



An EU Survey on Whole-of-Government Approaches to External Conflict and Crisis

This report is part of the Bertelsmann Stiftung's EU Survey on Whole-of-Government Approaches to External Conflict and Crises (WGA) 2020. More on the WGA at <https://www.wga-project.eu>.

Please cite as follows: Bertelsmann Stiftung, WGA 2020 Country Report – Portugal. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2020.

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Portugal Report

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1 | Introduction

From its intermediate geographic position between the Atlantic and Mediterranean regions and between Europe and Africa, as well as owing to its recent history, Portugal is keenly aware of the importance of building bridges and the notion that only together can we respond in a more effective way to multidimensional and complex global (security, political, developmental) challenges. The commitment to multilateralism, including support for multilateral action and coordinated responses to crises and conflicts, is therefore an important feature of Portugal's foreign policy.

As a small country with limited resources, Portugal's external actions have always stressed the importance of multilateral responses based on a wider international effort, perceiving the EU, NATO and the UN as complementary rather than competing frameworks. In this context, at the national level, Portuguese governments have viewed sharing collective responsibilities and participating in international efforts aimed at fostering peace and security (e.g. participation in all EU CSDP missions) as an instrument for strengthening the country's external reputation and credibility.

It should be noted that Portugal was struggling to fulfil its commitments during the financial/economic crisis and the so-called Adjustment Programme (2011–2014), a period in which there was a political decision to reduce participation in international missions to a minimum and even to halt participation in EU missions. In the last few years, however, there has been an effort to increase participation in and contributions to international security

efforts. For example, at present, 11 percent of Portugal's armed forces are engaged in international missions (a total of 19 missions in 2019), with the largest headcounts being in the Central African Republic and Afghanistan.

The perception of participating in international efforts as an instrument for strengthening Portuguese external action necessarily implies increased coordination among policies, instruments and actors. In this context, there is an increasing awareness of the need to improve coherence and joint approaches (particularly between the diplomatic and defence axes, which implies the reformulation of legal instruments and strategic documents) as well as to increase coordination between different instruments, actors and institutions in what is often referred to as a whole-of-government approach (WGA). Despite this awareness, these efforts are not being implemented in a very structured way in practice, and there is some resistance to them from institutional structures and cultures.

Most strategic guidance related to a WGA is linked to Portugal's foreign policy priorities, which have not changed for many years and rest on four main pillars: the Atlantic, including relations with the United States; the European Union and the European integration process; the Portuguese-speaking world (with special attention being paid to Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOP) and the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP)); and Portuguese communities abroad.

On the one hand, particularly regarding external action related to defence and security, Portuguese strategic documents mainly highlight the country's participation in NATO and in external missions of the European Union. On the other hand, Portuguese action in response to external crises and conflicts is very much linked to Portugal's focus on the most vulnerable and fragile countries as well as related security, diplomatic and development efforts. Some of the main partners of Portuguese development cooperation are fragile and/or affected by situations of fragility (e.g. East Timor, Guinea-Bissau, and São Tomé and Príncipe), and supporting them – through both bi- and multi-lateral cooperation – is of particular importance to Portugal.

At the bilateral level, Portugal's development-cooperation attaches particular importance to peacebuilding and statebuilding, including institutional strengthening and capacity development in key areas, such as governance, the rule of law, security and the provision of essential services. This is also linked to Africa as a foreign policy priority, which is reflected in Portugal's participation in EU CSDP missions and in its diplomatic stances regarding the importance of Africa to EU external relations. For example, there are the past Africa-EU summits and the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES); the new European Peace Facility and its stress on the need for increased commitments to Africa; and, most recently, the negotiations surrounding a post-Cotonou framework. Focusing on Africa will also be a major priority when Portugal holds the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU in 2021.

2 | What policies have been developed to further policy coherence?

