SIXTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME
PRIORITY 7
“Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge based Society”

Deliverable 4
“Indicators to Monitor Community Conflicts in Europe”

Preliminary Version

PEACE-COM
Peace Processes in Community Conflicts:
From Understanding the Roots of Conflicts
to Conflict Resolution
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PRELIMINARY BIBLIOGRAPHY
1. General Introduction

The general aim of this deliverable is to propose measurable indicators for monitoring community conflicts in the European Union. These indicators have been selected thanks to two main methods:

- the critical review of existing monitoring techniques, especially the ones that have already been developed by the European Union, with an identification of their holes and weaknesses, in order to supplement them; this deliverable therefore aims at identifying the most useful and relevant indicators developed by existing monitoring systems;

- the transformation of data gathered in all work packages into indicators, with a specific focus on WP1 findings; on the basis of the previous work packages, this deliverable specifies the relevant dimensions for assessing the evolution of community conflicts in Europe;

The chosen indicators have subsequently been prioritised and minimised according to the general objective of the monitoring system, which is to document and monitor the evolution of conflicts, and more specifically their escalation and/or de-escalation, as measured through different predetermined stages of conflict.

This first part of the report focuses on an objective evaluation of the main trends in Early Warning Systems, that is an evaluation of their intrinsic qualities and flaws. The evaluation of the indicators which are being provided for each one of the EWSs will be made according to a few rules which they should abide by if they aim at serving the purpose of early warning. The first set of rules deals with data collection: indicators should be documented, since there is no point in stressing important dimensions of a given conflict if the facts to which they refer are confidential or very difficult to assess. The second set of rules concerns data analysis: several strategies regarding data analysis can be chosen, as we will see. However, it is important that an EWS be coherent and provide indicators that match the chosen methodology of data analysis. Most EWSs rely on measurable indicators, and indeed measurability is a key aspect to the tracking of trends and changes which characterize the escalation or de-escalation of a conflict. A third set of rules deals with the clarity of data description and of conclusions. Since the output of EWSs generally takes the form of country reports, it is important that the main conclusions be easily understood by the users of early warning tools. This requires that the reception of the early warning by its users be seriously taken into account in order to avoid misinterpretation: "effective early warning entails overcoming two distinct but interconnected problems (1) the informational problem of obtaining the necessary quantity and quality of intelligence in a reliable form and timely manner, and (2) the analytical problem of overcoming various barriers that can impede or distort the accuracy of analysis.... This entails averting both the 'underwarning' problem of missing developing conflicts and the 'overwarning'. (Jentleson 2000b p.11 cited by Schmeidl p.18)

Lastly, early warning analysis should abide by the general rules of scientificity, that is that it is important that the conclusions draw on the premises included in reports, on the one hand, and on the other hand that the matter at stake — the evolution of a given conflict — be explained using indicators which are not the conflict itself. In this light, it is clear that indicators of conflict, such as the level of violence at a given period, cannot be used in order to explain the conflict or its evolution over time. It should be mentioned that the debates over the validity of an EWS strategy, PCIA (see below), have included a more general reflection

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1 See Deliverable 1 for a detailed description of these stages.
on the nature of early warning indicators. Should one aim at defining a set of generally applicable indicators or of specific, context-related indicators? Such debate is actually ongoing: “The necessity of embedding indicators into the local and specific situation is clearly outlined. On the other hand, there are also benefits in more generalised sets of indicators that would allow for cross-country comparison.” (Fisher and Wils p.6)

Drawing on this first part, the second part will critically comment on them from the standpoint of the PEACE-COM project. Therefore it will specifically assess how they address the European community conflicts, given the fact that most EWSs have been designed to monitor other types of conflicts – EWSs addressing humanitarian crisis of a different nature than conflict itself have not been included in the following landscape of early warning tools, since their goals clearly differ from those of the PEACE-COM project.
Monitoring of conflicts encompasses more than early warning systems, since it can be defined as “any initiative that focuses on systematic data collection, analysis and/or formulation of recommendations, including risk assessment and information sharing, regardless of topic, whether they are quantitative, qualitative or a blend of both” (Austin 2003: 2). The majority of early warning systems aim at producing conflict analysis oriented towards decision-making, however the breadth of the scope of what they monitor varies from one system to another: “Early warning is a term that is often used to describe a variety of activities that are not all strictly early warning, including conflict analysis and monitoring, data analysis, risk assessment and advocacy. While some systems belong to one sector alone such as AKUF (conflict analysis) others often straddle sectors such as FAST (conflict analysis and monitoring, data analysis, risk assessment and advocacy).” (Austin 2003: 4). Such methodology as PCIA (Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment, developed by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung) actually includes the monitoring of the impact of the project on the conflictive situation. “Relief and development organisations working in places of civil war have raised awareness of conflict-sensitive planning and are seeking to integrate peacebuilding activities into their work. They have learned from recent experiences in war-torn societies that well-intended activities might have unintended outcomes and that development cooperation is never neutral in conflict situations.” (Fischer and Wils 2003: 3). This concern over applicability of recommendation draws some early warning practitioners to advocate for EWSs to be included in a continuous process of conflict assessment: “To achieve the three main goals: (a) identify the causes of conflict, (b) predict the outbreak of conflict and, what is more, (c) mitigate that conflict, an early warning system should contain six core mechanisms. To address the first objective, the archetypical system should have a systematic process of: (i) data collection (quantitative and/or qualitative) and (ii) data analysis. In order to predict conflict, it is necessary to have (iii) an assessment for warning or identification of different scenarios. To move towards the mitigation of conflict and bridging the gap between early warning and response, the model should in a continual circle: (iv) formulate an action proposal, (v) transmit recommendations and (vi) assess the early response, which in turn feeds back into the formulation of action. The need for this continual circle is that warning must not stop with intervention.” (Austin 2003: 11) The first three points mentioned are coherent with our own set of objective rules. However, for the purposes of PEACE-COM do not include the monitoring of donor projects, only conflict analysis systems will be discussed here and we will leave aside project assessment or, as in the case of PCIA, conflict-sensitive project impact assessment.

Several scholars such as Austin (2003) and Schmeidl (2001) already proposed assessments of the field of Early Warning Systems (EWS) on which it is possible to draw for our purpose. Austin proposes to categorise the existing EWSs by their focus and methodology. However, since the focus on conflict is shared by many of them, the methodological divide seems to be more stable to observation. Austin proposes that “All the systems can be (...) divided into four methodological categories: quantitative, qualitative, a dual process of quantitative and qualitative, and finally networks”(p.5). He then proceeds to account for the rationale of each methodology. It is useful to recapitulate them first before studying in-depth a few EWSs.

- Qualitative early warning: “They employ field-based analysts or special envoys, often posted within the region in question, to monitor and conduct specific research.”
Qualitative early warning therefore very much depends on the network of experts mobilized in order to gather data: both FAST and FEWER, for instance, insist in their presentations on this aspect. Qualitative data analysis uses qualitative indicators: here the term “indicator” does not exactly refer to the same measurable, comparable data than when it is used in a quantitative context. It should be more understood as a key dimension which has to be taken into account if one wants to understand the outbreak of conflict – as in the case of the EU Check-list for the root causes of conflicts. Few EWSs offer an actual methodology for qualitative analysis beyond the description of key indicators and a recommendation that actors should be exhaustively listed. FEWER is one noticeable exception to this rule, since it relies on linguistic methodologies in order to determine the key indicators for the analysis of conflict and peace in a comparative fashion.

The results of qualitative analysis usually take the form of country reports or country briefs which are updated regularly. They are narrative and rarely adopt a pre-defined structure, since their aim is to underscore the most striking aspects of a given situation.

- **Quantitative early warning:** “The methodology employed is based on the systematic collection and processing of empirical information according to a given set of criteria. The main objective of quantitative analysis is to „… isolate factors that contribute to the outbreak of war or make warfare more likely…[and] one tries to reveal a direct link between them and the outbreak of war.” (Conrad & Schlichte 2000, 4) From empirical evidence, they try to ascertain the antecedent contextual structures, events and processes that caused the outbreak of violence.” (p.6)

Austin classifies quantitative models according to Gurr’s typology (1998) into “five main models: structural models, accelerator models, threshold models, conjunctural models and response models.”

Structural models “aim to identify the conditions and structural contexts under which violent conflict will erupt. From a predefined list of indicators, the models review causal relationships between these indicators and their magnitude in relation to the objective whether this is state failure or minority risk. The base data, which is data of previous conflicts, is used to identify the indicator magnitude. The results are then tested retrospectively on different conflict data to verify the indicator constellations. Through analogy, in trying to discover why the glass shattered, they look for elements such as brittleness and the degree of brittleness.”

Accelerator models aim “to identify the triggers and antecedent processes that spark and lead to conflict. Barbara Harff points out that „…certain events cluster prior to an outbreak of geno/politicide“ (Harff 1998, 71). These events can then be traced backward as a process prior to the specific outbreak. Developing upon risk assessment by adding a timeframe, accelerator models identify sequences that lead from high-risk situations to conflict.” (p.7)

Threshold models “are based on event data analysis and, although they do not try to identify the causes or processes of conflict, attempt to abstract the information from other conflicts and to identify similarities in the patterns formed by the event data.” (p.8)

Conjunctural models “operate using predefined indicators but differ insofar as they do not examine the magnitude but rather the relationship between, and combination of, indicators. By identifying the constellations present in the pre-conflict phase, they hope to build an early warning.” (p.9) However, they have not yet reached a phase of application.
“Response models “do[...] not attempt to identify the cause of conflict but rather the impact of various interventions and their appropriateness to the conflict. The main product is to produce various hypothetical scenarios in response to different combinations of intervention.” (p.9)

- Qualitative and quantitative early warning: the example here cited of project employing both methodologies is FAST, which we are going to discuss at length later. “This system utilises four information sources: constant monitoring (qualitative analysis), event data analysis (quantitative analysis), expert network (external expertise), and fact finding missions (field investigations).” (p.10)

- “Networks”, argues Austin, “provide a contributive role in the warning about conflicts. These networks cooperate with one another to share field reports and information both from NGOs as well as inter-governmental agencies.” (p.10) Among examples of such networks, he lists the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Humanitarian Early Warning System (HEWS), or the Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER) based in London. Even if networking cannot be considered a methodology for data analysis in the same way as qualitative or quantitative, the aim to share information obtained from various sources using different methods of data collection and analysis raises important questions of consistency and comparability within the final system.

