

# CDE4Peace

REVIEW | ASSESS | INNOVATE | RECOMMEND

## CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT AND EXPERIMENTATION FOR EU CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PEACEBUILDING (CDE4PEACE)

### **D6.1** **Policy recommendations**

by Nikolay Pavlov



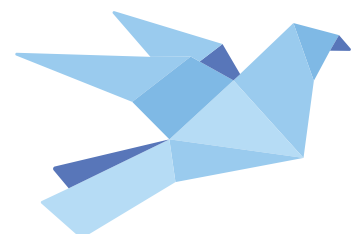
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# Table of Content

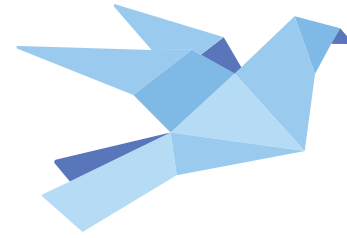
|   |    |
|---|----|
| 1. Introduction.....  | 6  |
| 2. Analytical framework .....   | 8  |
| 3. Strategic concepts for EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding .....                    | 10 |
| 4. Operational concepts for EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding .....                  | 12 |
| 5. Available and emerging CD&E tools .....  | 14 |
| 6. Potential of a CD&E tool for the EU's conflict prevention and peacebuilding policy ..... | 15 |
| 7. Conclusions .....  | 17 |
| 8. References .....   | 18 |

# Executive Summary

This deliverable presents actionable policy recommendations for integrating the Concept development and experimentation (CD&E) methodology in the EU policy decision-making cycle. It has been developed under WP6 Recommend of the CDE4Peace project. Drawing on the project's research findings an analytical framework is outlined and five key policy recommendations are proposed for operationalizing CD&E as a policy tool in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

# 1. Introduction

One of the major challenges for the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in an increasingly volatile security environment during the last years has been the design and implementation of research-based conflict prevention and peacebuilding missions and operations. At the political level EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding have been addressed in the ambitious Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy (EU Global Strategy, 2016) and by the Member States' decision to launch the long overdue Permanent Structured Cooperation on security and defence (PESCO) in 2017. In the period 2020-2022 another important document – the EU's Strategic Compass has been drafted and widely discussed at the highest EU political level. In addition, at the policy and academic level several new concepts and approaches have been proposed and some of them have been implemented with mixed results in conflict-stricken countries. After the establishment of the European External Action Service the EU adopted from NATO the concept of a comprehensive approach. In 2016 the concept of an integrated approach to external conflicts and crises was proclaimed in the EU Global Strategy. The EU Global Strategy also puts special emphasis on the concept of resilience which has been interpreted as the new EU foreign policy paradigm (Juncos, 2017) and even broader in terms of ideology (Chandler, 2013). Within the frameworks of a H2020 research project a 'whole-of-society' conceptual approach to EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding has been designed which highlights the importance of inclusivity of local societies for the sustainability of peacebuilding (Martin, et al., 2018). In another H2020 research project a novel conflict-sensitive conceptual approach to EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding has been elaborated (Rieker and Blockmans, 2019). Overall, the proposed concepts and approaches cannot be considered



as fully developed theoretical concepts in scientific terms. In many cases and, especially in official EU documents which are consensual by default the new (or rebranded) concepts display obvious inconsistencies and even contradictions. These are rather hypotheses or pre-theories in the sense of Rosenau's classical work (Rosenau, 1966). While conceptual work in the academia has occasionally yielded distinguished results, it has not been able to provide EU policy-making with ideas and tools substantiating the claim for the EU as a global actor. It is quite obvious that the EU has not been able to play an active peacebuilding role in many crises on the international arena, including in the war in Ukraine.

Similar to other social science disciplines research on EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding lacks an experimental phase. This is a major problem of the research-policy interface as it is practically impossible to validate the emerging new strategic and operational concepts. To great extent the proposed novel concepts and approaches remain unverified political and academic speculations. The complexities of policy implementation warrant the introduction of experimental research in the study of EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding. A promising tool for experimental research in the field of EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding is Concept development and experimentation (CD&E) which gained ground in NATO throughout the last 20 years.

