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# The EU Advisory Mission Ukraine: Normative or Strategic Objectives?

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## About the Author

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## **Abstract**

In December 2014 the European Union (EU) deployed a Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mission in Ukraine. The mandate of the EU Advisory Mission (EUAM) was originally two years, but it has been extended until November 2017. This paper examines to what extent EUAM has been successful from the EU's perspective. It does so by assessing to what extent the mission has achieved its (explicit) normative objectives and (implicit) strategic objectives. The paper argues that the mission has contributed to the EU's strategic objectives by shaping the milieu in Ukraine but it has been less successful in advancing the EU's normative objectives. However, in the case of EUAM, the Union's strategic and normative interests, although different, have not hampered the mission's overall performance.

## Introduction

The most prolonged and deadly crisis in Ukraine's history since its independence began in 2013 as a protest against the government's decision to abandon plans to foster closer trade ties with the European Union (EU).<sup>1</sup> The 'Euromaidan' protests were, however, not only about the trade deal with the EU, but also showed that the public demanded reforms after decades of weak governance and a lopsided economy controlled by oligarchs and clans.<sup>2</sup> The EU had cautiously followed the developments in its Eastern neighbourhood, and there was visible interest from certain member states to be seen 'to do something' to stop the crisis.<sup>3</sup> Particularly Russia's influence in Ukraine was perceived as harmful, and the annexation of Ukraine's Crimea region in March 2014 strengthened this assessment.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, Russia's continued support for the Ukrainian separatists further escalated tensions between the Western powers and Russia.<sup>5</sup> Especially after the Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 was shot down over Donetsk on 17 July 2014 by Ukrainian separatists backed by Russia, there was strong support among EU member states to deploy a mission in Ukraine.<sup>6</sup>

On 1 December 2014, the European Union Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform Ukraine (EUAM) was deployed as part of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).<sup>7</sup> The purpose of this civilian mission is to mentor and advise the Ukrainian officials to deliver a civilian Security Sector Reform (SSR) that would help to stabilise the country in the long-run through enhanced democracy and rule of law.<sup>8</sup> The concrete activities taken are giving strategic advice to reform and develop the civilian security sector, hands-on training and projects and facilitation of cooperation between the Ukrainian and international actors.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> R. MacMahon, "Ukraine in crisis", London, Council on Foreign Relations, 25 August 2014.

<sup>2</sup> S. Solodkyy & V. Sharlay, "How could the EU accelerate reform in Ukraine?", Kiev, Institute of World Policy, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> B. Pohl, *EU Foreign Policy and Crisis Management Operations: Power, Purpose and Domestic Politics*, New York, Routledge, 2014, p. 172.

<sup>4</sup> N. Mirimanova, "Peacebuilding in Ukraine: What Role for the EU?", *EPLO Civil Society Dialogue Network Discussion Paper*, no. 8, Brussels, European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, 2014, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> N. Novaky, "Why so soft? The European Union in Ukraine", *Contemporary Security Studies*, vol. 36, no. 2, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Council of the European Union, "Council Decision (2014/486/CFSP) of 22 July 2014 on the European Union Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform Ukraine (EUAM Ukraine)", *Official Journal of the European Union*, L331/24, 17 November 2014.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

Although EUAM officially has no direct conflict management involvement in the Russian-Ukrainian crisis,<sup>10</sup> it became clear that Ukraine's decision to sign the Association Agreement with the EU in November 2013 partly triggered the conflict.<sup>11</sup> Russia clearly perceives this Association Agreement with the EU in a geopolitical light. It is thus possible that the EU does not only have explicit normative objectives to relieve the situation in Ukraine but also implicit strategic objectives that it wishes to fulfil through EUAM.

EUAM can therefore be seen as shaping the EU's external milieu in its Eastern neighbourhood,<sup>12</sup> and Russia does not belong to the EU's 'ring of friends'.<sup>13</sup> That said, operating through a civilian mission in Ukraine offers the EU an indirect and perhaps the only viable channel to counter the Russian action in Ukraine. A successful reform of the Ukrainian civilian security sector would be a victory for the 'soft power' measures used by the EU.<sup>14</sup> If the mission turned out to be unsuccessful, this could lead to a loss of credibility and reputation for the EU, and, even worse, to an increased threat of instability in the EU's Eastern neighbourhood.<sup>15</sup>

This paper sets out to examine to what extent the EUAM has been a success from the EU's perspective. The evaluation of CSDP missions is a very difficult and sensitive endeavour, amongst other things because they are seldom the only EU tool of external action in the target country.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, 'success' has very different meanings for different actors. In EUAM's case, the mission has been ongoing for 27 months but there is only one evaluation conducted of its success. This evaluation by Kateryna Zarembo, Deputy Director for the Institute of World Policy in Kiev, focuses on examining EUAM through its mandate. Zarembo argues that the mandate of the mission is very ambitious when it comes to the reforms it attempts to deliver, yet at the same time it restricts the mission to solely operate in Kiev.<sup>17</sup> Overall, this paper agrees with Zarembo

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<sup>10</sup> K. Zarembo, "EUAM's first year: ambitions versus reality", *Policy Brief*, Kiev, Institute of World Policy, 2015, p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> S. Pifer, "Poroshenko signs EU-Ukraine Association Agreement", Washington, DC, Brookings Institution, 27 June 2014.

<sup>12</sup> A. Hyde-Price, "'Normative' Power Europe: A Realist Critique", *Journal of European Public Policy*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2006, p. 217.

<sup>13</sup> R. Prodi, President of the European Commission, "A wider Europe: a proximity policy as a key to stability", speech/02/619, 6<sup>th</sup> ECSA-World Conference, Brussels, 5-6 December 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Solodkyy & Sharlay, *op. cit.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> "EU Support for Security Sector Reform: Learning from the EU CSDP Missions and Other EU Support in Guinea-Bissau and DRC", *Civil Society Dialogue Network Policy Meeting*, Brussels, 16 May 2011, p. 2.

<sup>17</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

that the scope and nature of the mission mandate is crucial in evaluations, but points out that the EU's objectives behind formulating the mandate must be examined in order to fully grasp the success of the mission. This paper assumes that examining the strategic and normative objectives behind CSDP missions captures both external and internal aspects that affect the missions' success. It assesses EUAM's success (1) in introducing norms in the administrative levels of the security sector in Ukraine, (2) in attaining the EU's strategic objectives through the mission, and (3) in balancing the EU's normative and strategic objectives behind the mission. Examining these three different levels of success provides a comprehensive picture of the mission's overall success from the EU's perspective. The first hypothesis in this paper is that the EU does not only have explicit normative objectives to relieve the situation in Ukraine but also implicit strategic objectives that it wishes to achieve through EUAM. The paper claims that the mission has contributed to the EU's strategic interests by shaping the milieu in Ukraine but it has been less successful in advancing the EU's normative interests. Regarding the balance between normative and strategic interests, the hypothesis is that strategic interests of the EU are the dominating interests behind deploying the mission, and that they are possibly hindering the overall success of the mission. In this regard, the paper finds that the strategic interests behind EUAM have not hampered the mission's success as the strategic and normative objectives largely coincide.