Although Portugal does not have a defined overall WGA strategy regarding its response to external conflicts and crises, the need for greater coordination and coherence is outlined in several strategic documents and policies, among which the following are noteworthy: First, in

2009, the Council of Ministers approved the National Strategy for Security and Development (Government of Portugal 2009). The strategy, which was the result of a much-needed debate among stakeholders engaged in defence/security and development cooperation, was regarded as a natural extension of a stronger stance in Portugal's responses to fragile situations and aimed to "promote greater coherence and coordination in the external global action of the Portuguese state regarding security and development". However, ownership was not ensured, and the strategy did not have visible concrete results, partially because it failed to establish clear responsibilities in the implementation of follow-up mechanisms.

Second, in 2013, the Council of Ministers adopted the Strategic Concept for National Defence (Government of Portugal 2013). This guiding framework analyses the major threats and establishes national priorities at both the domestic and international levels, with the latter focusing on Portugal as a security provider. However, since this overarching framework is very much focused on the armed forces, it does not define any follow-up mechanisms and also tends to be hindered by a fragmented framework in practice. A related document, the National Defence Law (as amended in 2014) (Republic of Portugal 2009), states that the national defence policy includes the public-sector policies that are relevant to safeguarding the strategic interests of Portugal, and specifically mentions inter-ministerial coordination as well as cooperation between the armed forces and the security/police forces. Nevertheless, some have argued that there is a need for an overarching national strategy on security that would allow for a more comprehensive approach towards security by going beyond the defence sector and the armed forces. This is made difficult, however, by legal constraints linked to a juridical/constitutional dimension of the security concept.

Third, in February 2014, the Council of Ministers adopted the Strategic Concept of Portuguese Development Cooperation 2014–2020 (Government of Portugal 2014) to be the guiding document for the country's development policy. In addition to firmly establishing development policy as an element of Portuguese foreign policy, this document prioritises the link between peace, security and development by reinforcing coordination among actors and instruments of external action according to the 3D (diplomacy, defence, development) principle.

Fourth, in 2015, the Council of Ministers approved the Operational Strategy for Humanitarian and Emergency Aid (Government of Portugal 2015), which focuses on providing practical guidance to increase coordination and coherence in responses to emergency situations. The objective is to enhance this integrated response both within government departments and institutions engaged in humanitarian responses as well as when they coordinate with non-state actors. However, it does not have much political leverage, and awareness of its existence should be increased.

Returning to the issue of defence documentation, it should also be noted that a new cycle of programming is currently being defined regarding Portugal's defence policy (2019–2022), which is supposed to be able to respond to emerging threats and new challenges in a more coherent and comprehensive manner. This will hopefully include an update of old but still valid legislation from the 1980s and 1990s that covers several aspects of defence policy-related external actions, including defence cooperation with partner countries. The need to update these instruments as well as to revise other strategies, such as the Strategic Concept for National Defence (Government of Portugal 2013), is explicitly stated in a decree of the Ministry of National Defence from April 2018 (Ministry of National Defence 2018).

At present, strategic documents regarding defence and security only mention civil-military coordination, particularly the need for increased coordination among all the security forces involved in external missions (i.e. the narrow scope of a WGA). The most recent documents also mention the priorities of maritime security and cybersecurity, which will also require greater civil-military coordination. What's more, the extension of Portugal's continental shelf is also a reason for civil and military organisations to enhance coordination and share equipment. Of course, Portugal's armed forces are supposed to fulfil the state's international commitments in the military field, to participate in humanitarian missions and international peacekeeping operations, to cooperate in civil protection missions, and to engage in technical-military cooperation in the broader context of the country's cooperation policy (which is now called 'defence cooperation'). Nevertheless, documents on security strategies make almost no reference to other actors beyond those in the security-defence axis, and development stakeholders are completely overlooked.

Turning now to the EU level, Portugal has actively participated in discussions to develop comprehensive approaches to external conflicts and crises. The Portuguese agenda in the negotiations surrounding the Global Strategy was centred on advocating for a stronger focus on Africa (e.g. regarding the development of a regular high-level political dialogue that goes beyond development cooperation and is not limited by the migration agenda) as well as on the Mediterranean and the EU's southern neighbourhood.