In NATO CD&E is defined as a combination of methods and tools that drives NATO's transformation by enabling the structured development of creative and innovative ideas into viable solutions (NATO CDE Handbook, 2021, p.1). Given that NATO is the world's largest and, allegedly the most successful military alliance it is tempting to achieve a proper understanding of CD&E and to investigate how this transformation tool can be adopted by the EU and effectively utilized in EU policy-making.

At this backdrop the principal research objective of the CDE4Peace project was to explore the potential of Concept development and experimentation for enhancing the EU's conflict prevention and peacebuilding policy. The project had three specific research objectives. First, it aimed at assessing the applicability and compatibility of Concept development and experimentation with strategic and operational concepts in the area of EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding. CD&E is seen as a promising tool for the transformation of complex security systems, especially in NATO context but its potential for EU policies has not been explored.

Secondly, the project sought to introduce and adapt CD&E to EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding by defining the requirements for an innovative CD&E tool tailored for this specific policy area. Finally, the project aimed at defining actionable policy recommendations for implementing the CD&E methodology and tools in the complex EU policy-making process. To this end WP6 (Recommend) in the CDE4Peace project has developed an analytical framework for CD&E as a policy tool and distilled the main policy-relevant findings and recommendations from the project.



## 2. Analytical framework

Similar to other ideas in the long and proud history of ideas Concept development and experimentation could be analysed from two perspectives. As argued by Skinner (1969) there are two orthodox (though conflicting) answers to the question about the appropriate procedures to arrive at an understanding in the history of ideas. The first perspective insists that it is the context “of religious, political and economic factors” which determine the meaning of any given idea. The other perspective, however, insists on the autonomy of the idea itself as the sole necessary key to its own meaning. The alternative approach suggested by Skinner, and which is also applicable to CD&E is to focus on the essential variety of ideas, without hoping to learn directly “timeless truths” from “classical texts”. To paraphrase Skinner (1969, p.52), the EU must learn to do its own CD&E for EU purposes.

The analytical framework draws on several approaches in order to unpack CD&E and provide meaningful support to EU policy-making. No single approach can help resolve the “research puzzle” of CD&E. The approach coming from institutional isomorphism is most relevant for analysing CD&E in the context of the EU-NATO relationship and for studying the adoption of CD&E in the European Union’s Common Security and Defence Policy. From the perspective of institutional isomorphism CD&E could be analysed as a distinctive NATO brand of organisational innovation and institutional response to external and internal pressures (Pavlov, 2022). CD&E in its dual identity of policy and methodology has certain limitations; it is not a silver bullet for all existing problems that international organisations face in defence planning and capability development.

The project’s empirical findings demonstrate that so far CD&E has been adopted from NATO and applied by the EU in its defence planning and capability development process under the CSDP to a very limited extent. CD&E does not provide tangible input to the main steps in the EU defence planning process in terms of determining requirements or defining capability development priorities. CD&E as a project management methodology has not been applied in EU defence



capability development under the PESCO or European Defence Fund (EDF) frameworks. The CD&E methodology has only been employed occasionally in EU civilian capability development in the area of disaster response. Despite the modest adoption in the EU’s defence planning CDE4Peace research found that CD&E has the potential to be one of the tools to support the EU’s integrated civil-military capabilities in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

Overall, there is a low degree of isomorphism and institutional overlap between NATO and the EU in the application of CD&E. The purported “strategic partnership” between the EU and NATO is widely understood to be problematic, by both academics and practitioners. As noted by Smith and Gebhard (2017, p.305) NATO member Turkey has been blocking any attempt at establishing stronger formal cooperative ties between the alliance and the EU. In this context, it is not realistic to expect any meaningful cooperation between the EU and NATO in the specific area of Concept development and experimentation either. The development of autonomous EU capabilities for CD&E should be streamlined as part of the EU policy process and oriented to achieving EU strategic autonomy.