In the first section, the paper explores EUAM's success in achieving its normative goals by drawing on 'normative power Europe'. This approach gives insight into the values the EU is seeking to project to others.<sup>18</sup> According to Ian Manners, such values include democracy, liberty, peace, good governance and respect for human rights.<sup>19</sup> The subsequent section examines EUAM's success in realising its implicit strategic objectives by drawing on realist theory. What is crucial in realist theory is that it sees states as the main actors in international affairs.<sup>20</sup> States' actions are primarily driven by their need to guarantee their security, and thus their survival in the anarchic system of international politics.<sup>21</sup> Overall, normative power Europe and realist theory capture the two opposite ends of the EU's motivations behind its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), namely normative and strategic interests.

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<sup>18</sup> I. Manners, "Normative power Europe: a contradiction in terms?", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 40, no. 2, p. 236.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> J. Mearsheimer, *The tragedy of great power politics*, New York, Norton, 2001.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

## Normative interests

Evaluating the success of CSDP missions is methodologically problematic as the impact of a mission in a certain context is hard to separate from the other factors that affect the situation on the ground. Therefore, this section examines how well EUAM implemented the mission mandate.<sup>22</sup> Evidently, efficient implementation of the mandate does not guarantee a beneficial impact on the ground.<sup>23</sup> Yet, as the scope of this paper is to evaluate the success of the mission from the EU's point of view, how the mission fulfils its mandate is a crucial starting point. The structure of this section is thus threefold: first, it looks at EUAM's capabilities in bringing about normative standards, as mentioned in the mandate. This will be followed by an examination of the level of local ownership of the mission and the willingness of locals to absorb the reforms. Lastly, it evaluates to what extent the possible normative objectives achieved are sustainable in the long run.

### *Normative standards*

The EU has been characterised as a 'normative power' guarding universal norms and principles in its external action.<sup>24</sup> A reflection of this can be seen in EUAM's mandate as one of the aims of the mission is to introduce normative standards, such as transparency and accountability, to the civilian security sector in Ukraine.<sup>25</sup> By definition these standards reflect what is considered to be the normal state of affairs. Normative standards in Ukraine are thus compared to the ones of the EU, assuming that the EU constitutes a normative power.<sup>26</sup> Yet, these normative goals are not solely the EU's invention, but have also been demanded by the Ukrainian public. However, the people in power are not always as enthusiastic about reforms given their vested interests.<sup>27</sup> According to an official of the European External Action Service (EEAS), "corruption in the Balkans is peanuts compared to the situation in Ukraine".<sup>28</sup> This corruption extends to the civilian security sector.

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<sup>22</sup> T. Tardy, "CSDP in Action - What Contribution to International Security?", *Chaillot Papers*, no. 134, Paris, EUISS, 2015, p. 36.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Manners, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

<sup>25</sup> "Mandate", *EUAM Ukraine*, retrieved 29 March 2016, [http://www.euam-ukraine.eu/en/about\\_euam/the\\_mandate](http://www.euam-ukraine.eu/en/about_euam/the_mandate).

<sup>26</sup> Manners, *op. cit.*

<sup>27</sup> Interview with an official, CPPC, EEAS, Brussels, 3 February 2016.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

Nevertheless, there have been some successes regarding introducing normative standards in Ukraine. First, EUAM has managed to create a good working relationship with the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU) established in mid-April 2015. The creation of this body is remarkable as there has never been a specialised body monitoring anti-corruption activities before in Ukraine.<sup>29</sup> EUAM has, since NABU's establishment, contributed with strategic advice and IT equipment in order to facilitate the work of the detectives.<sup>30</sup> These efforts, which deviate from the purely advisory mandate, are essential as EUAM cannot tackle corruption in Ukraine by simply hoping that the EU's values diffuse through its operation, as suggested by normative power Europe theory.<sup>31</sup>

With regards to public trust, one of the missed opportunities is the patrol police reform in which EUAM has not been involved.<sup>32</sup> This reform has been 'branded' as a "force for change",<sup>33</sup> and perhaps as the most successful reform in the post-revolutionary period in Ukraine.<sup>34</sup> To explain its absence, EUAM has insisted that its limited mandate restricts the exercise of powers.<sup>35</sup> Yet the limited mandate has not prevented EUAM from cooperating with the Lviv regional police in the city of Sambir on a project that has many elements in common with the patrol police reform.

Generally, political pressure can be seen as a tool for EUAM to reach its objective of introducing normative standards in Ukraine because it is to be expected that normative reforms will be met with resistance for change in the security sector.<sup>36</sup> According to Zarembo, Deputy Director for the Institute of World Policy in Kiev, the Ukrainians even expect political pressure from the mission.<sup>37</sup> She believes, however, that the mission does not meet the preconditions for delivering.<sup>38</sup> Unfortunately, Zarembo is right about Brussels and the EU Delegation to Ukraine not wanting to see

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<sup>29</sup> H. Kokhan, "Building anticorruption system in Ukraine: current status and challenges", Paper presented at the European Academy in Grunewald *Understanding Governance Virtuous Cycles: Who Succeeded and Why*, Berlin, 8-12 July 2015, p. 1.

<sup>30</sup> "EUAM hands over IT equipment to NABU", *EEAS*, 13 October 2015.

<sup>31</sup> Manners, *op. cit.*

<sup>32</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> E. Marat, "The problem with Ukrainian police reform", *Foreign Policy*, 29 December 2015.

<sup>34</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Solodkyy & Sharlay, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>37</sup> Interview with Kateryna Zarembo, Deputy Director, Institute of World Policy, via Skype, 9 March 2016.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

EUAM become a political player.<sup>39</sup> The current procedure is that the mission needs to respect the political guidance it receives from the Delegation, and therefore cannot act independently.<sup>40</sup> Yet having two EU organs in Ukraine could still be efficient provided that they work in a close conjunction. In Ukraine, however, this is not the case.

In line with the normative power Europe approach, EUAM is relying on advising and on giving an example by being present in Ukraine. Given the level of corruption in Ukraine, it would be naive to believe that EUAM could have an impact by simply giving advice on how to tackle the problems. According to an EEAS official, the Ukrainians do not require advice on what reforms are needed, but on how to implement these reforms.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, if EUAM really wishes to achieve its objectives of bringing about normative standards, it needs to exert political pressure on the Ukrainian government.<sup>42</sup> What seems to currently stop this from happening is the internal rivalry between the mission and the EU Delegation that does not wish to see the mission become more independent. Thus, although the mission has successfully cooperated with some Ukrainian actors in promoting normative principles, EUAM has not been as successful as it could be in introducing values.

#### *Local buy-in*

The extent to which EUAM has managed to introduce normative standards in Ukraine is closely linked to the local buy-in which is also an indicator of the mission's success. Therefore, the effectiveness of the whole mission depends largely upon the willingness of the local actors, both officials and civil society, to co-design the numerous programmes.<sup>43</sup> If the buy-in is missing, the local actors may become 'spoilers' of the mission<sup>44</sup> and a threat to the mission's goals.<sup>45</sup> As normative power Europe holds, the EU wants to be seen as a normative actor interested in creating a democratic society in Ukraine instead of being seen as actor imposing its own values on the Ukrainians. Therefore, local buy-in can be divided into two equally important dimensions: first, it is

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<sup>39</sup> Interview with an official, Coordination and Cooperation Team, EUAM mission, via Skype, 16 February 2016.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Interview with an official, anti-corruption component, Justice Sector Reforms in Ukraine, via Skype, 9 March 2016.