Portugal pushed its agenda during its 2007 presidency of the Council of the EU. For example, the first Council of the EU joint session of defence and development ministers was held, the new European Consensus on Development and the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid were approved, the Joint Africa-EU Strategy was endorsed, and the process of developing an action plan related to fragile states and situations was initiated. Portugal also pressed for a EU ESDP mission in Guinea-Bissau (2008–2010), which was the first ESDP mission conducted in an integrated manner by involving the entire security sector (defence, justice and police) as well as the first mission fully planned and controlled as part of the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) for civilian operations of EU crisis management. However, most member states showed little interest in contributing to and being actively engaged in this mission, which in turn contributed to its shortcomings.

At the international (non-EU) level, Portugal is generally seen in multilateral forums as an honest broker that pays special attention to the voice of the least developed and most fragile countries (which struggle to find a voice even within their development groups) and, therefore, as a useful partner for building bridges and consensus. It has strongly advocated for the inclusion of the 'peace, justice and strong institutions' global goal (Goal 16) during the negotiations surrounding the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and it is involved in several discussions at the UN and the OECD on peacebuilding and statebuilding approaches in countries prioritised by Portuguese external action, such as the Portuguese-speaking countries.

3 | Who are the main actors involved in cooperating in a WGA?

Portugal's participation in international missions and launching of such external-action defence initiatives has a well-structured coordination process when it comes to the military component. The minister of foreign affairs and the minister of national defence make a decision, and then they take this decision and the related forces planning to the Supreme Council of National Defence (CSDN), which is the coordination entity for advising the president of the republic on national defence issues. The CSDN then issues an opinion on the participation of Portuguese military forces in external missions arising from Portugal's international commitments. This structure includes military and political actors: the prime minister; the ministers of defence, foreign affairs, internal administration and finance; the ministers responsible for the industry, energy, transports and communications sectors; the top commanders of the armed forces; representatives of the autonomous regions (i.e. the Azores and Madeira); and representatives of the national parliament.

There are other coordination mechanisms between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Ministry of National Defence (MND) that contribute to increasing coherence. These include: holding regular councils of defence and security (MFA+MND); having a diplomatic officer working in the cabinet of the minister of national defence; having a representative of the armed forces (from the cabinet of the chief of the general staff of the armed forces) working in the MFA's Directorate-General for Foreign Policy; maintaining regular and open communication channels between the MND and Portugal's permanent representation to the EU in Brussels (which also has a military officer to coordinate with diplomats). However, articulation between political and military sensibilities is not always easy, even within the MND.

From a more comprehensive perspective, the Interministerial Commission for European Affairs and the Interministerial Commission for Foreign Policy (both under the MFA) have regular meetings that are attended by representatives of several ministries and aim to increase the coherence of Portugal's external actions. The CFSP is discussed at the Inter-ministerial Commission for Foreign Policy, which has political meetings and then technical meetings dedicated to specific topics.

The role of the EEAS and the rise of new structures and institutional linkages at the EU level geared towards responding to external crises and conflicts have also prompted some changes in Portugal aimed at better adapting to these new dynamics. This is taking place within the MFA as well as between the MFA and the MND, but it mainly involves adding competencies to the already-existing institutions rather than creating new structures or strategies. Some achievements resulting from the Global Strategy have motivated Portugal to develop specific policies and measures. This is the case, for example, with PESCO, for which a national implementation plan and a 'project participation monitoring group' for following up on PESCO activities (GAPP-PESCO) were created in 2019. The latter's members include several representatives from the defence establishment (e.g. from the Directorate-General of National Defence Policy, the cabinet of the chief of the general staff of the armed forces, and the individual branches of the military).

The National Authority of Emergency and Civil Protection (ANEPC), which is responsible for emergency civil planning in cases of disasters, crises or war, has both domestic and external

competencies, according to its organic law published in 2019 (Republic of Portugal 2019). On the external level, it can participate in foreign assistance missions (by order of the Ministry of Internal Administration) and is responsible for coordinating with the MND efforts that are related to civil emergency planning under the NATO framework. One should note, however, that there is some discontent regarding this arrangement stemming from a lack of clarity regarding responsibilities. While the ANEPC is the authoritative body when it comes to coordinating and participating in civil-protection missions and actions, the ANEPC does not always have the necessary skills and knowledge to spearhead civil emergency planning, which is an activity of a military nature.