2.1. USAID and CPR

According to USAID (2004), conflict assessment should be designed so as to allow the identification and prioritization of “the causes and consequences of violence and instability” and, at the same time, the understanding of how existing development programmes interact with these factors (p.2). Accordingly the USAID recommends investigating conflicts around five key dimensions:

1. **Incentives for violence** (such as ethnic or religious grievance, poverty, competition over natural resources, destabilizing demographic shifts or manipulation by political or economic elites)
2. **Access to resources** (organizational, financial, human) that help organize and engage into violence
3. **State and social capacity and response** (ability of the state or society to accommodate demands or deal with conflict situations)
4. **Regional and international causes** that support community conflict in a particular reason (such as arms flows, refugee flows, transborder ethnic movements, transnational terrorism, erosion of state sovereignty)
5. **Windows of vulnerability** describe external or internal conditions that support conflict (these could range from elections to natural disasters).

The Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Network (CPR) supported by the United Nations proposes a more detailed conflict assessment network that maps several dimensions against each other (see table 1). More specifically the CPR considers that there are different factors / causes of conflict, namely, political (P), economic (E), social (S), security
(SEC), regional (R) and international (I) factors. Peace efforts or initiatives can also operate at different levels – political, economic, social, security, regional and international. A similar classification can be made with regard to key actors or stakeholders as well as in terms of strategic issues. Strategic issues delineate synergies between factors that cause conflict, factors that underlie peace initiatives and factors that describe actors’ activities.

Following this framework, conflict assessment is carried out in six steps:

1. Assess the factors that characterize the conflict and its causes and classify these into political, economic, social, security, regional and international causes. Among the causes, distinguish between the conflict manifestations (at present), the proximate causes, i.e. factors that accentuate and make more severe a specific conflict and the structural or underlying root causes of the conflict.

2. Characterize the various stakeholders (primary, secondary, external) in a conflict at different levels (political, economic, social, security, regional, international). Specify their actions, their agendas (interests and needs) and their alliances.

3. Specify peace efforts, peace structures / processes as well as gaps in peace efforts. Once again specify whether these efforts are occurring at the political, economic or social level, whether they are initiated by international or regional actors and whether they also concern security issues.

Once conflict causes, stakeholders and peace efforts have been adequately detailed, the next step is:

4. To look for specific patterns that link causes with stakeholders and relate peace efforts to areas of intervention.

5. This allows the identification of gaps in peace efforts.

6. It also helps in the definition of scenarios about the possible development of the conflict in the next stage. Three types of scenarios should be defined: a best-case scenario that foresees conflict management or resolution, a middle ‘muddling through’ scenario and a worst case scenario. It is absolutely important to define a worst case scenario and corresponding contingency objectives in terms of crisis-management options.
The USAID and CPR assessment frameworks are both comparable and compatible. The CPR framework displays a greater sensitivity for the role of stakeholders and their agendas; the USAID network is more cognizant of the role of ‘external’ events in creating conditions supportive of conflict and violence. Both fail to consider the symbolic dimension of conflict as is transmitted by the media, the educational system, cultural events as well as personal history. The symbolic dimension is in fact what allows conflicts to be reproduced over time and generations and what often explains the difficulties in successfully implementing peace initiatives. Another dimension that is not given adequate attention by the CPR and USAID assessment frameworks is the impact pathway dimension, namely the mode through which conflicts evolve over time and impact on resident populations.

2.2. Strategic Conflict Assessment

Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) is the methodology used for early-warning and conflict monitoring by the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

This methodology is composed of three stages:
1. Analysis of the conflict
2. Analysis of international responses to the conflict

SCA is described as a “flexible methodology” since it is to be adapted “according to the needs and objectives of the end user” and “according to the nature and phase of the conflict”. The
emphasis put on early warning or on monitoring ongoing conflicts varies according to the purpose or the donors. The following lists of indicators are directly quoted from the original document and commented upon.

Even if SCA encompasses three successive stages, this temporality does not correspond to the one of the conflict itself: “the notion that the ‘beginning’ and ‘end’ of a conflict can be identified is inappropriate in contemporary conflicts. Conflict is a dynamic social process in which the original structural tensions are themselves profoundly reshaped by the massive disruptions of war. Therefore ‘root causes’ may become decreasingly relevant in protracted conflicts which have led to the transformation of the state and society”.

The emphasis is put on data processing: “The added value lies less in the information gathering than in the analysis, interpretation and prediction of conflict trends.”

There are limits to the accuracy of conflict assessment: “This is not an exact science and never will be – there is no substitute for skilled regional specialists and analysts. One should also be realistic about its predictive powers; at best it is about identifying plausible possibilities.” (“Conducting Conflict Assessment: Guidance Notes”, DFID)

The emphasis is put on the individual incentives of actors and on “perceptions and the meanings that people attribute to events, institutions, policies” rather than on structure – i.e. “the institutions (political, economic, social and military) which may predispose a country to violent conflict”.

The theoretical ground here is the ‘political economy’ approach, where the principal explicandum of conflict is the personal interest of key stakeholders. “If the political economy of war brings opportunities, there will be strong interests in perpetuating and managing war for purposes of personal gain. Interventions which ignore these interests risk fuelling the conflict.”

The causes of conflict can therefore be sorted out, using Collier’s expression (2000) between ‘greed’ (“opportunities for predatory accumulation”) and ‘grievance’ (“the negative reactions of those who are disadvantaged”). It is not our purpose here to provide a general criticism of this theory, yet it is possible to assess how useful its translation may be in an EWS such as SCA. Reducing the strategies and aims of actors to two main trends certainly serves the purpose of providing a limited set of clearly defined indicators. However, it is questionable whether this narrow definition of the interests of actors does justice to the complexity of their representations. The same criticism could be made in the field of social movement theory and contentious politics to the authors, mostly from the “resource mobilization” school of thought, who often use economic metaphors such as “social movement entrepreneur”. By assuming that economic aspects play a key role in explaining conflict evolutions, SCA may risk to be trapped in a constrictive deprivation/aggression understanding of a given situation.

Concerning its scope of analysis, contemporary conflicts are described as “multi-levelled”, which means that it should be analysed at the international, the regional, the national and the local level.

The analysis of the conflict is performed in three steps: 1. Structures, 2. Actors, 3. Dynamics.
Structures: The following table present some examples of the dimensions analysed for each step.

EXAMPLES OF SOURCES OF TENSION AND CONFLICT

SECURITY
• Security forces have limited capacity and are weakly controlled
• Human rights abuses from security forces/armed groups
• High levels of military spending
• Presence of non state military actors
• Poorly controlled.contested borders
• Unstable regional/international context (e.g. political changes in neighbouring countries)
• Legacy of past conflict
• Proliferation of light weapons

POLITICAL
• Weakly institutionalised/unrepresentative political system
• Lack of independent judiciary
• Lack of independent media and civil society
• Corruption
• Weak political parties
• Lack of popular participation, and gender imbalance, in political and governance processes
• Flawed election processes
• Political exploitation of ethnic/religious differences
• Systems for managing conflict weakly developed
• Weak and uncoordinated international engagement
• Destabilising role by diaspora populations

ECONOMIC
• Economic decline: trends in poverty, unemployment, inflation, food security, access to social welfare.
• Widening economic disparities – growing Gini coefficient - based on regional or ethnic divisions
• Macro economic instability
• Shift to destabilizing external investment patterns or destabilizing international economic policies
• Increasing competition over shared resources
• Growth in black and parallel economies
• Development of war economy

SOCIAL
• Social exclusion
• Legacy of unresolved ethnic conflict
• Absence of cross cutting social and civil society organisations
• Tensions over language, religion, ethnicity
• Failure of dispute resolution mechanisms/decreasing legitimacy of customary authorities

One can notice that some of these dimensions can be translated much more easily into documented indicators than others: the use of the Gini coefficient, where such data is available, is easier than the assessment of social exclusion or of unresolved ethnic conflict.
This set of indicators is composed of a wide array of dimensions which show the inventiveness and the intention to cover all aspects of a situation demonstrated by the authors of SCA. However, a drawback to this strategy is that it is difficult to sort out between the key indicators and the less important ones. An important aspect to the study of indicators is that, even in qualitative analysis, it should privilege reducing the number of indicators to a few independent variables. When indicators are numerous, a way of rating them in order to make them more clearly understandable should also be provided – for instance using coefficients or ranking them according to their salience.

**Actors**

Once a comprehensive list of the actors involved in the conflict has been established, the following points are to be documented for each one of them:

- Interests: what interests do they have in relation to the conflict and how do these interests influence the conflict?
- Relations: what are the relationships between the various actors?
- Capacities: what capacities do they have to influence conflict either positively or negatively?
- Peace Agendas: do they have an interest in peace? What kind of peace do they want?
- Incentives: what kind of incentives could be offered for them to choose peace? Or disincentives to engage with violence?