CD&E is not completely unknown to the EU. Presently, CD&E in the EU falls within the remit of the EU Military Staff which is a part of the European External Action Service (EEAS). EUMS

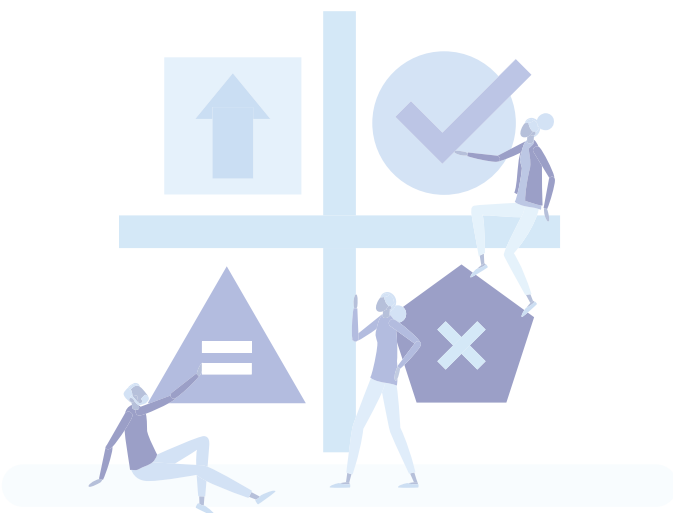


has a special place as a military body (under the EU Military Committee authority) in a mainly civilian organisation as the EEAS. CD&E activities, including the implementation of the EU Military Conceptual Development Implementation Programme (CDIP) are entrusted to the small Concept Development Branch within the EUMS Concepts and Capability Directorate. With only a few action officers the EUMS Concept Development Branch has no resources and manpower to pursue an adequate CD&E policy at the EU level (Interview no.1; Interview no.2). Having much more resources and experience in policy implementation the European Commission is better suited to carry out the European Union's Concept development and experimentation policy at the EU level. Of course, the implementation of the EU's CD&E policy as a civil-military synergy should involve all relevant EU actors such as the EUMS and the European Defence Agency under the leadership of the European Commission as the major EU supranational body. Apart from adequate resourcing this policy solution will ensure effective civilian control over the CD&E process in the EU.

Apart from the institutionalist approach, the analysis of CD&E could also benefit from a gender perspective. The potential application of CD&E tools to EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding would involve human beings, hence gender differences are very relevant. On the one hand, the EU has declared commitment to gender equality and to the Women, Peace and

Security agenda after the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1325. Recent research shows some advances in the EU's integration of a gender perspective in EU's peacebuilding policy but some scholars assert that the Union still lacks a systematic approach that places gender at the centre of its interventions (Urrutia, et al., 2016, p.19). It has even been suggested that despite the EU rhetoric on gender equality EU conflict prevention policy continues to be patriarchal and gender analysis is not taken into consideration (Davis, 2018, p.4). In this context the introduction of the gender perspective in the potential application of CD&E tools to EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding could improve the validity and reliability of the research results. Very importantly, the gender perspective should be employed as a research method and not imposed as a form of ideological control.

Overall, CD&E is atheoretical; it is elusive to theorizing and this is one of the reasons it is not warmly welcomed in the "ivory towers" of the academia and the fancy world of peer-reviewed journals. CD&E, however, is policy-oriented "by birth" which makes it very suitable for applied research and applied policy research, in particular. Drawing on the analytical framework, the next chapters will demonstrate how CD&E could be put in action by the EU in the development and implementation of the Union's strategic and operational concepts for conflict prevention and peacebuilding.



### 3. Strategic concepts for EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding

Strategic concepts in the area of EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding contain political assessments, objectives and guidance (CDE4Peace D3.1, 2020). These are typically outlined in strategic policy documents or legal acts, such as the European Security Strategy (2003) the EU Global Strategy (2016) and the Lisbon Treaty (2009). Characteristic examples of strategic concepts in the area are resilience and the integrated approach; the concept of a comprehensive approach; crisis management, stabilisation, the liberal peace concept, and post-liberal peace. Some of the concepts, such as liberal peace, resilience, sovereignty or common strategic culture could be considered metapolitical in nature as they are subjects of theoretical or philosophical political science. In some of these cases, most notably with regard to resilience and liberal peace the term 'paradigm' is equally justified.