<sup>42</sup> Mirimanova, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>43</sup> Tardy, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>44</sup> Interview with an official, Coordination and Cooperation Team, EUAM mission, via Skype, 16 February 2016.

<sup>45</sup> Tardy, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

about EUAM's ability to empower local actors and, second, it is about the willingness and absorption capacity of the stakeholders.<sup>46</sup>

### *Empowerment of local actors*

Although EUAM has always acknowledged the importance of having local stakeholders on board, it was not well understood how greatly the philosophy regarding the civilian security sector differs in post-Soviet countries.<sup>47</sup> In Europe, the civilian security sector consists of law-enforcement agencies and other agencies that are in place to ensure the security of citizens.<sup>48</sup> In the post-Soviet countries, however, the civilian security sector is hardly a known term and the purpose of the security sector is above all perceived as guarding the security of the state.<sup>49</sup> These differences regarding the concept of security service created a difficult context for EUAM. This context combined with the purely advisory approach taken by the mission gave the local stakeholders the impression that the mission just came to "tell how to do things better".<sup>50</sup> In general, it seems that EUAM attempted to tackle the most challenging task of empowering the local actors with the weakest tool available: advising.<sup>51</sup>

According to an EEAS official, "the EU always knew that it would have to amend EUAM's mandate".<sup>52</sup> This raises a worrying question regarding the planning of the mission before deploying it if the ideology was to 'learn-by-doing' and fix the miscalculations on the go. What is clear, however, is that for the first few months, the mission did not have an internal strategy, and yet it was expected to advise the Ukrainians.<sup>53</sup> On top of this, the mission had recruited very experienced personnel but their expertise was not what was actually required to empower the local authorities.<sup>54</sup> An expert hired to work at the mission in the beginning of its mandate described it as commonplace that EUAM sent its personnel, who had no experience of working with a ministry, to advise the Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs.<sup>55</sup> Given the loss of

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>47</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Interview with an official, Coordination and Cooperation Team, EUAM mission, via Skype, 16 February 2016.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Interview with an official, geographical desk, EEAS, Brussels, 13 January 2016.

<sup>53</sup> Interview with an official, anti-corruption component, Justice Sector Reforms in Ukraine, via Skype, 9 March 2016.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

credibility, EUAM's functioning might be hampered by Ukrainian authorities prioritising cooperation with other big actors such as the US, Japan and Canada.

The lack of research and planning prior to deploying EUAM reveals that there was a general impression that the mission would just come to Ukraine to help the locals to implement their own vision.<sup>56</sup> Naturally, this rather naive strategy needed adjusting when it became clear that there simply is no shared vision of what the Ukrainian security service should look like. Even with the amended strategy, EUAM was not prepared for the level of corruption in the security sector. The core of the mission is to render the civilian security sector trustworthy in the eyes of the public but how to achieve this in a corrupt society where no one appears to be responsible for anything?<sup>57</sup>

#### *Willingness and absorption capacity of the stakeholders*

When examining the willingness of the Ukrainians to adopt reforms more in detail, it becomes evident that EUAM has not well communicated what type of reforms it tries to advance.<sup>58</sup> As a starting point, an advisory mission in Kiev was not what the Ukrainians had wanted. Their original wish was to have a monitoring mission with a regional presence around Ukraine, especially in the areas where fighting was happening.<sup>59</sup> As a result of the EU not agreeing to this type of mission, there was a high level of disappointment towards the mission even before its deployment.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, since the mandate of the mission became an object of political dispute between the European leaders, the Ukrainian authorities felt that their opinions, as the direct beneficiaries, were not taken into account in the formulation of the mandate.<sup>61</sup> Consequently, EUAM's mandate was based too much on the advisory part without actually taking into account the Ukrainians' needs.<sup>62</sup> Thus, not only had the EU offered the Ukrainians a type of mission that they did not want, but it also failed to map out what the local needs were and how it could address them within the mission's

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<sup>56</sup> Interview with an official, Coordination and Cooperation Team, EUAM mission, via Skype, 16 February 2016.

<sup>57</sup> K. Liik, "What else could we have done? Ukraine after Vilnius", London, European Council on Foreign Relations, 28 November 2014.

<sup>58</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with an official, CPPC, EEAS, Brussels, 3 February 2016.

<sup>60</sup> Interview with Kateryna Zarembo, Deputy Director, Institute of World Policy, via Skype, 9 March 2016.

<sup>61</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>62</sup> Interview with an official, anti-corruption component, Justice Sector Reforms in Ukraine, via Skype, 9 March 2016.

mandate. There was hope that the 2015 revised mission mandate would tackle these drawbacks but EUAM's credibility as an actor empowering the local stakeholders has already suffered.

Another question is whether the mandate is too ambitious and broad, or actually too narrow. According to Zarembo, the EUAM's goals are currently too all-encompassing to be achieved.<sup>63</sup> She believes that EUAM needs to prioritise and set more narrow goals for itself in order to have a real impact.<sup>64</sup> Currently, the mission is targeting all areas, in accordance with the normative power Europe approach, ranging from restructuring law enforcement and security service to increasing the level of public confidence in the police with an initial mandate of three years.<sup>65</sup>

Some experts, however, believe that EUAM should have a bigger picture in mind when operating in Ukraine.<sup>66</sup> According to an EEAS official, this could be achieved by having more decision-making at the mission level since decision-makers in Brussels do not always understand the local conditions when setting up priorities and planning their implementation.<sup>67</sup> Given the different interpretations of the mission mandate among experts, it is no surprise that the Ukrainians do not know what to expect from the mandate. This is dangerous as instead of empowering the local stakeholders to deliver reforms, EUAM may create a "capability-expectations gap"<sup>68</sup> implying that the local stakeholders will expect more from EUAM than it can realistically achieve.

The lack of visibility is another shortcoming of EUAM's performance.<sup>69</sup> Without visibility it cannot be expected that the Ukrainian public knows what the mission is doing, and thus the general public cannot be expected to absorb or co-design the reforms with EUAM. It is not unusual that CSDP missions in the post-Soviet countries have very low visibility, yet the drawback is that the public may misunderstand the mission's objectives and nature.<sup>70</sup> A study commissioned by EUAM itself shows that the mission

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<sup>63</sup> Interview with Kateryna Zarembo, Deputy Director, Institute of World Policy, via Skype, 9 March 2016.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Council of the European Union, "Council Decision 2015/2249/CFSP of 3 December 2015 on amending decision 2014/486/CFSP", *Official Journal of the European Union*, L318/ 38, 4 December 2015.

<sup>66</sup> Interview with an official, CPPC, EEAS, Brussels, 3 February 2016.

<sup>67</sup> Interview with an official, Coordination and Cooperation Team, EUAM mission, via Skype, 16 February 2016.

<sup>68</sup> C. Hill, "The capability-expectations gap or conceptualising Europe's international role", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 31, no. 3, 1993, pp 305-328.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

is the most unknown project compared to other international projects and organisations present in Ukraine.<sup>71</sup>

### *Sustainability of reforms*

Evidently, EUAM aims at delivering reforms that have a sustainable impact. Nevertheless, for the mission to have a sustainable impact two factors are required: first, EUAM must cooperate efficiently with other donors with similar objectives. Second, there must be a common vision between the mission, the Ukrainian officials and the civil society on how the civilian security service should look like.