The example which is provided – the one of the local conflict actors in the Ferghana valley in Kyrgyzstan - explains how such agenda can be implemented. The list of relevant actors includes post-soviet elites, drug traders, religious fundamentalists, military and police and the “general public”. This list illustrates how the identification of key actors is closely linked with the overall approach centred on individual interest and incentives, since actors are mostly described as people who lost or gained (mostly) economic power. It is difficult to see how a definition of the “general public” as an actor can be operationalized.

**Dynamics**

This third step in conflict analysis is aimed at “assessing the likelihood for conflict to increase, decrease or remain stable”. Therefore, even if the concept of “root causes” has been pushed aside in SCA, some distinction between “longer term trends” and “shorter term triggers” is here reintroduced, so as to produce “prediction of future conflict scenarios”.

In order to determine the possible directions that the conflict may take, the following points are to be addressed:

- Analysing the longer term trends: i.e. are tensions increasing or decreasing?
- Assessing the likely shorter term triggers which may lead to the outbreak or escalation of conflict.
- Assessing which factors are likely to accelerate or slow conflict dynamics: this includes identifying institutions or processes that can mitigate or manage the tensions and conflicts identified so far.”

Three key dimensions are here considered:

1. A society’s structural vulnerability to violent conflict: as mapped out in the structural analysis.
2. The opportunity to benefit from instability and violence by elite groups: this includes political benefits as well as pursuit of economic agendas.
3. A society’s capacity to manage or contain conflict. Weak states lack the resources to contain conflict and are less likely to compromise or address the grievance of disaffected
groups. Institutions that might play a mediating role either lack capacity or deliberately marginalise certain groups.”

Once again, it is not clear how these dimensions should be operationalized, especially where “weak states” have not been subjected to a clear definition. Although conflict management by a given society is considered to be a key aspect, it seems to be hardly translatable into indicators when the conflict is still in escalating phase. This concept of “conflict management” is however central to the epistemological perspective of SCA: “We do not assume a model of ‘functional harmony’, with conflict in some way representing a departure from the norm. It is recognised that conflict has a positive dimension and is an essential part of the process of social and political change. Conflict management is, therefore, not about preventing conflict but supporting institutions that are able to manage conflict in an inclusive and non-violent way” (Goodhand 2001: 12)

To conclude, one can note that even if in SCA the analysis of the conflict and the analysis of international responses to the conflict are separated in two different steps, they are indeed considered to be closely tied to each other: “International actors and policies are integral to conflict processes and consideration of them should be included in the steps of Conflict Analysis”. This approach is coherent with the study of the “external” dimensions of the conflict (D1 p.16) as well as with the finding that the intervention of international actors impacts heavily on conflicts: “In the SCAs conducted to date, it was found that the main development actors had tended to work ‘around conflict’ and as a result, inadvertently exacerbated tensions or missed opportunities to mitigate or resolve conflicts.”

2.3. The European Commission Check list for root-causes of conflict

The Commission has developed an early warning system based on indicators in order to point at potential conflicts. The indicators are translated into a score, which allows a quick identification of the problematic cases. Therefore, it is clearly the escalating phase of the conflict that is been looked at. However, one of the mentioned objectives is “to heighten the effort to ensure that EU policies (and in particular those managed by the European Commission)) contribute to conflict prevention/resolution.” (Source: European Commission Check-list for Root Causes of Conflict), which requires a broadening of the scope of the “causes” in order to include the effect of EU policies through their monitoring.

The early-warning tool is composed of a check list for root causes of conflict, divided into eight main dimensions regrouping key points. For each one of these points, indicators are suggested.
1. Legitimacy of the State
2. Rule of law
3. Respect for fundamental rights
4. Civil society and media
5. Relations between communities and dispute-solving mechanisms
6. Sound economic management
7. Social and regional inequalities
8. Geopolitical situation
These main dimensions to be looked at are coherent with other early-warning systems. The indicators rely partly on pre-existing indicators of development (for example, the Human Development Rating): for instance, to the question “how are social welfare policies addressed?” are associated such indicators as “overall level of literacy, health, sanitation”. Some indicators, especially economic ones, closely mirror the definitions of sound governance adopted in a liberal European Union: the main dimension “Sound economic management” is translated into the question “Is policy framework conducive to macro-economic stability?”, documented with such indicators as “stability of main macro-economic fundamentals (inflation, public deficit, current accounts)” and “ability to attract investment (both domestic and FDI)”. There is a discrepancy in the possibility for the indicators to be precisely documented. For instance, under the main dimension “Legitimacy of the State”, such question as “How inclusive is the political/administrative power?” is being answered to using such indicators as “ethnic and religious representativeness of the government” (compared to SCA, the EC check-list does not explicitly mention gender balance) or “equality of access to political activity”, which are fairly easy to document. On the contrary, the fifth dimension, “Relations between communities and dispute-solving mechanisms”, seems to be much more difficult to assess, with such indicators as “Ability of major identity groups to mix together”, “frequency of outbursts of racial/religious violence”, “perpetuation of negative stereotypes or mutual suspicions by collective memory and culture”, which require field work to be assessed. Finally, the last dimension pointing to “external causes” – “Geopolitical situation” – deals solely with the stability of the region and the relations with neighbouring states, as well as with the impact of diasporas, and does not include the effect of past or present international action in the country.

When put into practice, such methodology gives results that look fairly similar to those of SCA (see for example Hollants Van Loocke and Philipson 2002).

- The first chapter on “Background” recapitulates the “root causes” of the conflict in Nepal;
- the second one, “The Positions of the Parties and Conflict Resolution Strategies”, presents the positions of key actors vis-à-vis the conflict;
- the third one, “Key institutions and actors”, gives some background information on each of them – including neighbouring countries and Western donors -;
- the fourth one, “Opportunities and risks”, proposes directions for future EC action, based on the root causes pinpointed earlier;
- the fifth one, “Proposed long/medium term conflict prevention strategy” builds a strategic framework which replaces projects in their temporal frame as well as it provides precise indicators for their evaluation and lists all EC capacity in the country;
- the sixth one lists all ongoing projects and assesses their results and lists promising directions for future projects
- the seventh one, “Short-term intervention”, addresses the question of what interventions should be done immediately.

Although the plan of the report on Indonesia (Mawdsley et al.2002) differs slightly from the one of the Nepal report, the organization of the content is pretty much identical, with an identification of the root causes in the “Background”, a listing of key actors in the conflict and their strategies vis-à-vis conflict prevention, an evaluation of the current EC projects and recommendations for future projects divided into short-term and long/medium-term interventions. The “Background” part, which is of foremost interest to our discussion of early-warning systems, is composed of a description of the political, economic, social situation of the country; it also retraces the historical grounds of the conflict. The various dimensions are
intermingled rather than articulated, since the narrative structure of the report leaves no room
to discussing the methodology of conflict analysis per se, assuming that a recapitulation of the
main facts will give a clear picture of the ongoing situation. No tables or graphs are used in
this “Background” section, thereby indicating that the early warning model is hardly
formalized. In the bibliography section, there are no references to methodological literature
(not even the EC Check-list for root causes). If documented indicators have been used in the
preparation of the report, they are not apparent in the final version, which privileges giving
the reader a sense of what is going on over precisely grounding the assertions.

2.4. FAST (Early recognition of tension and fact-finding)

FAST is an early warning project developed by the Swiss Peace Foundation since 1998, and it
aims at “the early recognition of impending or potential crisis situations for the purpose of
early action and conflict prevention” (FAST early warning, available on the Canadian
International Development Agency). It combines quantitative and qualitative analysis in a
methodology adapted to each country case, which therefore privileges the precise analysis of
a specific situation over cross-country comparison.

The content of each Country Risk Profile is coherent with SCA and the Reports of the EC
Conflict Prevention Assessment Mission: the “factors that may lead to armed conflict, hamper
conflict resolution or provide a window of opportunity for de-escalation and peace-building
efforts” are sorted out in “root, proximate, and intervening” factors. Those of these factors
which are considered most important are closely monitored. Background information
(“chronology of events, Tension Barometers, strategic information on political,
economic/ecological, socio-demographic, and military aspects of a country”), case scenarios,
a list of actor profiles, are provided as well as “detailed policy options identifying an overall
strategy, steps toward implementation (including obstacles to be overcome) and specific
tools/programs.”

FAST scholars are very concerned with methodological aspects of early warning, and try and
build new directions for research on this topic based on previous experiences, both positive
and negative – what Susanne Schmeidl calls the “Lessons Learned”. Such lessons for instance
deal with methodologies of data collection, for which she recommends to “integrate
quantitative indicators that allow for a detached depiction of the situation that is not biased by
qualitative considerations [and to] outsource early warning analysis in order to have a neutral
second opinion.” (Schmeidl p.15). Even if the latter option is not always feasible and the first
one shows a faith in the objectivity of quantitative data which we do not share, this concern is
useful for ensuring that an EWS will not solidify into an unquestioned procedure.

Causes of conflict

The distinction between root causes, proximate causes and positive/negative intervening
factors is described as the “backbone of FAST analysis”. It pre-exists the actual realisation of
each country profile, therefore the definition of each category is an important theoretical
milestone. Root causes are defined as the “background factors that enhance armed conflict”. They are “necessary but not sufficient causes of armed conflict”, “mostly static – [they]
change only slowly overtime” and “mostly embedded in historical context” – this definitions
reminds us of the “Ancient Hatreds” dimension (D1 p.19). On the contrary, proximate causes are defined as “factors that can lead (together with the root causes) to armed conflict”. They are “time-wise closer to the outbreak of armed conflict” and “can change quickly overtime”. The distinction between root and proximate causes, here of a purely temporal nature, is efficient since early-warning systems themselves are embedded in a temporal sequence leading – hopefully (Dorn and Matloff 2000) – to early response.