Strategic concepts constitute specific intellectual and social constructs which are designed to feed the EU policy process. Strategic concepts are defined in a highly abstract way which presents great challenge to existing experimental methods. In practice, strategic concepts are being tested in the old-fashioned way, through academic and policy debates. Strategic concepts are difficult to quantify in a meaningful way. A clear example is the concept of strategic autonomy which has been gaining traction in Europe over the last years.

The concept of strategic autonomy formally was first introduced in the EU Global Strategy (2016) but was not clearly defined in the document. Fiott (2018) describes three different conceptual visions of strategic autonomy in the EU. The first vision of strategic autonomy is that of responsibility. This vision links directly to the notion that European states should take up a greater share of the burden inside NATO and, when appropriate, through the EU. Under this vision, autonomy is defined as the freedom to conduct missions and operations autonomously rather than the freedom from dependencies on the U.S. The second vision interprets strategic



The Roman Ruin at Schönbrunn, Vienna

autonomy as hedging. Strategic hedging can be seen as a way to ensure that EU defence structures and policies are autonomous and effective enough to take on a range of military tasks should the U.S. gradually withdraw from Europe over time. The third and most radical vision is strategic autonomy as strategic emancipation. The three conceptual visions have very different geopolitical and defence-industrial implications.

In the "Macron doctrine" strategic autonomy is directly linked with the wider concept of European sovereignty (Macron 2020). As noted by the French President Emmanuel Macron, if there were European sovereignty, there would be a fully established European political power in place ... the concept of European strategic autonomy or European sovereignty is very strong, very rich; it says that we are a cohesive political and cultural space, that we owe it to our citizens not to depend on others.

In this interpretation strategic autonomy has not only geopolitical and technological but also ideological dimensions. This is certainly inspiring given that the ideological foundations of the CSDP and EU crisis management have traditionally been underestimated (Pavlov 2015). The downside of the "Macron doctrine" is that the ideological substance is not clearly articulated and the problem space of the strategic concept becomes enormous.

The concept of pragmatic strategic autonomy has been interpreted by the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP) Josep Borrell as a process of political survival for Europe (Borrell 2020). His view represents the mainstream concept which seeks to combine reference to the vital character of the transatlantic relationship with calls for Europeans increasingly taking charge of their own security. The mainstream concept is further developed under the Strategic Compass which aims at harmonizing the perception of threats and risks among EU Member States. As shown by the work on the Strategic Compass the concrete implications and policies within the concept of strategic autonomy are difficult to define and negotiate between the EU 27.

Given the present maturity level of EU strategic concepts the most promising CD&E methods to be employed are strategic-level exercises and concept testing. Strategic-level exercises (live or simulation) could provide the opportunity for experimenting strategic concepts in a safe and controlled environment. The ability of the EU to conduct strategic-level CD&E exercises with strategic autonomy-framed scenarios would be a major test for the concept itself. The symbolic power of a regular EU-wide strategic autonomy CD&E exercise under joint French-German leadership could be very high.

Very promising is also applying the CD&E technique of concept testing for strengthening strategic concepts and raising their maturity level. Concept testing is a novel method that uses critical thinking to improve concept robustness and enhance concept quality (Norman and Fenning, 2019). Concept testing is well suited to the analysis of complex policy and doctrine documents. Concept testing examines the four main elements of a concept: the motivation, aim, proposition (core idea), and proposal (plan). A concept test takes these components of a concept and tries to “draw” the links within the

argument. Concept testing enables the problem space to be clearly described and the logic of its argument elucidated. Concept testing is suitable for strengthening CSDP strategic concepts in terms of logical coherence, the validity of assumptions made, the quality of information and gaps in the argument.

As demonstrated by the example with strategic autonomy the benefits of applying CD&E to EU strategic concepts are more political than scientific. CD&E could support the intellectual process of further exploring conflict prevention and peacebuilding and finding innovative and viable solutions for the effective survival and transformation of this EU policy area. By exercises and concept testing CD&E can play a supporting role in keeping EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding relevant to the constantly changing geopolitical environment and the complex internal EU undercurrents. The CD&E methodology, however, cannot provide “scientifically proven” strategic concepts as this goes beyond its powers.