### Cooperation with donors

Regarding cooperation with other donors, it is a well-known fact that donor organisations and governments often apply their long-term priorities regardless of the possible duplication with other actors.<sup>72</sup> In EUAM's case, however, the fiercest competition comes from within. The chemistry between the mission and the EU Delegation to Ukraine has been questionable.<sup>73</sup> This is one of the biggest problems for EUAM as it aims to reform the security sector, which is by definition a highly sensitive and political matter, with only technical tools such as advising and training.<sup>74</sup> However, these tools, which are in line with the normative power Europe image, are not enough. Political tasks such as SSR need to be tackled with political tools in addition to technical tools.<sup>75</sup> Yet the mission lacks political tools because the EU Delegation appears to be jealous guarding its monopoly of political power.<sup>76</sup> This mistrust has also led to the Delegation not sufficiently helping the mission to deal with Ukrainian politicians, which should be common practice. Partly, this is explained by the personnel at the Delegation being mainly Commission technocrats who refrain from political thinking,

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<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> Solodkyy & Sharlay, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>73</sup> Interview with an official, Coordination and Cooperation Team, EUAM mission, via Skype, 16 February 2016.

<sup>74</sup> L. Van de Goor & E. Van Veen, "Less post-conflict: The value of SSR to more developed countries", in M. Sedra (ed.), *The future of security sector reform*, Ontario, The Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2010, p. 96.

<sup>75</sup> R. Parkes, "Integrating EU Defence and Migration Policies in the Mediterranean", *FRIDE Working Paper*, no. 125, Madrid, Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior, November 2014, p. 14.

<sup>76</sup> Interview with an official, Coordination and Cooperation Team, EUAM mission, via Skype, 16 February 2016.

and thus do not value cooperation with EUAM.<sup>77</sup> Therefore, the rivalry between the two organs renders EUAM incapable of having a sustainable impact.

In addition to the tension between the Delegation and the mission, the EU project “Support to Justice Sector Reforms in Ukraine” is largely ignoring EUAM although they have very similar goals.<sup>78</sup> In this regard, however, the mission is not perceived as a competitor by the project as the project is financially better placed to implement reforms than EUAM.<sup>79</sup> Currently, the cooperation between the mission and the project is based on personal chemistry and goodwill of the personnel, which evidently does not offer a very solid basis for cooperation.<sup>80</sup>

### Common vision

Regarding the common vision, coordination between EU bodies is essential in order to deliver reforms with a sustainable impact. However, even more crucial is the creation of a common vision between the mission and local stakeholders who are directly affected by the civilian security sector. Presently, there seems to be unnecessary blaming on both sides regarding the lack of vision on how to reform the security sector.<sup>81</sup> For the EUAM personnel, it came as a surprise that there was no local vision that the mission could have helped to implement.<sup>82</sup> This naive approach evaporated rather quickly when the mission learned that the Ukrainian institutions were too weak to analyse the situation properly and enforce the respect of rules.<sup>83</sup> Nevertheless, this should not become an issue as it is challenging even for European countries to have a common vision.<sup>84</sup>

Yet, the mission’s attitude has surprised many Ukrainians who argue that is unrealistic for EUAM to expect that Ukraine would have a vision when there are no resources and no proper expertise on how to implement reforms.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, the general feeling is that EUAM is lacking a strategic vision due to an improper mapping of local needs.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> Interview with an official, CPPC, EEAS, Brussels, 3 February 2016.

<sup>82</sup> Interview with an official, Coordination and Cooperation Team, EUAM mission, via Skype, 16 February 2016.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> Interview with Kateryna Zarembo, Deputy Director, Institute of World Policy, via Skype, 9 March 2016.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

Therefore, the fact that the mission does not know what to offer to the Ukrainians to facilitate reforms should not be blamed on the lack of a vision on the Ukrainian side.<sup>87</sup> In order to be successful, the mission needs to abandon the expectation that the Ukrainians would have a strategic vision. Also, the Ukrainians must stop expecting the mission to provide them with a readymade vision. Instead, the strategic vision has to be created together whilst taking into account the civil society's expectations and concerns. Otherwise, the reforms will hardly have a sustainable impact. In this regard, EUAM may use its advisory capacity to urge the Ukrainian leadership to enhance communication with civil society.<sup>88</sup>

To conclude, it is clear that most of EUAM's normative objectives are impossible to be achieved in the short run. What has been evaluated in this section, however, are the EUAM's efforts in ensuring that possible reforms will be sustainable. Factors deemed crucial in this regard are cooperation and a shared strategic vision. Unfortunately, internal cooperation with other EU bodies still hinders the mission's efforts in ensuring a sustainable impact. When it comes to a shared strategic vision, much work remains to be done. Both sides seemed to expect that the other side would have a readymade vision that could just be implemented. The lack of vision should not be seen as an obstacle, but as a chance for creating a shared strategic vision including sustainable reforms. The aforementioned factors combined with the lack of visibility of the mission, the unclear mission mandate and insufficient research before the deployment of the mission render EUAM rather unsuccessful from the normative point of view. Moreover, it implies that EUAM has perhaps been more motivated by other objectives, namely strategic objectives.

### **Strategic interests**

From a realist perspective, it can be argued that, in addition to normative objectives, EUAM is also driven by broader geopolitical objectives.<sup>89</sup> Although the mandate only allows the mission to mentor, advise, and with the revised mandate to train the civilian security sector personnel, realists see CSDP missions as instruments for member states to harness coercive diplomacy and managing crises with 'hard' power.<sup>90</sup> However, in EUAM's case, it must be kept in mind that it does not include any military aspects which

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<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> Solodkyy & Sharlay, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>89</sup> Novaky, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>90</sup> Hyde-Price, "'Normative' Power Europe: A Realist Critique", *op. cit.*, p. 230.

most realist scholars focus on in CSDP missions.<sup>91</sup> Nevertheless, the notion that the multifaceted nature of conflict management has culminated in including activities such as institution-building and the rule of law in CSDP missions should not fool the reader to think that the mission is free of self-interest.<sup>92</sup> On the contrary, “the multi-actor and multi-level nature of contemporary crisis management” means that no security actor can have an impact without taking into account the broader picture that includes economic, political and military components.<sup>93</sup>

Thus, from the realist point of view, having a civilian mission can be seen as a strategic choice by the EU as it seems to only serve the EU’s normative objectives shared with the Ukrainians. Nevertheless, it also has the potential to fulfill the EU’s broader geopolitical objectives related to strategy, geography and relative power.<sup>94</sup> Naturally, the mandate of the mission does not outline the EU’s strategic objectives, and thus the performance of the mission structure in fulfilling the mandate cannot be directly evaluated, as it was done in the section on normative objectives. In order to define how successful the mission has been in realising its strategic objectives, this paper will first examine how well the EUAM has managed to push through reforms of its liking and, second, the mission’s capacity to offer an alternative to the Russian model. These two factors are derived from realist theory, according to which states are motivated not only by a balance of power but also an ideological balance. Assessing these indicators will reveal how successful EUAM has been from the point of view of the EU’s strategic interests.

