ghouta – a rebel stronghold in the Damascus region – killed hundreds of civilians and opposition forces. The US denounced the attack as a grave violation of international law and declared its willingness to conduct limited air strikes against the Assad regime. The EU Member States were united in condemning the attack, but divided on the appropriate response. The UK and France were the only ones signalling support for a US-led air campaign. The UK later withdrew its pledge for military support due to strong opposition by a war-weary British public, reluctant to follow the US lead after the experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan. Due to combined diplomatic pressure by Washington and Moscow, a military intervention could be averted and Assad agreed on the destruction of Syria’s chemical weapons arsenal as well as on the accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

ISIS and the refugee crisis: horizontal without vertical coherence

In 2014–2015, three interlinked developments further raised the stakes linked to the Syrian crisis. The first was the expansion of the self-styled Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Initially an Al-Qaeda cell in Iraq, the group used the power vacuum to seize control over large parts of Syria and Iraq and to establish a presence in Libya. The second development was a series of ISIS-linked terrorist attacks in neighbouring and European countries, culminating in the tragic Paris attacks of 13 November 2015. The third development was the unprecedented increase of Syrian refugees headed towards Europe. Between January and December 2015, 349,901 Syrians applied for asylum in the EU, raising the total number of applicants since the beginning of the conflict to 579,184 (UNHCR 2015).

On 20 October 2014, the Foreign Affairs Council called for a comprehensive response to the ISIS threat and tasked the European Commission and the HR/VP with the elaboration of a regional strategy. It published an ‘EU Regional Strategy for Syria and Iraq as well as the Da’esh threat’ five months later (Council of the European Union 2015b). The strategy aimed at enhancing coherence. It called for synergies between the EU and Member State actions
and underlined the need for complementarity between diplomacy, humanitarian aid, sanctions and longer-term development cooperation. In line with the call for horizontal coherence, it allocated EUR1 billion to the regional crisis complex for 2014–2015 from different EU budget lines, amounting to EUR144 million under the ENI for the Syrian crisis. The ENI funds were supposed to help prevent regional spill-overs, enhance border security, strengthen the moderate opposition, provide basic services and rebuild administration in areas of reduced violence (Council of the European Union 2015b).

The EU used additional ENI funds to complement humanitarian assistance. In December 2014, it established the ‘Madad’ Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian crisis to implement the priorities set out in the UN Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (European Commission 2016). The aim of the Fund was to pool financial contributions from the EU budget, the Member States, non-EU donors and private entities and to disburse them flexibly to Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. In 2015, the EU allocated EUR300 million under the ENI to the Madad Fund and redirected EUR200 million to it from the Instrument for Pre-Accession (European Commission 2016).

The flexible use of ENI funds shows that the EU has learned some lessons in terms of increasing horizontal coherence. The same cannot be said for vertical coherence. The EU-level contribution to the Madad Fund was to be matched with another EUR500 million from the Member States. By November 2015, they had only committed EUR32.4 million and, thus, little more than 6 per cent (European Parliament 2015). The Member States primarily viewed the Madad Fund as a means for pooling the EU’s different budget lines (Hauck et al. 2015). Some were reluctant to channel contributions via the Fund as they feared a decrease of their own visibility and political influence. Others believed that the UN should be the primary recipient and that the Fund would just increase transaction costs and cause unnecessary delays (ibid.). The bottom line is that the UN faced important funding gaps, while many Member States failed to contribute their ‘fair share’ to the international crisis response (OXFAM 2016).

In addition, the Member States had no common collective approach to ‘high politics’. They did not agree on military engagement in the fight against ISIS in Syria or Iraq. Their contributions were either unilateral or organised in the framework of the US-led coalition against ISIS. After the Paris attacks, France attempted to Europeanise these contributions when it invoked, for the first time, the EU’s mutual assistance clause (Art. 42.7 TEU). After a unanimous and strong pledge of assistance, the Member States’ assistance to France’s operations in Syria and other theatres were agreed bilaterally instead of being coordinated at the EU level. Though variable, the Europeans’ contribution to the military fight against ISIS remained marginal. The US was responsible for strategy and conducted 85 per cent of all air strikes (European Council on Foreign Relations 2015).

Meanwhile, the migratory repercussions of the Syrian conflict became a hard test for vertical coherence. A few Member States such as Sweden and Germany accepted the bulk of the Syrian refugees. Proposals to establish a more equitable distribution met with intense political resistance from national capitals. In September 2015, the EU agreed on a binding mechanism for the redistribution of 160,000 Syrian refugees, but by December only a few hundred had been relocated.

Overall, the EU played a key role as the most important humanitarian donor in the Syrian crisis. It used ENI funds to complement short-term humanitarian assistance and counter-terrorism measures. However, as the UN’s funding gaps and the persistent refugee flows illustrated, the EU and the Member States failed to provide the necessary financial bridge between emergency and longer-term aid. The EU Member States could not agree on a coordinated political strategy, a collective military contribution or sustainable mechanisms for the management and support of...
the refugees. Meanwhile, other global and regional players that are far less affected by the repercussions of the Syrian conflict have dominated in the military and diplomatic realm.

Conclusions

The 2015 ENP review shows that the EU has learned some important lessons from the Libyan and Syrian cases. It identified stabilisation as the main political priority for the following three to five years and put a greater focus on the security dimension and migration. It announced the creation of an ENI flexibility cushion for ‘conflict and post-conflict needs; refugee support; crises and disaster response; and for security and stabilisation programmes’ (European Commission and HR/VP 2015: 20). Trust Funds were mentioned as examples of how the EU can respond more flexibly to short-term financial needs. The review presents the EU Regional Strategy for Syria and Iraq as well as the ISIL/Da’esh threat as a useful tool to ensure coherence (Council of the European Union 2015b). Clearly, the ENP will not turn into a crisis response mechanism. However, as the Libyan and Syrian cases showed, the EU can strengthen the ENP’s strategic, financial and institutional links with other fields of comprehensive crisis management.

The review also underlines the need for greater ownership by the Member States. It aims at enhancing vertical coherence through a greater role for the Council. However, the experience with Libya and Syria suggests that this will be a challenging endeavour. While the EU has reacted swiftly and substantially in the fields of humanitarian aid and sanctions, the Member States have often failed to act coherently in areas of ‘high politics’. They either deviated from agreed EU positions or failed to agree on a common approach regarding crisis diplomacy, the use of force and migration.

Strengthening the ENP’s security dimension and enhancing the focus on migration implies bridging the gaps between supranational and intergovernmental policy areas. This is a traditional challenge in the implementation of EU external action. However, the link between the ENP and comprehensive crisis management magnifies the challenge as the former represents a long-term policy, while the latter suggests a multidimensional short-term approach in a context often marked by urgency, potentially high stakes and risks. This is particularly true for defence and immigration, which are attached to domestic political stakes. There is a chance that the increased visibility of the security- and migration-related implications of the Libyan and Syrian crises for the EU could foster a greater sense of shared and indivisible responsibility and thus enhance the Member States’ propensity for collective action. Such a political momentum would be needed to truly bolster the ENP’s security dimension.

Note

1. The analysis draws on a range of expert interviews with decision-makers in Brussels and national capitals conducted between 2011 and 2015. Interviews were held under the condition of anonymity. In-text referencing corresponds to generic designations in line with interviewee preferences.

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367
Nicole Koenig