The actual application of CD&E in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding very much relies on the complex defence games of partnership and cunning played between the EU and NATO. As argued by Smith and Gebhard (2017) EU – NATO relations are running on the fumes of informed deconfliction. While strategic partnership is widely declared, the survival and adaptation strategies of the two international actors in the harsh geopolitical realities do not necessarily play out in sweet harmony. Different scenarios for the future NATO – EU relations are possible, ranging from increased collaboration in the defence realm (Biscop 2018, pp.175-178) to the most radical vision of the EU’s strategic autonomy as emancipation (Fiott 2018, p.6). Without seeking to predict the future, it is obvious that the state of NATO – EU relations will have decisive impact on the application of CD&E in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

## 4. Operational concepts for EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding

CD&E methods can be applied to EU peacebuilding missions and operations for testing and validating operational concepts. Operational concepts govern the planning and conduct of concrete peacebuilding operations and missions (CDE4Peace D3.2, 2020). After 20 years of the CSDP the EU has conducted more than 35 missions and operations using civilian and military instruments.

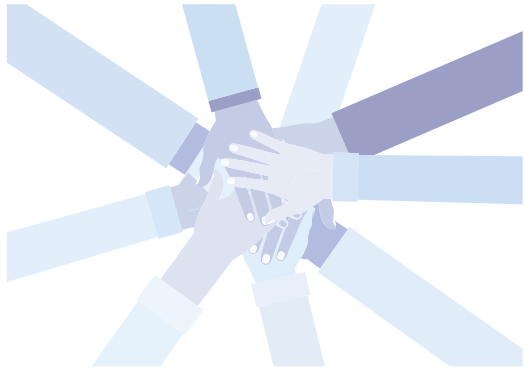
EU operational and mission concepts are framed by a number of policy and operational documents drafted by EU bodies and adopted by Member States in the Council. The main documents are the Crisis Management Concept (CMC), Military or Civilian Strategic Options (MSOs / CSOs), the respective Council Decision, the Concepts of Operations (CONOPS), and the Operational Plan (OPLAN). The operational concept is the main output from the CSDP operational planning process. The operational concept is a valid research unit and a credible research subject.

EU operational concepts are suitable for the application of quantitative research methods. The mandates – which are pivotal in operational concepts – can be converted into quantifiable variables. Operational concepts are centred around mandates which describe what actually the operation has to achieve. Mandates could be converted analytically into operation goals and tasks, which in turn can be assessed by means of quantifiable peace indicators. At the policy level the introduction of quantifiable indicators for measuring mandates performance and implementation could be helpful for defining more realistic mandates and clear exit strategies. At the academic level quantification enhances the scientific credibility of future research in this area and makes possible an important (and missing) methodological link between qualitative and quantitative research methods. The quantification of EU operational concepts is important as precisely quantitative methods prevail in the CD&E methodology.

Mandates of concrete EU missions and operations could be tested and validated through well-established CD&E methods, such as exercises, modelling & simulation (M&S), wargaming, alternative analysis and operational analysis. Exercises (also known as exercise-based experiments) are a source of great competitive advantage (de Nijs, 2019, p.6). In the EU context exercises could enable EU bodies to develop and evaluate capabilities and forms of operation. Some small-scale exercises have been conducted by the EU but so far, they have been focussed primarily on training.







Including experiments in exercises could benefit the EU's operational planning capabilities. Experimentation of EU operational concepts could also be conducted by means of modelling, simulation and wargaming. Very useful could also be alternative analysis which is a set of methods in the NATO CD&E process supporting the inclusion of independent critical thought and alternative perspectives in the decision-making process (NATO Alternative Analysis Handbook, 2017, p.3). For example, alternative analysis could be applied to carry out a scientific assessment of alternative options for mandates (e.g., executive vs. non-executive mandate; civilian vs. military or civil-military missions / operations).