However, there are hints that the distinction between root and proximate causes can lead to theoretical assumptions regarding the nature of these causes. The examples provided for root causes - “ethnic diversity, colonial history, economic situation” - are problematic because they are very diverse and have different temporalities. If colonization is a historical fact and the economic situation can refer to structural features of the economy – such as the presence or lack of access to raw materials – which are unlikely to change, considering “ethnic diversity” as a static feature endangers the analysis of coming close to an illusion of ethnic “primordialism” (Appadurai 1996: 197 sq.).

Lastly, the distinction between “negative intervening factors” which are “increasing the likelihood of armed conflict” (such as “arms-trade”) and “positive intervening factors” (e.g. “civil society initiatives”) which decrease it is context-sensitive.

Methodology of data analysis

FAST country reports rely on both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Qualitative analysis is aimed at providing in-depth information about a specific situation as well as giving insight in order to understand the results of quantitative analysis.

FAST’s specificity is the use of event data analysis, a computer-based way of processing data divided into “single cooperative and conflictive events” – generally, as for the Kansas Event Data System (KEDS), found in newspapers - “These events are collected by local staff and entered into a web-based software tool through a coding scheme called IDEA (Integrated Data for Event Analysis), which is based on the WEIS (World Interaction Survey) coding scheme”. (FAST website). Then, “all events considered relevant to conflict development are assigned a certain numeric value according to a distinct conflict scale. These values can then be added up, and graphically displayed in a curve, for specific time intervals”. Therefore, large quantities of information can be processed into indicators and presented in graphs, and the use of standardized indicators permits for comparison between case studies. Once conflict trends have been identified, quantitative analysis can be used as a tool for forecasting them.

Methodology of data collection

FAST presents an original method of data collection in order to document both qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Noting that event data analysis relies most times on such sources as international newspaper, such data collection may mirror the perception that Western journalists have of the situation: “as automated coding currently only relies on Reuters ® news-wire, it does not guarantee a good-enough coverage of all countries in the world as international journalism is based on two principles: a) what may be of general interest to the rest of the world, and b) violence and blood sells better than other news. In countries or regions that are of lesser interest to English-speaking news-services, the event-data principle of no report meaning no event does not hold true.” (Schmeidl p.34) Therefore, in order to tackle this issue of one-sightedness, “for each country/region monitored, unique sets of data
are collected by FAST’s own Local Information Networks (LINs). This is done independently from Western media coverage, thus providing a constant influx of information.” FAST relies on a network of local correspondents in order to document themselves a specific set of indicators. The possibility of multiplying viewpoints on a specific situation is therefore opened, however, the systematic reliance on indicators may grant them of a stability which they may do not deserve – since the task of documenting indicators cannot lead to a revising of the set of indicators itself.

Note: FAST experts put early warning tool methodology high on their agenda: FAST is part of the NoE GMOSS, one of which subprojects is to test a number of early warning techniques.

**Output**

The output of such techniques is a set of Country Risk Profiles that are quarterly updated. Such document contains graphs representing the evolutions over time of listed indicators. The first one, “Relative Conflictual Actions”, refers to the “proportion of all actions belonging to all conflictive categories reject, accuse, protest, deny, demand, warn, threaten, demonstrate, reduce relationships, expel, seize, and force to all actions.” (FAST Albania update n°2, 2004) Conflict and cooperation events are evaluated: “Each event category is assigned an IDEA rating (value), ranging from -7 (extreme conflict) to 13 (extreme cooperation). Zero value events are excluded from these calculations.” New indicators are then designed based on this evaluation, such as “International conflict” (i.e.”the international conflict indicator displays the total sum of the negative (IDEA) values of all conflictive interstate or international events in a specific time period”) or “International Cooperation” (i.e. “the international cooperation indicator displays the total sum of the positive (IDEA) values of all cooperative interstate or international events in a specific time period”). FAST literature provides with operational definitions for the two main concepts of cooperation and conflict:

“Cooperation: captures various forms of accommodative or cooperative behaviour between diverse domestic or international actors. Such behaviour can vary from verbal agreements, meetings to concrete joint efforts or operations for the forwarding of mutual benefits between domestic actors (based on Goldstein 1992).

Conflict: captures contentious or conflictive interactions (e.g., antagonism, contradictory action, or disagreement) between diverse domestic or international actors. The type of conflict can vary from verbal antagonism/disagreements, contradictory action, to outright physical force with various levels of intensity (based on Goldstein 1992). (Schmeidl p.34)”

However, the definition of the displayed indicators – which vary according to the case being studied – is sometimes difficult to grasp. For instance, the Serbia-Montenegro updates mention such indicator as “Relative Civil Direct Actions”, defined as the “proportion of Civil Direct Actions compared to All Civil Actions. Civil Direct Actions are conflictive events that can be assigned to the following event types: threaten, demonstrate, reduce relationships, expel, seize and force. These categories encompass direct action limited to non-governmental, or civil sector actors.” (FAST Update Serbia-Montenegro n°4 2004). In fact, “Direct Action” appears to be a sub-class of “Conflictual Action” – one can even deduce the following equation:

\[
\text{Conflictual Action} = \text{Direct Action} + (\text{reject, accuse, protest, deny, demand, warn})
\]
Several issues arise from such definitions. The distinction between Conflictual Action and Direct Action is unclear, and cannot be boiled down to a distinction between discursive or symbolic/physical acts, since the extra categories do not refer only to discursive events – “protest” can indeed refer to a whole range of means of action. The meaning associated with the category “direct action” is hardly linked to the literature on direct action since an indicator called “Relative Government Direct Actions” is used. This contradicts the fact that direct action, as a component of contentious politics, usually describes part of the unconventional repertoire used by actors which cannot access the conventional ways of doing politics – of which the government is certainly not part of.

In the country reports, the graphs recapitulating the main variations in indicators are followed by a list of facts relevant to the indicator at stake, allowing the reader to understand these variations. However, the link with the indicators is sometimes unclear, for instance the description of the search by the government for private investors in order to carry out the privatization of companies in Serbia is placed under a graph discussing the relative weight of Civil Direct Action and Government Direct Action. Since the methods of data collection and the mathematical processing of data are highly standardized, the weak point of such methodology lies in the process of granting a rating to a specific event. Austin notes that “almost all of the event data coding is now automated. Schrodt et al. (2001) identifies five main advantages: cost, sharing software, lack of bias and, finally, the possibility to experiment with coding rules. (…) Concerning bias, although both human as well as machine coding result in bias: “….that even expert [human] coders in the military tend to overestimate the military capability of China during the 1980s because they know China to be a large communist country“ (ibid; citing Laurance 1990), the bias in machine coding is consistently incorrect in contrast to human coding where there are as many bias positions as there are coders. The machine bias holds the advantage that the program can be continually re-adjusted to compensate for the bias.” (Austin 2003: 8). Such revision is however both complicated (due to the large span of possible grades and the asymmetry of the scale) and subjective (if practices at a given FAST outlet can benefit from dialog between data collectors, strong international coordination is necessary in order to make sure that indicators are comparable worldwide).

2.5. FEWER

Methodology

FEWER is an Early Warning network which puts the emphasis on locally gathered and analysed data. Among the core assumptions that shape the Early Warning methodology used, we find that “conflicts are complex. We need to understand not only what may fuel a conflict, but also what prevents its outbreak.”. Therefore “an understanding of conflict as well as peace generating factors is critical for early warning analysis.” (p.8). This hypothesis translates into a core equation of conflict and peace analysis: “(a) conflict trends – (b) peace trends +/- (c) stakeholder trends = overall trends.” (“Conflict analysis and response definition abridged methodology April 2001”)

This assumption impacts on the indicators devised in order to monitor conflicts. First of all, a classical distinction is made between root causes (“Structural or underlying causes of conflict.
Examples may be poverty, poor governance, etc.”), proximate causes (“Factors that accentuate and make more severe the underlying causes of conflict. Examples may be poor personal security, availability of weapons, etc.”) and trigger events (“Events that led (or may lead) to the violent escalation of the conflict. Examples may be the arrest of a key political figure, an especially violent cattle rustling episode, etc.”)(p.3)). As we have seen previously, a limit to this approach is the subjective divide between root and proximate causes, which is neither purely temporal nor just referring to a difference in nature between structures and actors, for instance.

The originality of the FEWER methodology lies in the fact that it analyses peace indicators as well as conflict indicators. The former include:
- systemic indicators: “The system that upholds peace or “conflict carrying capacity” of society. How strong is it? Examples may be rules governing relations between villages and groups, a culture of tolerance, etc.”
- process indicators: “The processes that are in place for dealing with conflict and that sustain peace. Examples may be inter-village meetings, a process where elders meet, etc.”
- “tool” indicators: “The tools or instruments available for dealing with conflict. Examples may be traditional courts, truth commissions, etc.”

Here again, the difference between categories seems unclear, especially the one between processes and tools for which the given examples seem fairly close.