When it comes to participation in UN and EU missions, Portugal contributes both military and police personnel. Regarding UN efforts, Portuguese soldiers are serving in stabilisation missions in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), Mali (MINUSMA) and Colombia (UNMCOL), and Portuguese police officers are participating in joint efforts in Colombia (UNVMC), South Sudan (UNMISS), Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), Haiti (MINUJUSTH), Kosovo (UNMIK) and Darfur (UNAMID, a hybrid UN-AU mission). Regarding EU efforts, Portugal currently contributes soldiers to missions in Somalia (EUNAVFOR ATALANTA and EUTM SOMALIA), Mali (EUTM MALI), the southern-central Mediterranean (EUNAVFOR MED) and the Central African Republic (EUTM RCA), the last of which is led by a Portuguese officer and includes some 200 Portuguese soldiers. At the police level – which includes members of the Public Security Police (PSP), the National Republican Guard (GNR), and the Foreigners and Borders Service (SEF) – Portugal has officers (though sometimes as few as one) deployed on EU missions in Mali (EUCAP), Georgia (EUMM), Niger (EUCAP), Kosovo (EULEX), Ukraine (EUAM), Somalia (EUCAP), the Central African Republic (EUTM RCA), the Palestinian territories (EUPOL COPPS), and Bosnia-Herzegovina (EUFOR ALTHEA).

Portugal faces some difficulties in its efforts to coordinate between security/police forces and political institutions. The large number of internal security forces (e.g. the PSP, the GNR, the SEF, the Judicial Police and the Maritime Police) complicates coordination, there is still a lack of clarity regarding certain roles and responsibilities, and certain procedures and practices (e.g. on information-sharing and data collection) have yet to be harmonised. Whereas the military has an established annual budget for participating in international missions (approved within the state budget), the participation of security forces in international missions involves decisions that are made on an ad hoc, individual basis. For instance, if Portuguese police institutions receive a call for proposals or job posting from the EU (via the permanent representation in Brussels), each police force makes its own assessment regarding whether it is suited to participate rather than making a joint assessment or analysis at the strategic level.

The role of parliament, known as the Assembly of the Republic, has both relevant aspects and shortcomings. The parliament has specific permanent (i.e. standing) committees with representatives drawn from several parliamentary groups (e.g. the European Affairs Committee and the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Portuguese Communities). Since 2010, the parliament has also selected priority EU-related issues to receive monitoring and follow-up. For example, in 2018, these priority issues included implementing the EU Global Strategy and fostering greater efficiency and coherence in CFSP implementation. Nevertheless, the parliamentary commissions frequently conduct their work in an isolated manner, and the quality of the debate on different sectoral issues is often undermined by parliamentarians' lack of knowledge on specific issues or technical aspects.

Regarding external action, and specifically pertaining to the EU, the interactions between Portugal's government and parliament include regular debates with government representatives (e.g. before and after meetings of the European Council), regular reporting to parliament on policies and measures, and consultation processes. Government representatives also attend parliamentary hearings if requested to do so by the parliament. To name a recent example, in January 2019, at the request of the parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Portuguese Communities, the minister of defence and the minister of foreign affairs participated in a hearing dedicated to discussing the implementation of the EU's Global Strategy and PESCO. However, when it comes to participation in international missions, the parliament is only informed of a decision that has already been taken at the government and military levels.

Although civil society organisations in Portugal would like to have a stronger voice in influencing public policies and WGAs related to external actions, they basically play no role in drafting or implementing WGAs. There are exceptions, however, when it comes to activities related to the development-cooperation sector, as members of civil society organisations attend some meetings and participate in the Coordination Unit for Humanitarian and Emergency Aid in the framework of the Strategy for Humanitarian and Emergency Aid, which is overseen by Camoes – Institute for Cooperation and Language, the Portuguese development agency.