#### *EUAM’s ability to push through reforms*

In order to define EUAM’s ability to push through reforms, three aspects are being measured: EUAM’s internal coherence, understanding of the structural context and expertise of personnel. These three aspects provide a basis that allows EUAM to push through reforms of its liking, and thus depict EUAM’s capacity to advance the EU’s strategic objectives.

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<sup>91</sup> Novaky, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>92</sup> Tardy, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> A. Wolf, “The Future of NATO enlargement after the Ukraine crisis”, *International Affairs*, vol. 91, no. 5, 2015, p. 1104.

## Coherence

For the mission to effectively push through reforms, it needs to be internally coherent. This refers to the coherence among EU member states that support not only the mission's mandate, but also its day-to-day operations. CSDP missions can be seen, in the light of realist theory, as EU member states' strategic instruments and as reflecting their strategic objectives. Reaching an EU-wide position is often complex,<sup>95</sup> and in EUAM's case, the drafting of the mission mandate was especially problematic<sup>96</sup> given their security-oriented nature.<sup>97</sup> Consequently, member states' control of the process was strongly influenced by their broader policy towards Russia.<sup>98</sup> Some member states naturally have stronger interests and policy priorities in maintaining a well-functioning relationship with Russia. This gave the negotiations a difficult starting point.<sup>99</sup>

In the negotiation process, 'hawkish' and 'dovish' member states emerged. The 'hawks' urged the EU to join the Ukrainian side and act decisively in helping them to ensure stability, sovereignty and integrity.<sup>100</sup> The 'doves', on the other hand, consisted of countries reluctant to take any sides because of strong bilateral relations with Russia.<sup>101</sup> Due to these divergent views, the mandate of EUAM turned out to be "a political compromise".<sup>102</sup> For the Ukrainian authorities, it was a disappointment<sup>103</sup> since they had not wanted a mere advisory mission in Kiev but a mission that would clearly confirm the EU's support for Ukraine. From a realist perspective, this is a clear reflection of the EU's strategic thinking behind the mission. Yet, the division between member states reveals the incoherent backing of EUAM.

It seems obvious that a mandate described as a political compromise is not ideal for EUAM to push through reforms of its liking, especially if it does not respond to the recipient state's requests either. In accordance with realist theory, the strategic

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<sup>95</sup> Tardy, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>96</sup> Novaky, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>97</sup> M. Šešelgytė, "CSDP in the Eastern Neighbourhood: From Neighbours to Partners", in S. Biscop & D. Fiott (eds.), *The State of Defence in Europe: State of Emergency?*, Brussels, Academia Press, 2013, p. 43.

<sup>98</sup> Novaky, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>99</sup> K. Raik, "A Europe Divided by Russia? The New Eastern Member States and the EU's Policy Towards the East", in J. Grower & G. Timmins (eds.), *Russia and Europe in the Twenty-First Century: An Uneasy Partnership*, London, Anthem Press, 2007, pp. 207-226.

<sup>100</sup> Novaky, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> Interview with an official, Coordination and Cooperation Team, EUAM mission, via Skype, 16 February 2016.

<sup>103</sup> Interview with Kateryna Zarembo, Deputy Director, Institute of World Policy, via Skype, 9 March 2016.

objective of the EU is to have a stable neighbour as Ukraine's security directly affects the EU's security.<sup>104</sup> In order to stabilise Ukraine, EUAM would need to be able to introduce normative standards that would strengthen the currently incapable institutions. However, tackling the deep running corruption with a weak mandate is close to impossible and reveals the internal incoherence of the EU as an external actor. Therefore, EUAM's success in pushing through reforms depends largely on the willingness of the Ukrainians to accept these reforms.

In addition to the mandate, EUAM's day-to-day actions in Ukraine reflect its internal coherence or the lack of it, and thus the ability to bring about reforms. Surprisingly, day-to-day operations show that the vague mandate actually works in the mission's favour because it leaves wide margins for interpretation. As discussed in the previous section, there have been reforms that EUAM has not taken part in referring to its limited mandate, and yet it has worked on very similar reforms. This reveals that the mission, in line with realist theory, is acting as a strategic player and choosing which reforms to engage with. The ones that do not contribute to the EU's foreign policy objectives will have less importance even if they respond to the needs of the country in crisis.<sup>105</sup> However, the most ideal situation for the mission is when the strategic and normative interests coincide. An excellent example of this is the Ukrainian State Border Guard Service which EUAM has successfully advised to adopt and implement a communication and public relations strategy.<sup>106</sup> The Ukrainians had themselves recognised the need for an improved communications strategy but this also coincided with the EUAM's strategic objective to counter the Russian border guards, who were faster and better organised in dealing with messages concerning the situation on the Russian-Ukrainian border.<sup>107</sup>

Nonetheless, there are deeper internal coherence problems. According to an anti-corruption advisor previously part of the mission, there is an endemic problem regarding advising.<sup>108</sup> At the moment, the revised mandate allows EUAM to engage more in training activities but the problem lies in the mission personnel being reluctant to do so.<sup>109</sup> The personnel is used to, to put it frankly, "giving advice wearing a suit"

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<sup>104</sup> Interview with an official, geographical desk, EEAS, Brussels, 13 January 2016.

<sup>105</sup> Tardy, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>106</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> Interview with an official, anti-corruption component, Justice Sector Reforms in Ukraine, via Skype, 9 March 2016.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

without actually having to take part in the field work.<sup>110</sup> In this respect it is clear that there is need for more coherence regarding the experts hired and the training they receive.<sup>111</sup>

#### Understanding of the structural context

The second factor EUAM needs to succeed is a sound understanding of the environment in which it operates. This implies that, in order for the mission to bring about reforms, it has to understand the problems that need to be tackled and what policy responses are required.<sup>112</sup> According to an EEAS official, "EUAM is only doing what the Ukrainians have asked it to do".<sup>113</sup> However, this does not take into account the oligarchs who have for over 20 years used a 'pick-and-mix' approach to reap the benefits from both the EU and Russia.<sup>114</sup> These oligarchs provide Russia with a tool to delay or even jeopardise the reforms the EUAM tries to achieve.<sup>115</sup> Put differently, "the biggest threat to Ukraine is not Russia but the Ukrainians themselves".<sup>116</sup> Therefore, the opposition is likely to manifest itself in the form of low commitment to the implementation of reforms.

Overall, it seems that an insufficient understanding of the structural context in Ukraine undermines EUAM's ability to push through reforms. When it comes to the problems identified, the mission lacks awareness of the level of political resistance in Ukraine, supported by Russia. The main obstacle to reforms are indeed the corrupt Ukrainian officials. However, in order to grasp the whole picture, EUAM needs to take into account Russia's actions in the region. For Russia, Ukraine is a "crucial test case which will either prove or dismiss the credibility of its Great Power ambitions".<sup>117</sup> It is worth noting that the EUAM does not seem to have considered this. Going forward, the mission must take into account the possibility that by trying to push through reforms it

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<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> E. Gross, "Missions", in Gross, Eva & Menon, Anand (eds.), *CSDP: between internal constraints and external challenges*, ISS Reports, no. 17, 2013, p. 41.

<sup>112</sup> Tardy, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>113</sup> Interview with an official, geographical desk, EEAS, Brussels, 13 January 2016.