Lastly, FEWER puts an emphasis on the monitoring of actors, called “stakeholders”: “It is critical to understand the potential and actual motivations of different stakeholders and what actions they take to further their respective interests.” Contrary to SCA, FEWER grounds this actor analysis on a much richer definition of the possible motivations than just interest understood in a very narrow economic sense. Three dimensions are here studied:
- “Agendas/power: The agendas of key stakeholders for conflict and for peace. What is the cumulative power of stakeholders promoting peace or conflict? Examples include labour unions wanting a change in government, allied with student groups who have the same agenda. Their combined power for strikes and demonstrations may be significant.
- Needs: The needs of different stakeholders may include access to land for pastoralist groups, or the need medical supplies for guerillas (e.g. Burundi). Critically, what needs are opposing and overlapping among different stakeholders?
- Actions: What actions are the different stakeholders undertaking to promote peace or conflict?” (p.6)

Here again the distinction made between the three dimensions seems unclear – putting agendas and power in one dimension undermines its actual specificity – and the evaluation of the “needs” of each actor necessarily includes a normative prospective, which is not being discussed. However, the analysis of “the cumulative power of actions for peace or conflict” as summarized by the key equation appears to be a promising direction, for it includes in the analysis possible coalitions: “for example, local NGOs and women’s groups may be advocating for justice and key donors may seek to fund the special courts”

For each dimension, the FEWER methodology asks to list political/security indicators, economic indicators and socio-cultural indicators, a distinction frequently used by EWS (see SCA). The monitoring of these indicators makes it possible to determine some trends by asking what conflict indicators (root, proximate, triggers) reinforce each other, and therefore to describe possible scenarios, either “Best case”, “Status-quo” or “Worst case” scenarios.
Methodological and epistemological principles

FEWER methodology papers include a critical evaluation of early warning practices and develop an original epistemological reflection on the topic of data gathering and analysis. First of all, the authors state, as we did earlier, that “indicators need to be measured in quantitative terms, be policy relevant, and have associated information sources”. They also call for widening the spectrum of the dimensions which are being studied, and particularly for the introduction of a gender perspective. Epistemologically, they go as far as to state that “it is now clear that a factual approach to early warning is flawed. Different indicators could be interpreted in a number of ways by people in conflict affected areas. Perceptions, therefore, are as important as facts.” (p.8) However, contrary to SCA, FEWER does not specify how such emphasis on perceptions can be implemented in the analysis.

Guidelines for ensuring that all key aspects and actors have been covered by the country report are provided. These questions actually match the holes that have been identified in early warning systems and operationalize the theoretical guidelines. An example of such check-list goes as follows:
“Please consider the following five questions during the indicator analysis:
1. Have you considered indicators at all levels (local, national, international)?
2. Have you considered both the relative importance of historic, present and future indicators?
3. Are your indicators reflective only of the current phase of the conflict (pre-conflict, actual conflict, post-conflict)? If so, please consider whether other phases are relevant.
4. Are the indicators you selected important both in terms of facts and perceptions?
5. Do the indicators selected reflect the concerns of different sectors of the population (women, elderly, poor, rich, etc.)?”

On the level of data gathering and of data analysis, the authors call for a multi-faceted methodology: “Three directions can be seen in the practice of early warning: (i) unstructured qualitative and context specific situation assessments; (ii) generic indicator-based analyses; and (iii) quantitative model-based studies. All three directions have value, and inform the approach which FEWER member organisations take in their early warning efforts.” (p.8) However, in-depth country reports are based on qualitative analysis. Yet, an effort is made in order to go beyond the narrative description of local situations and allow for cross-country comparison. They argue that “qualitative content analysis is a classical method for structuring and categorising written material of any origin. This method is particularly useful when we have to work with a largely unstructured and narrative text.” (p.9) An application of this methodology to the country report material allows for the construction of comparable indicators: “the conflict and peace indicators for the Great Lakes region in Africa and the Caucasus region have been developed by applying qualitative content analysis on regional reports. The data set covered forty regional reports between 1998-1999 for the Great Lakes including Country Reports, Region Reports, Thematic Reports and Policy Briefs.” However, it must be noted that the constructed indicators may not be equally documented: such methodology appears therefore to be particularly useful if it allows for a feedback directed at local networks, so that they may complement the missing information.
2.6. Preliminary Conclusions

Although there have been some assessments of the field of Early Warning Systems, as mentioned in the introduction, no actual evaluation of their relevance has been made with regards to actually preventing conflicts. It should be noted that their outputs in terms of analysis appears to be uneven: although all EWSs include thick descriptions of the country cases in their outputs, the efficiency of such reports as far as prompting appropriate response is not obvious. For that matter, it may be useful to distinguish between EWSs which provide with precisely documented thick reports, allowing the reader to draft her own analysis, and those in which the evolution of the situation is translated into a scale, thereby facilitating interpretation and action. It should be noted, however, that the link between early warning and early response is not a direct one, as it is mediated by the institutional patterns of the donor which is, in the end, solely responsible for engaging in an action about a given case.

From our objective criticism of the main models available for Early Warning Systems, we can point at their main qualities:

- SCA’s methodology is built on a dynamic concept of conflict which allows to track trends of escalation and de-escalation, instead of trying to look at the “root causes”, defined in an essentialist fashion as is the case with the primordialist assumption regarding the role played by ethnicity in most EWSs.

- The European Commission Check-list for root causes of conflicts is a simple tool in which the relative escalation of a conflict is materialized into a score easily interpreted by the users.

- FAST puts the emphasis on multiplying data sources and methodologies for data analysis, and therefore aims at reducing the risks of cognitive bias on the part of the researchers who perform the analysis.

- FEWER is the early warning tool that includes the most sophisticated analysis of actors with regards both to conflict and peace.

A shortcoming shared by all the EWS which were studied for the purpose of this deliverable is that they do not include the effects of accommodation policies in the scope of the analysis in a systematic fashion. Most of them include the “international response” to conflicts in the dimensions which are being monitored, but not only does this formulation implies a sequential model of action – first, the conflict, then, the response – instead of a multi-levelled interaction between local actors and international actors, it does not clearly render the fact that accommodation policies are structured sets of measures obeying to distinctive logics.

Even if most EWS include the listing and description of all key actors in the conflict, the dynamics of their actions are not included in the scope of the analysis. Typologies of actors tend to ascribe a position to them instead of making it possible to understand how their multi-positionality can impact on the evolution of the conflict.
3. Outline of a design for the PEACE-COM monitoring system

3.1.1. Issues linked to questions raised in D1

- Taking multidimensionality into account

Even if D1 concluded that some dimensions of our case studies are more salient than others, it has also shown that each conflict situation combines various dimensions at the same time, whose relative importance may vary in time or according to the actor you are talking to. Each dimension or cause of a conflict cannot be understood without taking into account their relative weight, as well as the causal relationships that may exist with other issues. In our monitoring system, we therefore need to adopt a multidimensional approach, integrating this multidimensionality of conflicts we are dealing with. This applies also to our specific objectives, and especially to the monitoring of the impact of Europeanisation. For instance, European integration must not only be assessed through its impact on the level of violence (escalation or de-escalation), but also on the various dimensions that have been identified as relevant, conflict by conflict.

We should also not dismiss the possibility that dimensions may impact in various ways on each other, even in cases which present strong similarity. In other words, the fact that the same two dimensions are strongly present in one case does not necessarily mean that they interact in the same way. This leads us to use an at least partly conjunctural model, as described in the first section of this deliverable, namely a system that examines the relationship between, and combination of, various indicators it uses. The main problem we will be facing while promoting such an approach is that this type of monitoring systems has not yet reached a phase of application.

However, we can rely on the fact that one of the aims of WP2 is precisely to identify, on the basis of D1 and of the various case study reports that have so far been prepared by each team involved in this project, key configurations linked to the degree of violence reached during a specific conflict, in other words, to point at particularly relevant combinations of dimensions, as far as monitoring is concerned. We therefore suggest to integrate these key combinations in our monitoring system, instead of trying to examine all possible relationships between indicators, an objective which would probably be overambitious and almost impossible to handle. We therefore propose to include these combinations in our monitoring system, as soon as the most relevant will have been identified and operationalised.

Integrating a dynamic approach

Another complexity put in evidence by D1 is what we have called the “shifting temporality of causes”, namely the fact that most of the conflicts we are covering feed themselves constantly, they are self-perpetuating, start-up conditions giving birth to new conditions and paradigms in the framework of which new grievances can develop. In this perspective, ‘root’ causes may loose part or all of their relevance for characterising and understanding current conflicts. We have therefore suggested to limit our analysis to issues to which actors still refer.

However, as some of these shifts may be of a partly semantic nature, we still need to include a dynamic approach, weighting the varying importance of factors across time. This dynamic approach has partly been adopted by previous EWSs such as SCA or FAST. For instance
FAST methodology proposes to distinguish between root and proximate causes; this distinction is very useful and should be included in our own monitoring system, but does not exactly refer to the same thing, because the perception of root causes by key actors may also be changing over time. For instance, while many XVIIth century authors used to state that the root causes of the conflict in Ireland were religious, their successors in the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries began to point at the political or colonial causes of the conflict. One solution can be to submit these readings of conflict causes to an on-going review, and therefore to allow our monitoring system to take any shift or evolution into account. In other words, avoid to “freeze” our cases into one category of conflicts, by integrating possible changes in their “basic” configuration.

Issues, causes, dimensions?

Similarly, we should also think about a way to deal with the fact that some of the dimensions identified in D1 can be seen both as causes and issues. As we have seen in D1, it is for instance the case of religion, language, identity, socio-economic disparities, territory. This invites us to pay attention both to historical causes and to current issues, as complex interaction processes are at play between them. D1 had proposed, through the use of the word ‘dimension’, to treat causes and issues in a similar way, so as to avoid any kind of ranking between them, as well as any value judgement. We propose to keep this perspective, and to avoid by all means any distinction between causes and issues that would not been directly connected to the description or analysis of actors’ discourses.