4 | How does your country operationalise a WGA?

In term of administrative structures and processes to operationalise a WGA, Portugal's MFA has established information-sharing mechanisms (e.g. with the embassies and the permanent representation in Brussels), and the MND has internal reporting mechanisms. However, information-sharing within other institutions and between sectors is mainly done on an informal basis. Information is mainly gathered within the individual institutions or sectors, and there is no aggregation of data (e.g. regarding military and police participation in EU and international peace missions). What's more, poor information-sharing can sometimes also result from squabbling over competences and attempts to gain more visibility.

There can also be a lack of coordination within individual sectors. For example, as mentioned above, the profusion of different forces in Portugal's security sector leads to multiple political authorities and, in some cases, overlapping responsibilities and conflicts of jurisdictions. Within the development sector, there are some structures for coordination, such as the Inter-ministerial Commission for Cooperation (CIC). However, in practice, these mainly result in information-sharing, and the system remains fragmented – including in budgetary terms – owing to the plethora of actors and actions. Both of these sectors would benefit from improved intra-sectoral coordination, which would then allow for efforts aimed at improving inter-sectoral coordination between the security and development sectors. It should also be noted that, as in most countries, dialogue and coordination between security and development actors is impacted by different views, languages, mandates and approaches.

At the same time, Portugal has had some success at creating specific WGA-like structures to coordinate external action related to a specific issue. For example, the Portuguese Commission

for Supporting the Transition in East Timor (CATTL) was created at the national level to coordinate external action, and Portugal was involved in diplomatic efforts in the transition process on a multilateral basis led by the UN (e.g. UNTAET, UNMIT) as well as several international peace missions (e.g. ones regarding the Portuguese language and capacity-building in several sectors as well as bilateral agreements on police cooperation and training). Another example is Portugal's actions in the 2008–2010 period in Guinea-Bissau, which simultaneously included diplomatic efforts; participation in an EU ESDP mission on security-sector reform combining defence, justice and police; and development-cooperation actions. In practice, East Timor and Guinea-Bissau are examples of the diverse fields of action in which Portugal has been engaged. Nevertheless, there is still a lack of discussion of the results of initiatives like these, from which lessons learned could be extracted so as to improve future planning and action.

More recent examples of implementing a WGA can be found in the framework of foreign policy. One good example is the nomination of an ambassador for the Sahel, as Portugal did not have this specifically regional approach beforehand in terms of human resources. Another example is Portugal's actions related to Venezuela, which comprises diplomatic efforts (i.e. bilateral political dialogue and coordination within the EU) and aid (i.e. financing the EU/ECHO joint pool fund for NGOs working inside Venezuela and also through bilateral aid to the refugees in Colombia).

A specific thematic structure that could bring about some positive results is the Coordination Unit for Humanitarian and Emergency Aid, a unit chaired by Camoes – Institute for Cooperation and Language, the Portuguese development agency. Despite some practical difficulties in coordinating participating actors, this coordination structure has been functioning since approximately 2017. Its members include representatives of Camoes (as the MFA's proxy) as well as of the ministries responsible for the national-defence, internal-administration, health and social-protection sectors, who have regular biannual meetings as well as extraordinary meetings (e.g. when Hurricane Idai ravaged Mozambique in March 2019). The unit's creation has recently sparked a process of clarifying concepts, understanding the language of different stakeholders, and debating issues on the humanitarian agenda, all of which were not done beforehand. Although this process is still in its infancy, it represents a concrete step towards a more coordinated WGA in this area.

It should also be noted that coordination within international structures and missions is mostly vertical. Regarding humanitarian/ emergency missions and aid, the central coordinating role is played by the UN through OCHA and sectoral or thematic clusters (e.g. WFP for food aid or WHO for health), and Portuguese support and related organisations are included in those clusters. In the UN or EU missions in which Portugal participates, both at the planning and operational stages, coordination takes place vertically between the Portuguese contingent (whether civil, military or police) and the EU or UN mission (since they are included in a defined command/structure and division of work) rather than horizontally (between Portuguese forces or officials).