<sup>114</sup> R. Dragneva & A. Dimitrova, "Patterns of Integration and Regime Compatibility: Ukraine between the CIS and the EU", in K. Malfliet & L. Verpoest & E. Vinokurov (eds.), *The CIS, the EU and Russia: Challenges of Integration*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, p. 13.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> Interview with an official, CPPC, EEAS, Brussels, 3 February 2016.

<sup>117</sup> A. Moshes, "Russia's European Policy under Medvedev: How Sustainable is a New Compromise?", in R. Dragneva & K. Wolczuk (eds.), *Eurasian Economic Integration*, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013, p. 215.

may alienate Kiev from Moscow.<sup>118</sup> In line with realist theory, this is likely to incite Russia to act assertively and focus on undermining the reforms with the help of corrupt Ukrainian officials.

Not properly understanding the structural context it operates in leads to EUAM not responding to the problems with the right tools. EUAM seems to rely on having more 'power of attraction' than Russia and trust the long-standing 'European choice' of Ukraine.<sup>119</sup> This weakens EUAM's chances of pushing through reforms as it does not take into account alternatives. Therefore, it is time for the mission to realise that it can only have a limited impact with advising and mentoring, and if it really wants to achieve its strategic goals, it must admit that it has entered into a geopolitical game with Russia and use political pressure accordingly.<sup>120</sup>

#### Personnel's expertise

The third factor that affects EUAM's ability to push through reforms is its personnel's expertise. Personnel with the right expertise would understand the Ukrainian realities and be able to use the political environment to advance the reforms that are deemed important. However, it has not been a secret that the EUAM experts feel overwhelmed with the post-Soviet vertical power structure of the security sector.<sup>121</sup> Simply put, EUAM personnel lacks the experience of working in such an institutional environment.<sup>122</sup> This has two implications for the mission: first, it must rely more on Brussels regarding strategic advice and, second, its capacity to advise and mentor might be questioned.

When it comes to strategic advice, some Ukrainian officials have indeed opted for cooperating directly with the EU institutions in Brussels instead of the mission on matters concerning SSR.<sup>123</sup> Their reasoning behind this move was that the mission would have had to consult Brussels in any case which would have taken more time than the direct communication.<sup>124</sup> There have also been cases where Ukrainian ministries have had

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<sup>118</sup> L. Delcour & H. Konstanyan, "Towards a Fragmented Neighbourhood: Policies of the EU and Russia and their Consequences for the Area that Lies in between", no. 17, Brussels, CEPS, October 2014, p. 3.

<sup>119</sup> R. Dragneva & K. Wolczuk, "Russia, the Eurasian Customs Union and the EU: Cooperation, stagnation or rivalry?", *Chatham House briefing paper*, London, Chatham House, August 2012, p. 10.

<sup>120</sup> S. Stewart, "The EU, Russia and a Less Common Neighbourhood", Berlin, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, no. 3, 2014, p. 3.

<sup>121</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> Interview with an official, Coordination and Cooperation Team, EUAM mission, via Skype, 16 February 2016.

to wait for months for mission experts to arrive in Kiev to advise them on government plans.<sup>125</sup> To some extent the fault is in the mission's structure but the personnel's lack of expertise contributes to it. Thus, the slowness of the mission to respond to Ukrainian requests makes the EUAM a reactive player instead of a proactive strategic player.

Regarding the credibility of EUAM, the Ukrainians had directly communicated to the EU that the success of the mission depended on who is coming.<sup>126</sup> Therefore, if EUAM wishes to advise high-ranking Ukrainian officials, it must send experts that have the necessary qualifications.<sup>127</sup> Currently, the mission has very experienced personnel but their expertise does not match Ukraine's needs.<sup>128</sup> This compromises EUAM's chances of being an actor whose advice is appreciated. If the mission wants to achieve its strategic goals, it has to start thinking more strategically and hire experts from Eastern Europe and the Baltic states for whom it will be easier to understand the local conditions in Ukraine.<sup>129</sup>

#### *EUAM's capacity to offer an alternative to the Russian model*

Already in 2013, the EU member states were of the opinion that "it was necessary to 'rescue' Ukraine before it could drift further in Russia's direction".<sup>130</sup> Although all the claims that EUAM would have something to do with Russia's actions in Ukraine have been firmly denied in public,<sup>131</sup> the mission is a way of showing both Ukraine and Russia that the EU matters.<sup>132</sup> EUAM is interested in stabilising Ukraine given its location in the EU's neighbourhood, and in order to do so, it has to reduce the Russian destabilising effect.<sup>133</sup> This paper draws on the Hobbesian understanding of world politics as a constant competition in which international actors try to advance their interests and control the others.<sup>134</sup> Therefore, if EUAM is to encounter Russian hegemony in its 'near abroad', it needs to have the capacity to offer alternatives to the Soviet legacy that persists in the Ukrainian security sector. Russia seems to have understood that war today is not about destroying the enemy, but about eroding the values and norms

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<sup>125</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>126</sup> Quoted in N. Novaky, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>127</sup> Novaky, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>128</sup> Interview with an official, Coordination and Cooperation Team, EUAM mission, via Skype, 16 February 2016.

<sup>129</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>130</sup> Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>131</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>132</sup> Interview with an official, CPPC, EEAS, Brussels, 3 February 2016.

<sup>133</sup> Interview with an official, geographical desk, Brussels, 13 January 2016.

<sup>134</sup> H. Haukkala, "The European Union as a regional normative hegemon: the case of European Neighbourhood Policy", *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 60, no. 9, 2008, pp. 601-622.

promoted by it.<sup>135</sup> This means that the mission must make the reforms attractive to the Ukrainians, so that they will not lean more towards the Russian model. Moreover, EUAM needs to have the right tools at its disposal to counter the coercion that Russia uses to keep Ukraine under its control. Therefore, the attractiveness of the mission and the tools at its disposal need to be assessed.

#### Attractiveness of EUAM to the Ukrainians

The first factor that affects EUAM's capacity to offer an alternative to the Russian model is how attractive EUAM is to the Ukrainians. This question is seldom raised perhaps because the EU is used to relying on having more 'power of attraction' than Russia.<sup>136</sup> However, EUAM exhibits some characteristics that confirm that the EU has stepped up its game in order to counter Russia's actions in their shared neighbourhood. One of these signs is the timing of the deployment of EUAM.<sup>137</sup> According to the Treaty of Lisbon, CSDP missions are post-crisis tools.<sup>138</sup> Yet EUAM was deployed during the Russian-Ukrainian crisis.<sup>139</sup> This is a unique arrangement in the history of CSDP missions and strongly points to the direction of the EU wanting to give both Ukraine and Russia a political sign.<sup>140</sup> For the Ukrainians, it was a sign that the EU will stand by Ukraine and help it to retain its stability, sovereignty and integrity.<sup>141</sup> For Russia, it was a sign that the EU is willing to engage in normative rivalry.<sup>142</sup> On the EU's side it was understood that EUAM would "affect relations with Russia".<sup>143</sup> Nevertheless, the EU went ahead with EUAM.

The early history of the mission shows that although the beginning of EUAM can be described as slightly chaotic, the Ukrainian ministries and agencies overcame their initial disappointment and welcomed the mission.<sup>144</sup> Although it is likely that political leaders in Ukraine sometimes act as if they could achieve reforms by declaration rather than by bringing forward actual structural changes, they recognised that what the EUAM was offering would be popular among the general public.<sup>145</sup> The mission did

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<sup>135</sup> E. N. Kross, "Putin's war of smoke and mirrors", *Politico*, 9 April 2016.