Taking perceptions and meanings into account

One related issue is the question of measurement of the meaning of dimensions for actors on the ground. As we have seen in D1, all conflict dimensions have very different meanings and implications for concerned actors. This could be considered as anecdotal if this had not crucial consequences for understanding conflicts themselves, and therefore in terms of conflict resolution. One useful example is the question of socio-economic differences: as we have seen, they can both point towards discriminating policies generating distrust, and to economic differentials accused by a favoured community of hampering its own development. We therefore again suggest to integrate a qualitative approach allowing us to assess these variations of meanings, as it is the case in the SCA system, which has put the emphasis on individual perceptions and meanings. This point is of a specific importance for the coherence of our monitoring system, as we are not so much interested in the causes of the conflict, than in the perception that the key actors have of them. We should be therefore able to avoid any kind of ‘primordialism’, as it is the case when ‘ethnic diversity’ is presented as a ‘root cause’ of a specific conflict (as in the FAST system).

3.1.2. Analysing how a conflict is framed by its actors

Since it is our purpose to include within the scope of analysis not only documented facts but also the subjective significance that these facts endorse for the various actors involved in a given conflict, it is important, once the list of relevant actors has been established, to document these representations (for instance based on discourse analysis of political
discourse, propaganda material or expert interviews). The results of this analysis, for each country case report, can be summarized in tables such as the following one:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REPRESENTATIONS OF ACTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DIMENSIONS OF CONFLICT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic and cultural differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of neighbouring states and bordering communities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indeed, such table aims at presenting in a simple way the various representations that exist of the same situation from different point of views. It is useful for mapping out the main topics of dissent, as a preliminary descriptive stage allowing the analysis of how the conflict is framed by its main actors. As we have seen, the concept of “root cause” is not a central one to our analysis, for epistemological reasons – it is not easy to distinguish between root causes and conflict issues – as well as for reasons related to the project objectives – for it is not our intention to re-state the historical grounds of the conflicts we study, which are well covered by the literature. Therefore, we will use a concept of “root cause” which refers to the perceptions that the various actors have of the origin of the present state of affairs. Root causes are here representations. It can be argued that actors consider primarily two temporal dimensions of the conflicts in which they are implied: “root causes” or “historical grounds” (to which for instance belong “ancient hatreds”) on the one hand; triggering events that play an escalating or de-escalating role in the conflict on the other. Therefore, we should document both aspects at this stage of the study of the representations of actors.

A way of reaching that goal is to use the theoretical model designed for WP2 in order to assess how a conflict is framed by the different factions. It boils down to considering three separate aspects of the representations of actors which are relevant for understanding the conflict at hand:

1. The **main paradigm** refers to how within each “camp” the conflict is mainly framed at a moment in time. It can be described using the four main clusters defined in D1:
   - cultural dimensions
   - socio-economic and geographic dimensions
   - political dimensions
   - “external” dimensions

   It should be noted that no discrimination is made here between the scientifically salient dimensions pointed out in D1 (see below), such as Culture/Language, and not-so-relevant
dimensions, such as the outcomes of colonization, for the actors may think that these latter dimensions may be extremely important to understand the conflict.

2. Perception of Self in relation to the Other is a crucial aspect of identity and plays a key role in fostering of mitigating practices and attitudes of exclusion and stigmatisation of the other “camp”. It is possible to sort out three main categories of relations:

- “non-existence” (separation): perception of symbolic non-existence of the ‘other’ community (out-group), in the sense that the in-group represents a kind of ‘higher’ form of existence (culturally, politically etc.), which really exists and ‘ought to be’, while the ‘other’ is ‘non-cultural’, ‘non-legal’ etc., which ‘ought not to be’ and that this is why it ‘does not exist’ (Hence there is no “conflict” perceived: separation does not include perception of open conflict - it does not make sense to conflict with a ‘non-existent’ other).
- “alien other” (confrontation): perception of the ‘other’ community (out-group) as an alien; domination of accusations, ethnocentrism and prejudices; perception of open conflict between the community groups and impossibility of compromises.
- “different other” (integration): perception of the ‘other’ community (out-group) as a possible partner; possibility of compromises in case of conflicts; orientation towards cooperation and inclusion; perception of joint interests and multiple identities.

3. Within-community differentiation or factional predominance, which refers to the process through which within one community, several understandings and perceptions of the same conflict co-exist, leading generally to internal factionalism (e.g. radicals v/s moderates, etc.). The fact that at a given time one faction is in position to impose its perception and strategy to others should not prevent from analysing the various positions within each “camp”, in order to analyse what is the dominant faction at one point.

3.1.2. A multi-levelled design for the PEACE-COM monitoring system

Drawing on the previous remarks, it appears necessary to build conflict indicators which address different structural levels in order to analyse the situation at a given point in time. Building on the concept coined in SCA of existing “structural” factors which should be analysed differently from events that may prompt an escalation or de-escalation of the conflict, a differentiation is to be made between those indicators which describe the existing conflict and those which refer to factors explaining its changes over time:

- **Aspects of the conflict** refer to how the conflict manifests itself. They are indicators used in order to “disaggregate” the thick description of each case study in order to render conflict description more comparable. These aspects are factors which are consubstantially linked to the state of conflict, i.e. their presence actually indicates the existence of the conflict. To them belong such aspects as violence, community separation, institutional discrimination.

- **Triggering factors** induce change within the conflict situation, or prevent it. They encompass two different categories of indicators. The first one regroups structural indicators which refer to institutions which play a key role in the conflict: security, political, economic, social according to SCA. Considering that structural indicators belong to triggering factors may seem counter-intuitive, for most EWSs distinguish
between structural aspects and what they call “triggering events”, but it allows us to avoid a static understanding of how structures are part of the evolution of a conflict: far from being the immutable ground on which the conflict is built, their dynamics are intrinsically linked with the escalation or de-escalation of the conflict. The second category of triggering factors is composed of events which at one point may have an important impact on the conflict (in accordance with the framework of analysis designed in WP2).
4. Identification of relevant indicators within PEACE-COM Framework

One of the awaited outputs of this work package is to provide measurable indicators for monitoring community conflicts in the European Union. However, the aim of this work package is not to build a completely new system of monitoring, but to rely on previous experiments, try to supplement and adapt them to the cases covered by the project, as well as to its specific objectives. This work package will be of direct policy relevance, in particular for conceptualising new peace programmes or accommodation initiatives. By transforming data gathered in other work packages into indicators, it is also expected have a forecasting and policy function.

The second part of this deliverable will therefore focus on the specific questions raised by the conflicts covered by this project in terms of monitoring techniques, and will specifically address the question of the assessment of the impact of European integration and of Europeanisation on conflicts taking place within the Union. After having raised several conceptual issues related to our sample of cases, to our specific objectives, and to WP1 findings, we will concentrate on the question of the choice of indicators.

4.1. Conceptual and Methodological Issues linked to our sample of cases and to our specific objectives

There are four main problems related to our sample of cases, as well as to our specific objectives:

- Monitoring conflicts, not only levels of violence

One of the first problems we are facing, when trying to adapt existing EWSs to the cases covered by PEACE-COM, is that conflicts covered by the project are not necessarily violent (a small minority of cases can be described has belonging or having recently belonged to the ‘violent political conflict’ category). Cases have been chosen in order to cover all range of possible types inside the European Union, and at its borders, and to allow us to study the full cycle of conflict. We will therefore need to adapt some EWS indicators that tend to be biased towards the description and explanation of levels of violence. For instance, many EWSs include very detailed indicators about human rights violations, violence against women, children or specific social or ethnic groups. While we think that we should not completely drop this kind of indicators, as violence can be one feature of conflict, we suggest, on the basis of the first case study reports – suggesting that these features are either absent, or present at a low scale in the cases we are covering – to reduce their number, as compared to previous EWSs.

In this perspective, it may also be relevant to adopt, as in the case of FEWER, a series a peace indicators that assess the ability of a given society to deal with conflict, through courts or negotiation schemes, and to allow us to assess their increasing or decreasing efficiency and legitimacy across time. On a conceptual level, the dynamic concept of conflict on which the SCA EWS is built also seems highly relevant for our purposes, as it concentrates on escalation and de-escalation trends instead of trying to define conflict in an essentialist fashion, leading to a search of primordialist conflict causes.
Another decisive question at this stage concerns the nature of data that is being gathered in this project; for conceptual reasons, we have chosen to gather both qualitative and quantitative data, and we have consequently adopted a methodology fitted for these purposes (cf. work done within the frame of WP2). This approach should also be reflected in our monitoring system, which should thus mix both methodologies and types of data. As we have seen in the first part of this deliverable, the FAST and the FEWER EWSs already use such an approach, and our suggestion here is to follow this example, by mixing qualitative monitoring with quantitative event data analysis. This approach will be made easier by the fact that all of our workpackages encompass both methodologies. For instance, the qualitative and quantitative monitoring of actors proposed in the FEWER system could easily be conducted thanks to data gathered in WP3 and WP4.