In principle operational analysis as a CD&E method could also be employed to test and validate EU operational concepts. Operational analysis is generally defined as the application of scientific methods to assist executive decision-makers (NATO Glossary, 2019, p.93). Operational analysis is an evidenced-based method which involves the construction of mathematical models to describe a system. In the context of EU CSDP operations, however, the construction of precise mathematical models is highly problematic due to insufficiently reliable data and data fragmentation. The development of metrics and evidence base of EU missions and operations is still in its initial phase. The first attempt to develop a centralized, comprehensive and accurate database on the EU's CSDP missions and operations is the EU's Global Engagement Database (Di Mauro, et al., 2017). The database's main contribution is the credible definition of 73 variables and indicators related to mission and operation duration, EU Member States' participation, personnel, goals, level of engagement, conflict intensity and budget.

The database, however, does not provide variables on the impact from missions and operations. In practice, there is no reliable data on defining trends and measuring violence levels in conflict-stricken countries, such as:

- *trends in the number of victims and affected people from a conflict after an operation has been launched,*
- *trends in the disruption of critical infrastructures after the start of an operation,*
- *the number of trained personnel under an operation, etc.*

Hence, it is difficult to capture the causal link between EU operations and conflict trends on the ground. This weakness with regard to numbers significantly reduces the usefulness of operational analysis with regard to EU operational concepts.

Apart from experimenting concrete EU missions and operations, CD&E methods can also be used to test and validate the Comprehensive concept for ESDP police strengthening missions (Council of the EU, 2009). The concept is very important in the light of the fact that the bulk of all EU peacebuilding missions are civilian and most of them are actually police missions. The comprehensive concept constitutes a framework for police strengthening missions under the CSDP. CD&E methods, and specifically exercise-based experiments could be conducted to test and validate the modular structure of missions, the civil-military coordination mechanism and the planning guidelines set out in the comprehensive concept. The experiments could be supported with software tools for modelling & simulation.

In principle CD&E methods can be instrumental in the operation planning phase to support evidence-based and informed decisions. In practice, though, CD&E methods are time-consuming and expensive. Their application in the operation planning phase is very likely to further complicate the planning process. Therefore, CD&E can be applied most properly in the lessons learned phase when the operation's overall performance, impact, strengths and weaknesses are being evaluated. Lessons learned identified with the support of CD&E methods can be used in planning future EU missions and operations.

## 5. Available and emerging CD&E tools

By combining the ‘technology watch’ method with qualitative interviews the CDE4Peace project has identified on the European market 11 tools which could be used for concept development and experimentation purposes in the EU policy area of conflict prevention and peacebuilding (CDE4Peace D4.1, 2021). The CD&E-related tools are very diverse: software tools, simulation systems and platforms, command and control systems, virtual environments, knowledge bases (indexes) and serious games. Only some of the tools (e.g., TNO ACE and to some extent the German Armed Forces synthetic wargame KORA) have been developed specifically for CD&E purposes but all of the tools in practice could be used in a CD&E-structured process. About half of the tools identified are simulation systems which potentially could be used for the experimentation of mission and operational concepts for EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Very

importantly, some of the simulation systems have already been successfully integrated. The Datalab knowledge base and the Global Conflict Risk Index (GCRI) could potentially be used for scenario development in strategic-level exercises. Some of the tools, such as the ‘Gaming for peace’ game adequately address the gender aspects of EU peacebuilding. Overall, the tools identified are applicable to strategic and operational concepts in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding but they are not tailor-made for this EU policy area. The development of a CD&E tool for this EU policy area requires considerable investment and the involvement of end-users from EU institutions. There is a market gap for a CD&E tool tailor-made for the EU’s policy area of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Moreover, achieving strategic autonomy of the EU is hardly possible unless the Union develops capabilities for concept development and experimentation in the area of conflict prevention and peacebuilding.