<sup>136</sup> Dragneva & Wolczuk, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>137</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>138</sup> European Union, *op. cit.*, art. 43(1) TEU.

<sup>139</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>140</sup> Interview with an official, CPPC, EEAS, Brussels, 3 February 2016.

<sup>141</sup> Delcour & Konstanyan, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>142</sup> Dragneva & Wolczuk, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>143</sup> Interview with an official, geographical desk, Brussels, 13 January 2016.

<sup>144</sup> Zarembo, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>145</sup> J. Sherr, *Ukraine's New Time of Troubles*, Camberley, Conflict Studies Research Centre, 1998, p. 12.

not provide a wide geographical presence as originally hoped for, but it opened a channel for democratic reforms that the Ukrainian public had yearned for.

Overall, it looks as if EUAM has succeeded quite well in countering the Russian influence in Ukraine by offering an attractive alternative, normative model of governance. Nevertheless, the mission should be careful to avoid making the Ukrainians feel that they are only a token in the EU's geopolitical game with Russia.<sup>146</sup> EUAM should clearly communicate with the Ukrainian counterparts that Ukraine's security will not be on the table in the negotiations with Russia.<sup>147</sup> However, Russia is successfully driving a wedge between different EU member states.<sup>148</sup> One can already detect many differing positions among member states ranging from *détente* with Russia at almost any cost to a strong defence of norms and values.<sup>149</sup>

An illustration which shows the diverging opinions between member states was the negative outcome of the Dutch referendum in April 2016 on the Association Agreement between the European Union and Ukraine.<sup>150</sup> Whether the voters were fully aware of the implications of the No vote or used the referendum to vote against the government is not important for the purpose of this paper.<sup>151</sup> What matters is that Ukraine, and through that EUAM, risk becoming political tokens for the EU member states. This raises the question whether the mission mandate will be extended after 2017 given that the member states already disagree about the strategies concerning Ukraine. For the Ukrainians, the current events have also shown that the EU is not such a normative actor as it wishes everyone to believe.<sup>152</sup> The reforms EUAM tries to achieve are largely beneficial for the Ukrainians but the country is not blind to the EU's strategic interests behind deploying the mission.

### Strategic tools

The second factor affecting EUAM's capacity to offer an alternative to the Russian model is whether the mission has the right tools for countering Russia's ever more assertive actions in Ukraine. The member states had two options when designing the

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<sup>146</sup> K. Zarembo, "Ukraine in EU security: an undervalued partner", *Policy Brief*, no. 88, Madrid, Fríde, August 2011, p. 5.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>148</sup> G. Gromadzki, *The Eastern Partnership after five years: time for deep rethinking*, EP/EXPO/B/AFET/FWC/2013-08/Lot1/01, PE536.438, Brussels, European Parliament Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union, February 2015, p. 26.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>150</sup> M. De la Baume, "Juncker is 'sad' about Dutch No vote", *Politico*, 7 April 2016.

<sup>151</sup> L. Kroet, "Dutch get second chance to snub EU", *Politico*, 5 April 2016.

<sup>152</sup> Zarembo, "Ukraine in EU security: an undervalued partner", *op. cit.*, p. 5.

mission: first, to have a very visible mission speaking out against Russia's territorial violations, or to have a mission that rather focused on working behind the scenes without confronting Russia about its actions. They opted for the latter and pointed, in addition to Russia's interference, at the corrupt and dysfunctional government structure and law-enforcement agencies in Ukraine as causes for the crisis.<sup>153</sup> Rhetoric like this can be found repeatedly in the Management Concept for Ukraine and in the statements of European officials.<sup>154</sup>

Thus, instead of directly counterbalancing Russia's actions, member states have chosen to have a mission that is very critical towards all actors, even the Ukrainian security service structure.<sup>155</sup> This somewhat reduces the visibility of the mission but at the same time it is a clear sign that the EU is not going to play Russia's propaganda game. Instead, the member states have decided to let the actions of EUAM speak for themselves. Thus, at first sight it may look as if EUAM possesses almost no tools to counter Russia's actions in Ukraine, but not having many tools turns out to be a strategic choice of the member states.

While it is true that Russia has the comparative advantage of being able to take unilateral decision and consequently impose them quickly, EUAM's problem is not that it is not addressing the conflict or does not have the right tools to do so. On the contrary, as mentioned above, the mission is trying to achieve a sustainable reform in Ukraine. The EU has a long history of implementing SSR and it knows that SSR is heavily dependent on wider democratic progress and consolidation.<sup>156</sup> With a successful SSR, Russia's ability to influence the Ukrainian security sector would also be curbed.<sup>157</sup> Thus, with advising and training projects, EUAM attempts to strengthen Ukraine's capacity to counter Russia. In line with realist theory, this action is strategic as it allows the EU to avoid countering Russia's interference itself.

This section has evaluated EUAM's capabilities in pushing through reforms by examining the mission's internal coherence, its understanding of the structural context it operates in and its personnel's expertise as well as the mission's capacity to offer an

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<sup>153</sup> Zarembo, "EUAM's first year: ambitions versus reality", *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>154</sup> Council of the European Union, "Revised Crisis Management Concept for civilian CSDP mission in support of security sector reform in Ukraine", 01135/1/14 Rev 1, Brussels, 17 June 2014, p. 6.

<sup>155</sup> Zarembo, "EUAM's first year: ambitions versus reality", *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>156</sup> F. Bynander, "Ukrainian Security Identity and NATO Generated SSR", in M. Ekengren & G. Simons (eds.), *The Politics of Security Sector Reform: Challenges and Opportunities for the European Union's Global Role*, New York, Routledge, 2011, p. 162.

<sup>157</sup> Novaky, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

alternative to the Russian model through its attractiveness and tools at its disposal. So far, the mission has made progress towards achieving its strategic objectives. The mission has eliminated most of the friction that emerged when formulating the mandate of EUAM. Still, the mandate remains a political compromise and thus offers an ambiguous basis for the mission. On the one hand, it might make it harder for the mission to act assertively as its powers are very limited. On the other hand, it offers the mission an opportunity to exploit the vague wording in it.

However, understanding the conditions in Ukraine remains an obstacle for the achievement of EUAM's strategic objectives. The mission is still reluctant to realise the geopolitical implications of its actions and how deeply Russia is involved in Ukraine. Lastly, the experts at EUAM are not suitable for the mission's goal of pushing through reforms. They lack crucial experience of post-Soviet security sector conditions which makes the mission very dependent on Brussels and consequently operationally slow. Yet, the Ukrainians willingness to engage in reforms delivered by EUAM and the mission's general attractiveness have enabled EUAM to achieve some of its strategic objectives.

On the whole, this section reveals that there are strategic objectives behind EUAM and that, in comparison to the achievement of normative objectives, strategic interests have been better achieved by the mission. Therefore, from a strategic angle, EUAM can be seen as rather successful.