- Assessing the impact of Europeanisation

A third question, linked to one of our main objectives, points at the need to build instruments and indicators in order to measure Europeanisation, and consequently, the impact of Europeanisation on our cases. We started this project with the assumption that the process of Europeanisation raises questions concerning the transformation of collective identities and the organisation of democracy, especially in states where a range of social processes coalesce around generally shared perceptions of community difference. It is our belief that we cannot take for granted the fact that integration in Europe will bring automatically a solution to these conflicts, especially because some of these community conflicts endure and keep on reconstructing even decades after the integration of the country in the European space. One might add that Europe may even sharpen certain kinds of conflict by making claims for autonomy or even independence more credible. By lessening the relevance of territorial integrity of current nation-states, it seems easier for smaller communities to claim their independence, or at least a greater autonomy. The fact that the European Union, through its Common Foreign and Security Policy, has set itself the task of intervening in the conflicts raging in its vicinity, has led to various interventions that comprise a strong EU dimension. But these interventions concern primarily adjoining territories to the Union, rather than countries inside the Union. This has led the fact that the EU has been more interventionist in accession and eastern countries, where it has launched several peace programmes and policies (e.g. in the former Yugoslavia), than in the countries inside the Union, where the community conflicts are assumed to be a matter of domestic policy for each of the concerned countries. This raises two series of questions: First, how can we assess the existing EU peace programmes (especially in ex-Yugoslavia), when we have seen than most EWSs do not systematically include the effects of accommodation policies? Second, how can we assess the effects of Europeanisation on conflicts when this process develops itself in no specific frame (e.g. through the circulation of goods and peoples, through the adoption of various charters and texts such as the Charter on Minority Languages, and through the growing compliance to the so-called ‘Copenhagen criteria’)? This latter question is partly solved by the fact that some of these processes are mapped through existing indicators (such as ‘respect of the rule of law’), but still needs to be addressed through the use of data gathered in WP5 on EU peace initiatives, and on their perceptions and meanings by actors on the ground. The former question, on the inclusion of the effects of accommodation policies, should be carefully dealt with, and indicators should be built in close relation with WP5 findings. More specifically, WP5 will make an inventory of the different types of accommodation policies, by classifying
the tools or levers used, look at their patterns of implementation, and point at their flaws and shortcomings. It will also identify groups or institutions involved in these initiatives. We therefore suggest to develop indicators linked to these questions, namely on the one hand on the type of accommodation policies conducted, and on the other hand on the actors involved in these initiatives.

- **Measuring domino effects**

Similarly, in the perspective of assessing the impact of Europeanisation, it may be particularly interesting and relevant to develop instruments allowing us to measure the impact conflicts have on each other. If we have in mind the fact that Europeanisation leads to a growing interdependency and influence of populations, groups, and situations, on each other, then we should give us means to measure and assess this process. This would have a double advantage: first, it would give us information on this aspect of Europeanisation that is often being taken for granted, and second it would refine our understanding of the impact of European integration on community conflicts. For instance, how does the Northern Irish peace process impact on the Basque or the Corsican situations?

The implications of this choice are complex. They first lead us to adopt a dynamic approach that may allow us to measure these ‘contagion’ or ‘domino’ effects, especially through the discourses or perceptions of actors on the ground, but also through the type of accommodation policies that are implemented here and there: for instance, are policies affected by a kind of fashion effect? Another consequence of this choice is the need to go beyond country reports which are traditionally at the core of EWSs’ production. The quantitative aspect of our data gathering may here be very useful, as comparison and links between cases may be enhanced and simplified by the use of tables and charts (e.g. chronological charts). We may also want to include indicators on the international networking of actors, on relationships existing between actors at the international level, on the role of transnational actors and of various international forums in which models of actions and policies can be discussed and circulated.

### 4.2. The choice of relevant indicators

We are not interested in historical roots of conflicts – enough has already been written on this question – but rather on their current shape, as well as on claims that are presented as central by actors in conflict. In other words, we are not interested in EWSs’ dimensions which focus, such as in the European Commission Check List for root-causes of conflicts, on historical causes of conflict, when these ‘root causes’ are not considered by actors to be relevant anymore. But when the actors justify the current conflict by ancient causes (or ‘ancient hatreds’), then we have to find a way to include this dimension as well.

In this perspective, the 12 dimensions identified in D1 will be used in order to explain the nature of political demands and their shifts, rather than the eruption or cessation of violence. As we have seen in D1, these dimensions are not directly connected with the level of violence, but tell us a lot on the conflict’s shape, on the policies and programs that could be set up in order to address political demands, and therefore avoid escalation, or allow pacification. To these 12 dimensions, we have added two specific analysers which are accommodation policies and the Europeanisation process.

In order to choose relevant indicators, we have started from the 12 dimensions identified in D1. Our task has then been to think about how they can be operationalised, measured, quantified, disaggregated into indicators, by confronting them to the list of indicators that are
being used in previous EWSs (excluding of course those indicators that we have already dismissed for being methodologically flawed).

### 4.2.1. Ranking of conflict dimensions

Based on the table provided at the end of D1, it is possible to list the dimensions which are the most salient for the cases covered by PEACE-COM, since it is not our objective to draw another general EWS but to precisely study community conflicts in the EU. The colour scheme used in the table at the end of D1 gives an indication about the relevance of a given dimension for a case study. In dark grey are signalled cases of high relevance, in light grey those of moderate relevance. A white box indicates that the dimension is not present in the case being studied. Based only on the number of dark grey boxes, it is possible to rank the dimensions by their rating, both individually and in an aggregate fashion. The rates associated with each dimension may vary between 1 and 12.

**Very relevant dimensions:**
- Culture/Language (9)
- Territory/Land (7)

**Moderately relevant dimensions:**
- Socio-economic (4)
- Identity claims (3)
- Elite manipulation (3)
- Access to citizenship (3)
- Neighbours, diasporas, borders (3)

**Less relevant dimensions:**
- Religious differences (2)
- Centre-periphery (2)
- Political access (2)
- Decolonisation/Globalisation/Legacy of WWI and WWII (2)
- Population shifts (1)

The same ranking process can also be performed on aggregate dimensions (see D1).

**Very relevant cluster:**
- Identity dimensions (14)

**Moderately relevant clusters:**
- Socio-economic and geographical dimensions (12)
- Political dimensions (10)

**Less relevant cluster:**
- “External” dimensions (5)

This rating will be useful when documenting indicators, since the ones relating to the most important dimensions should be given priority.
4.2.2. Methodological recommendations

Key issues regarding the construction of indicators to study community conflicts in the EU have been underlined above: they can be translated into methodological recommendations.

Selection of relevant indicators

- The choice of indicators should be made according to the specificity of our topic and aim at explaining it, ultimately. Therefore, indicators which are popular for EWSs but which fit better the cases of violent conflicts, such as the proliferation of light weapons, should be discarded.

- For our purpose, which is not to explain the historical grounds of conflict situation but to highlight the key aspects of contemporary conflicts, indicators will not be documented prior to WWII – finding appropriate data earlier than this date would anyway prove to be quite difficult. Obviously, it would be possible to apply the system to any period of time, but our validation of findings will be based on the results of the PEACE-COM project. The emphasis is on the current state of affairs, therefore present day indicators should be the most precisely documented.

- As remarked earlier, peace factors as well as conflict indicators should be documented, for they contribute equally to the escalation or de-escalation of conflicts.

- Again, since the scope of our study includes analysing the impact of Europeanisation on a given dimension, some indicators may be included in several clusters when they contribute to explaining them: due to the qualitative nature of some indicators, a degree of overlapping between clusters is unavoidable.

Operationalisation of indicators

- Indicators will be documented using both qualitative and quantitative data gathered for the various WPs, which can then feed such methodology of data analysis as qualitative event data analysis. For instance, WP2 will provide us with an integrated analysis of both types of data.

- Many EWSs such as SCA emphasise the fact that conflicts should be studied in a dynamic fashion, i.e. focus on trends and not only on punctual factual indicators. Two strategies will be used in order to attain this aim. The first one is to use the information that we have got on previous accommodation policies to evaluate the likely outcome of the present situation. The second one is to provide chronological charts whenever possible which will help determining whether a given indicator is currently situated in an escalating or de-escalating phase with regard to the conflict. This task, which can be quite easily done with regards to policy changes, is more difficult when one tries and study the implementation of such policies, which may follow quite different paces from one country to another.

- Our objectives include a multi-dimensional analysis of conflicts, in which indicators are not only documented on their own, but are also articulated one to another. These articulations can be assessed chronologically, as when a shift in one dimension induces a later change in another one. They can also be demonstrated using key
indicators which link one dimension to another because they are intrinsically multi-faceted: for instance, widening economic inequalities based on regional or ethnic disparities both contribute to an increase in socio-economic factors of conflict as they encourage an ethnic differentiation of actors.

The study of the multi-dimensionality of conflicts implies to go beyond country case reports and to develop systematic tools for comparisons and articulations between cases. Two methods can be used for such cross-case analysis. The first one is the use of comparative methods, which requires first to define what appropriate comparisons should be conducted. There is actually no point in comparing two cases at random, hoping for significant cross-cutting dimensions in both conflicts. On the other hand, two cases which would present conflict patterns similar in many ways, but for which the conflict would take very different forms – e.g. one violent and one non-violent – could tell us a lot about the way in which the main dimensions of these conflicts are articulated to each other. However, the table presented at the end of D1 does not allow for an easy delimitation of such comparable cases. It would be then useful to conduct such analysis on aggregate dimensions and see whether for instance two conflicts presenting the same blend of cultural dimensions and socio-economic dimensions can be fruitfully compared to each other. The second method for assessing the possible links between country cases is to try and assess how the actual networks of actors involved in the various conflicts account for a possible “domino effect” or for “policy trends” between countries. For instance, the fact that nationalists from the Basque country, Corsica and Northern Ireland meet quite regularly is well documented. The study of network of actors will here be particularly useful.

An expected outcome of this monitoring system is to go further in analysing how the addition of several factors may impact on the escalation or de-escalation of the conflict and on its level of violence. As of now, whether the presence of a key dimension is the main explicandum of conflict evolution, as opposed to the sheer multiplication of dimension, can only be hypothesized.

Focus on the effect of two main analysers: the Europeanization process and accommodation policies

Since one of our main hypotheses is that Europeanisation and accommodation policies play a key role in explaining the escalation or de-escalation of the conflicts covered by the project, it must be operationalised using documented indicators which are used as analysers for each conflict dimension. These indicators encompass both policies and processes, structural changes and representations that the various actors of the conflicts have of these dimensions.