## 6. Potential of a CD&E tool for the EU's conflict prevention and peacebuilding policy

The CDE4Peace project has defined the requirements for a CD&E tool tailor-made for EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding (CDE4Peace D5.1, 2022). It is designed as an innovative simulation platform for training and experimentation in the area of EU peacebuilding missions and operations. The principal objectives of the CD&E platform are: 1) to improve human performance in EU peacebuilding missions and operations through training; 2) to improve mission and operational planning through experimentation. The main innovation of the CD&E platform is in that it goes beyond training in the area of experimentation of EU peacebuilding concepts. In the EU context which is framed by a still not fully developed Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) peacebuilding training and experimentation are closely connected and hardly separable in institutional and organisational terms. Therefore, the experimentation objectives in the CDE platform are aligned with exercise and training goals. The target audience of the platform is EU peacebuilding personnel from missions and operations on the ground as well as EU officers in Brussels-based EU institutions.

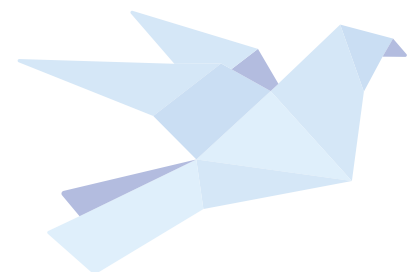
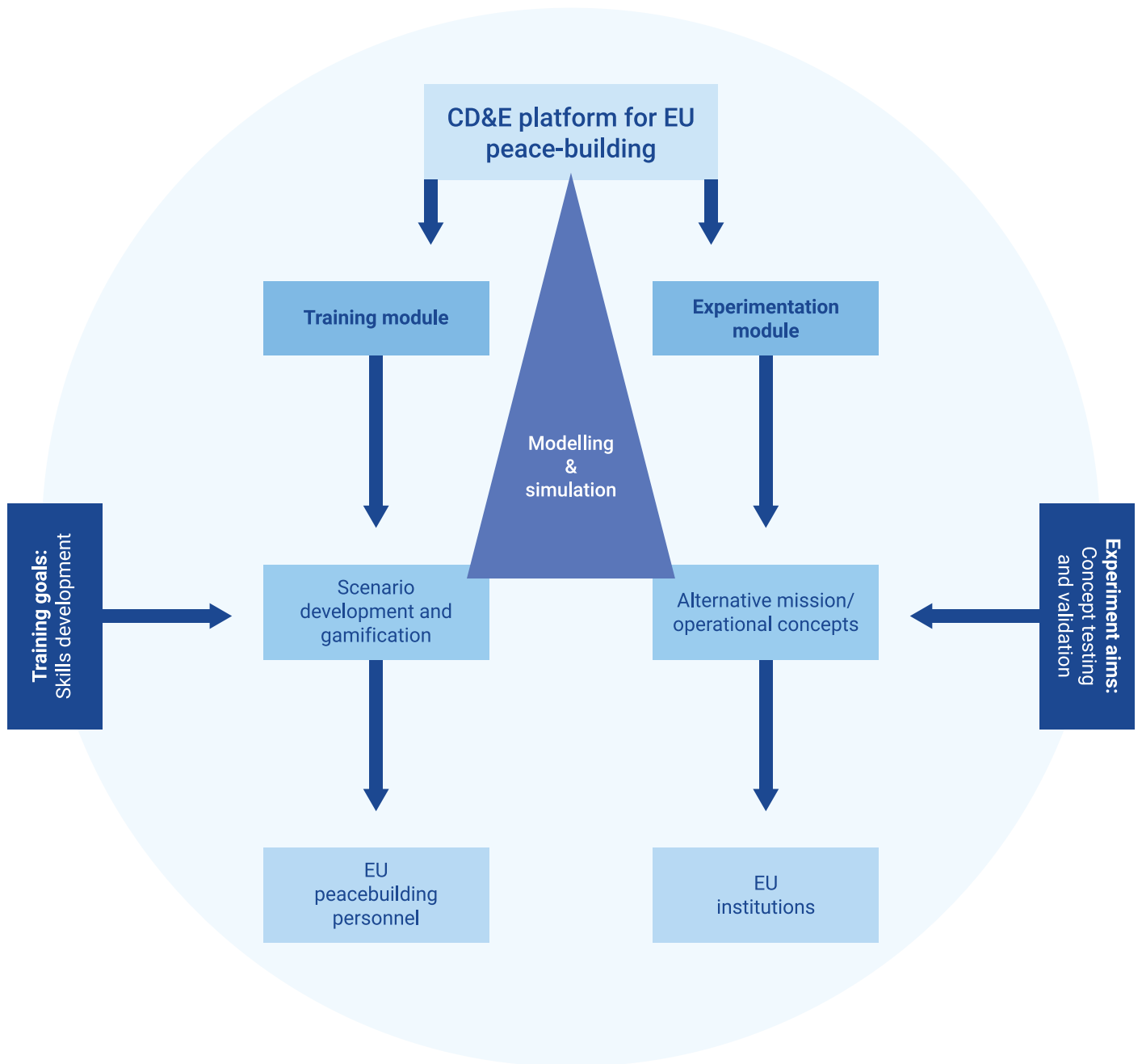
The CD&E platform is comprised of two modules, a training module and an experimentation module built around modelling and simulation (M&S) methods, techniques and tools. The training module of the CDE platform is designed as a scenario-driven multiple-player online role-playing visual game. It is a collective training tool driven by scenarios which take place in a fictitious conflict-stricken country where an EU peacebuilding mission is deployed. The training module is designed as a gamification module which applies gamification schemes and mechanisms in the CD&E platform. The experimentation module of the platform is designed and based upon the research finding that mandates are pivotal in EU