### **Are the explicit strategic objectives behind EUAM hindering the success of the mission?**

The analysis shows that the EU's approach to Ukraine cannot be completely separated from the EU's approach to Russia. As a result, EUAM exhibits both explicit normative and implicit strategic objectives of the Union. Interestingly, these interests seem to largely coincide instead of contradicting each other. Nevertheless, one should notice that although the stabilisation of the neighbourhood happens to coincide with the explicit normative objectives of human rights, democracy and rule of law, the reasons behind EUAM trying to achieve these end goals differ.<sup>158</sup> Thus, the argument in this paper is that the EU has normative objectives it tries to realise through EUAM but the strategic interests are the driving force behind launching the mission in Ukraine.

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<sup>158</sup> Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

The first indicator for this was the timing of the mission's deployment. Ukraine had long before the crisis broke out expressed its keenness to adopt the European model and even asked for help for this highly complex task.<sup>159</sup> All this was well-known in Brussels and yet the problems were not seen as urgent enough to send a CSDP mission until Russia started to destabilise the country. In line with realist theory the EU came to acknowledge the inevitable competition between national interests that exists in international anarchy.<sup>160</sup> By finally accepting that Russia's interests were contradictory to its own and that security rivalry in a self-help international system dominates cooperation, the EU's eyes opened for a new type of a political process.<sup>161</sup> This process was more focused on finding ways to manage and resolve conflicts instead of trying to reshape the world to resemble the EU.<sup>162</sup> However, as the EU did not have the political will to counter Russia in its near neighbourhood directly, it veiled the strategic goals under declaratory normative objectives.

Second, the much-discussed mandate of EUAM supports the argument of strategic interests. This is to say that pure advising is seen as weak even if the purpose is to promote normative goals. However, seen through what realists call 'strategic selectivity of structure', EUAM can be understood as working within a structure that facilitates certain actions and impedes others.<sup>163</sup> In other words, the mission is a 'situated actor' within a structural environment that shapes the possible strategies and opportunities at its disposal.<sup>164</sup> In Ukraine, the structural context is shaped by the incapable and weak institutions but also by Russia's strong influence. Therefore, the mandate had to be formulated in a way that it would not cause an adverse reaction in the Ukrainian or the Russian camp. As a result, the mandate became as incontrovertible as possible with just vague references to mentoring and advising. This serves the EU's strategic objectives of not causing further escalations of the conflict but also allows EUAM to strategically counter the Russian influence. Yet for advancing normative objectives, such as rule of law and democracy, the mandate is too weak.

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<sup>159</sup> J. Sinitsky, "EU-Ukraine relations before the 2014 Maidan Revolution", *E-International Relations Students*, 23 April 2015.

<sup>160</sup> A. Hyde-Price, *European Security in the twenty-first century: the challenge of multipolarity*, New York, Routledge, 2007, p. 36.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> Hyde-Price, "European Security in the twenty-first century: the challenge of multipolarity", *op. cit.*, p. 48.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

Third, in the previous sections EUAM's rhetoric and activities were criticised for being half-hearted. In some cases, the mission did not engage in reforms that seemed to be very similar to other reforms EUAM was working on. From a realist perspective, this is understandable as not all the reforms promise the same strategic gains for the EU. In the case of the patrol police reform, the EU perhaps perceived that the US, Canada and Japan were already handling the process and thus it could allocate its resources better by cooperating with the police in the Lviv region. Moreover, EUAM's work with the Ukrainian State Border Guard Service reveals the double-sided interests of the EU. On the one hand, EUAM only helped the Service to establish a better communication and public relations strategy. On the other hand, the reform clearly helped to counter the Russian officials whose functions were deemed better organised on the Russian-Ukrainian border. Thus, what might look like an incoherent action to outsiders is in reality part of the process of the mission evaluating and choosing which reforms have strategic, or preferably both strategic and normative, gains to offer.

Overall, this section shows that the initiative to deploy EUAM Ukraine was indeed shaped by "domestic political interests in being seen to 'do something'", and evidently the instruments the mission uses are more of a normative nature.<sup>165</sup> Nevertheless, one should not forget that the CSDP is always part of the broader CFSP framework and thus – unless the explicit normative and implicit strategic objectives happen to coincide – the normative interests are often subordinate to the Union's strategic interests.<sup>166</sup> This shows that strategic and normative interests are indeed not the same but in EUAM's case they do not hinder the success of the missions as they coincide to a great extent. Achieving stronger democracy, human rights and rule of law will at the same time support the strategic goal of the mission to strengthen Ukraine against Russia's influence.

## Conclusion

This paper examined to what extent EUAM has been successful from the EU's perspective. The hypotheses were that the EU had not only normative but also strategic objectives behind deploying EUAM, that EUAM has been more successful in advancing the EU's strategic rather than normative objectives, and that the strategic objectives may hinder the overall success of mission.

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<sup>165</sup> Pohl, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

Supported by realist theory, the findings interestingly show that there are indeed strategic objectives behind launching EUAM. If one only assesses the mission's ability of achieving its normative objectives, it can be stated that the mission has not been very successful. EUAM has managed to introduce some normative standards in the civilian security sector but overall the local buy-in and the estimated sustainability of the reforms are low.

On the other hand, if one only evaluates how well the mission has achieved its strategic objectives, EUAM can be seen as a success. The mission has not been very successful in pushing through reforms of its liking but it has successfully offered an alternative to the Russian model. The Ukrainian civil society clearly prefers the European model and is willing to pressure the political leaders to adopt reforms related to democracy, rule of law and human rights. This may lead to the strategic objectives of the mission eventually contributing to achieving the normative objectives.

The hypothesis that the strategic interests behind EUAM are hindering the mission's success turned out to be wrong. The mission has focused on concerting its efforts through normative means that have, however, achieved some strategic gains. This has been facilitated by the fact that strategic and normative objectives behind the EUAM largely coincide.

Overall, the criteria used to evaluate EUAM proved to be apt as they capture the internal and external factors that affect the success of the mission. However, the evaluation of the success of EUAM so far depends on which objectives matter the most to the EU. The Union is evidently still searching for its place as an external actor, and the ambiguity about the *raison d'être* of CSDP continues to handicap comprehensive evaluations.<sup>167</sup> Thus, the success of EUAM continues to be open for different interpretations, and it will also likely remain so. Nevertheless, this paper does not exclude that the mission may in the future become a successful example of a new type of crisis management mission that tackles complex and hybrid threats and works in close conjunction with other EU policies attempting to provide security as well as development.<sup>168</sup> For this purpose, based on the findings, the following recommendations can be put forward for the attention of EU policy makers:

- 1) strengthen the cooperation and coordination between the EU Delegation and EUAM so that they would reinforce each other's actions;

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<sup>167</sup> Šešelgytė, *op. cit.*

<sup>168</sup> Gross, "CSDP: between internal constraints and external challenges", *op. cit.*, p. 39.

- 2) ensure that the new regional presence in Lviv and Kharkiv will work in close conjunction with the mission office in Kiev;
- 3) issue more public statements especially on negative developments concerning ongoing reforms and draft laws in order to get more visibility for the mission;
- 4) create a shared vision of the civilian security sector's future with the Ukrainian counterparts;
- 5) make Ukraine an example of the EU's comprehensive approach by concerting the mission and European Commission's instruments to advance the civilian security sector reform.

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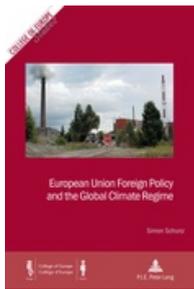
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