Europeanisation:
- Compliance to the “Copenhagen criteria”
- Enforcement of the recommendations made by the High Commissioner on National Minorities
- Enforcement of the European Convention of Human rights
- Introduction of minority self-government
- Policy transfers regarding minority rights
- Granting of territorial and cultural autonomy to minority groups
- Funding of activities and organisations of minority groups
- Introduction of affirmative action measures
- Funding of bilingual schools
- Recourse made by various actors of the conflict to European institutions in order to bring about the desired changes
- Belonging to groups at the European Parliament
- Belonging to a “Euroregion”, to a region receiving structural funds because of its status as a depressed area

Accommodation policies
- Aid for reconstruction
- Aid for the social reintegration of former combatants
- Institutions supporting the implementation of a culture of peace
- Institutions aiming at victim relief
- Institutionalisation of the dialogue with neighbouring states
- Representations of various actors of the conflict of accommodation policies

Our focus on the impact of the European integration process and accommodation policies requires that these dimensions be documented in a way that is easily readable and policy-oriented. Therefore, the following table is an example of how, for each country case, such factors may be summarized:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIMENSIONS OF CONFLICT</th>
<th>European Integration</th>
<th>Accommodation policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic and cultural differences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Socio-economic issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Territory dimensions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Political dimensions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of neighbouring states and bordering communities</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**4.2.3. Choice of indicators**

Based on the previous remarks as well as on our critical study of EWSs, it is possible to list relevant indicators which should be documented for each dimension of conflicts.

A. **Identity**
Most EWSs do not distinguish between religious dimensions, identity dimensions and cultural and linguistic dimensions. In fact, in country reports, they relate to each other in ways which argue for their treatment in an aggregate fashion instead of considering them as separate dimensions (this is especially true for religious dimensions). This can be attained by documenting precise indicators:

Cultural and linguistic dimension:
- Existence of a linguistic division
- Existence of cultural, educational, political institutions using the community’s language
- Recognition of several official languages
- Ethnic schools, churches, sports clubs, political parties, trade unions, media, welfare or health care
- Policies of management of cultural diversity

Identity conflicts:
- Tensions over language, religion, ethnicity
- Openness of media spheres
- Negative attitudes regarding specific communities
- Existence of a discourse justifying the political domination of a specific territory
- Political exploitation of ethnic/religious differences
- Widening economic inequalities along ethnic divides
- Existence of a discourse of past injustices
- History of ethnic/religious based social movements or political parties
- Absence of cross-cutting social and civil society organisations
- Ethnic and religious representativeness of the government
- Ethnicisation of actors: tendency of actors to refer to themselves in ethnic terms
- Absence of mixed marriages
- Use of ethnic categories in the political discourse
- Increase in ethnic spatial segregation
- Spreading of separatist or autonomist ideologies, and nature of relays
- Spreading of multicultural schemes and ideologies
- Peace factors: Institutionalisation of dialogue between communities and dispute-solving mechanisms.

Religion:
- Weight of churches, degree of church attendance for each community or ethnic group
- Influence of religious leaders
- Involvement of Churches in the conflict

B. Socio-economic and geographical dimensions

These dimensions are here being presented in a single cluster, which is not usual for EWSs: most of them indeed see socio-economic facts and border disputes as two separate kinds of facts. The D1 typology of conflict dimensions however brings them together since they obey to the same type of conflict explanation: the idea that the material conditions of living for the inhabitants of a given country determine the uprising of a conflict and their positions vis-à-vis the conflict.
Territorial dimensions:
- Existence of contested borders and territories
- Poorly controlled borders and territories
- Diverging symbolic views of territory held by different actors
- Grievance over loss of territory/property

Socio-economic dimensions:
- Trend for poverty and marginalisation (both in absolute and relative terms)
- Overall level of literacy, health, sanitation
- Housing conditions
- Unemployment (both in absolute and relative terms) – are some categories more concerned than others, e.g. minority, youth, women…
- Access to welfare and social benefits
- Existence of public policies addressing inequalities among communities through land reform, quota systems, social programmes or others
- Widening economic disparities based on regional or ethnic divisions
- Urban/rural gaps
- Existence of regions lagging behind in terms of economic development or particularly affected by lack of vital resources
- Redistributive policies between regions
- Income dependency on a limited number of sectors (e.g. one single agricultural product or industry or remittance)
- Capacity to react to natural disasters or international conditions (e.g. massive swings in commodity prices)
- Monetary and economic stability, as well as performances of the various economies
- Poor governance/ failure to meet convergence criteria

Demographic dimensions:
- Weight of various communities or ethnic groups in each region
- Fertility rates of various communities or ethnic groups
- Migratory influx, population moves between the various regions, and with the rest of the world
- Increasing regional ethnic segregation

Territorial dimensions:
- Existence of different myths of territory held by different actors
- Existence of contested borders and territories
- Poorly controlled borders and territories
- Grievance over loss of territory/ property

C. Political dimensions

Political dimensions are studied in all EWSs and indeed the belief that certain patterns of governance are likely to induce community conflicts is shared by the EU, which considers minority participation to democratic processes and unflawed elections to be key aspects of conflict resolution (see for an example of such position in an African setting, the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1)

Centre-periphery:
- Existence of centralist policies
- Degree of self-government in the region at stake (e.g. regional parliament)
- Granting of a constitutionally guaranteed autonomy

Security dilemmas and access to the political scene – this dimension is very much present in EWSs which nearly all mention weak states as a factor for the escalation of conflict:
- Perception by minorities that the central state does not serve their interests.
- Demands for higher regional autonomy
- Nature of political systems (e.g. strengthening of democracy?)
- Intensity of political mobilisation (e.g. abstention rates, or support for autonomist parties)
- Denial of these claims by the central state.
- Degree of openness of the legislative system
- Unrepresentative political system
- Flawed election process

Elite manipulation:
- Appropriation of the themes of the defence of language, culture, etc. by political parties
- Elites’ opinions about the regime
- Lack of grass-roots mobilisations/ weakness of civil society
- Lack of popular participation
- Lack of independent judiciary
- Attitude of intellectuals towards ethnic or communitarian mobilisation
- Corruption
- Citizens’ trust in their State
- Degree of demoralisation of civil servants and situation vis-à-vis the State (following the collapse of single party systems)
- Political stability (of elites, of leaders, of political parties…)
- Existence of organised crime

Access to citizenship:
- Existence of laws restricting access to political citizenship for certain categories of inhabitants
- Discriminatory laws and policies denying access to social rights for certain categories of inhabitants
- Failure to enforce anti-discrimination regulations and policies

D. External dimensions

EWSs rarely include indicators referring to such processes as decolonisation, globalisation and the consequences of WWI and WWII. In fact, if it is a good idea, when studying African conflicts, to include indicators relating to for instance the effects of structural adjustment policies, it can be argued that in the cases covered by the PEACE-COM project, such processes as the transition to market economies and the liberalisation of markets, which are usually associated with globalisation, indeed result from the Europeanisation process. Since we decided not to take into account the historical causes of conflicts, but to focus instead of the reasons why a given conflict is perpetuated or mitigated today, factors relating to colonisation/decolonisation processes may be left aside. The uses by some actors of an anti-colonisation discourse – such as in the Basque case, in the Corsican case or in the Northern
Ireland case — are here addressed in the study of the ideologies fostering popular support for separatist movements.

Colonization:
- Existence of a formerly ruling minority from the remnants of colonisation
- Ongoing interference of former colonial states in the local state of affairs

Role of neighbouring countries, bordering countries and diasporas:
- Level of threat of an external conflict
- Stability of the region’s geopolitical situation
- Relations with the country’s neighbours
- Dependency of the country on unstable neighbours for vital assets
- Pending border issues
- Effectiveness of regional conflict-resolution mechanisms
- Support from diasporas for community or ethnic mobilisation
- Role of border communities
- Refugee flows, transborder ethnic movements
- Support to militias or rebel groups operating on neighbouring territories
- Protection of war criminals or rebel groups from neighbouring states

Role of international actors:
- Various peace initiatives undertaken by international and/or intergovernmental actors
- Pressure and attitude of international financial and commercial agencies, such as WTO, IMF…
- Pressure and attitude of Churches (e.g. Council of Churches)
- Attitude of NGOs (e.g. Red Cross)
- International support for community or ethnic mobilisation
- Presence of illicit international activities on the country’s territory
Conclusion

The indicators elaborated above will now undergo a systematic empirical testing, by confronting them to the evolution of two community conflicts chosen amongst the cases covered by PEACE-COM. Their transferability to other conflicts will subsequently also be tested, with reference to the case studies analysed in the other work packages.

Amongst the numerous questions to which we expect this monitoring system to provide at least preliminary answers, the question of whether the escalation or de-escalation of a conflict can be considered as the result of one or a few key factors, or rather as the incidence of a certain number of key dimensions at a particular point, whereby the total number is the key rather the nature of these dimensions, is crucial. In other words, is it the presence of a core dimension, or the specific combination of several key dimensions, or the number of dimensions present at a certain point in time, that explain escalation or de-escalation?

At an even more fine-grained level, the empirical testing of the system should help us to investigate the internal dynamics of conflicts, and the varying weights of indicators in different settings. In this perspective, a specific indicator or dimension might have different consequences according to the current stage of the conflict we are talking about. For instance, actors’ representations might be at best a contextual indicator when it comes to predicting violence or escalation; they might however have a predictive power when it comes to explain why no settlement is successful. Some indicators’ or dimensions’ weights in the explanation for escalation or de-escalation might also vary according to the indicators or dimensions they are interacting with. In that sense, our monitoring system is expected to be of direct policy relevance, in particular for conceptualising peace programmes or accommodation initiatives specifically adapted to the needs of each specific conflict situation.
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