missions and operations. Mandates represent the EU's intentions and shape the respective mission / operation throughout its life-cycle. Hence, the experimentation module of the CD&E platform is mandate-driven and scenario-based. The main objective is to experiment and validate alternative mandates and operational concepts by scenarios. The experimentation module of the CDE platform employs the M&S method of simulation-based experiment. It is designed to experiment alternative EU mission and operational concepts and mandates (e.g., executive vs. non-executive mandate; civilian vs. military or civil-military missions / operations).

The CD&E platform could support the testing and validation of alternative EU-level governance models and institutional architectures derived from intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism. Intergovernmentalism models will be based on the predominant role of member states, while neofunctionalist models will be based on the role of EU supranational institutions. Secondly, the CD&E platform has the potential to support the development and refinement of EU strategic and operational concepts in the area of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. By exercise-based experiments the CD&E platform can confirm or disprove a concept-related hypothesis, or formally validate a strategic or an operational concept. The CD&E platform is a tool which enables the EU to take advantage of the potential of CD&E in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding.



## CD&E platform concept and design





## 7. Conclusions

By the proposed policy recommendations, the CDE4Peace project seeks to contribute to the improvement of EU policy-making in the area of conflict prevention and peacebuilding from a research-based CD&E methodological perspective. The project's interdisciplinary methodology is credible for linking the academic and policy analysis on EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding with experimental research and CD&E in particular. The complex NATO CD&E process, of course, cannot be replicated in the EU. First of all, these are different international entities. While NATO is beyond a doubt an international military-political organisation, the nature of the EU as an international actor is widely contested in international relations theory. The EU is seen by different schools of thought as a federal system, an international organisation or a sui generis entity. The EU has very different organisational architecture compared with NATO. The direct transfer of CD&E from NATO to the EU is neither feasible, nor justifiable. Very

importantly, the EU is a civilian international (or supranational) actor and not a military one. Every step in the direction of enhanced defence cooperation in the EU has to cope with strong opposition prompted by fears of militarisation of the Union. Hence, these recommendations suggest the ways in which CD&E could actually be used in the complex EU policy process within the current institutional setting, without expectations for a radical overhaul of the EU policy-making system.



Based on the project's research findings five key policy recommendations can be drawn, as presented below:

1. The European Union must develop its own capabilities for Concept development and experimentation, independent from NATO and aimed at achieving the EU's strategic autonomy.
2. The European Union's integrated civil-military CD&E should be institutionalized within the European Commission which has the resources needed for mainstreaming and prioritising CD&E as a policy process and methodology.
3. The EU should integrate CD&E methods such as exercise-based experiments and concept testing into the EU's strategic concept development process.
4. CD&E methods such as exercises, modelling & simulation (M&S), wargaming and alternative analysis should be used for testing and validating EU mission and operational concepts.
5. The EU should operationalize CD&E as a policy tool in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding with the help of an innovative CD&E platform

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