Coordination between ministries and several actors is particularly difficult when an emergency arises and prompts a Portuguese external intervention that is not within an EU or international framework. This was the case with the recent response to Hurricane Idai in Mozambique, where there was a prompt response and deployment capacity but a certain lack of clarity

regarding mandates between political responsibilities and humanitarian responses (military and civil) as well as difficulties in coordinating efforts in the field. It should be noted, however, that such difficulties in coordination are common to most EU countries.

5 | Conclusions

The level of commitment to comprehensive approaches in responding to external conflicts and crises ranges very widely in Portugal. On the one hand, most strategic-level documents include what are mostly general and non-binding commitments, which in turn have to be translated into concrete policy documents and operational mechanisms. On the other hand, successful implementation frequently relies on multiple interlinked factors, such as political will, individual commitment to moving forward on certain issues (e.g. the knowledge, agenda and capabilities of a minister or high-level official), leadership both at the political and institutional level, a suitable institutional framework, ownership by most relevant actors, and the recruitment/ deployment of necessary human resources.

At the strategic level, the existing framework is very much focused on sectoral approaches rather than WGAs. Within the security/defence sectors, the legal framework is incomplete, outdated in some cases and fragmented. However, there is an awareness of the need to modernise and update these strategic frameworks in order to promote more comprehensive and integrated approaches, and some progress has been made towards these goals in the last few years. In addition, the channels of coordination with and participation in EU structures and policies are multiple, and there is a general perception within Portugal's MFA that coordination within the EU has improved with the creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS).

Development is clearly the weakest link in the defence-diplomacy-development nexus, as it is neglected in Portugal's efforts to promote its WGAs, which are mainly focused on the interactions of diplomacy/foreign policies and security/defence policies (which are, incidentally, much needed in the case of Portuguese participation in European/international missions and structures). Within the defence sector, references to coordination are mainly at the domestic/internal level, either among the military or between civil and military aspects, and there are shortcomings in training on aspects that go beyond military issues (e.g. diplomatic/negotiation skills and even knowledge of languages).

There are some strategic documents that reflect a wider WGA perspective at the strategic level, such as the National Strategy for Security and Development (Government of Portugal 2009) and the Operational Strategy for Humanitarian and Emergency Aid (Government of Portugal 2015). However, the success of their implementation has been mixed, as it depends on the existence of political will, leadership, leverage and other domestic factors.

Such political leadership is influenced by the mandate (i.e. term in office) of each government, as there is a change in the high-level officials every four years that includes but is not limited to ministers and secretaries of state. In addition, this reshuffling includes directors and political appointees who are also very relevant for leadership within public institutions and administrations. Indeed, in a context in which most of the general WGA commitments are non-binding and where most coordination and coherence mechanisms between sectors is of an ad

hoc nature, political will and institutional leadership are key and can vary significantly depending on individual levels of commitment, knowledge, motivation and skills.

A dimension that is not sufficiently addressed is the participation of Portuguese officials in international functions, organisations and missions who have valuable experience and knowledge. For example, there are not enough mechanisms to enable effective knowledge-sharing and the analysis of lessons learned. Instead, in most cases, the knowledge remains with the individual, and the opportunity to use that experience to improve Portuguese policies and actions is not exploited.

Ownership is also an important issue, because even where there is political will, if most actors are not engaged in the process and there are no clear structures for implementation, strategies tend to be just words on paper. One obvious example is the National Strategy for Security and Development (Government of Portugal 2009). This strategy resulted from clear political guidance and coordination of the relevant ministries at a high level, but the appropriation of human resources from both sectors was not ensured, the coordination mechanisms for implementation were not in place, and it was not considered a priority by the new government from 2011 onwards (which also corresponds to a period of financial crisis). The combination of these factors led the strategy to be completely forgotten. Thus, one can say that a combination of several factors – and ones that go beyond the existence of strategies, structures and mechanisms – determine whether some governmental/political documents with WGA aspects and approaches will make some progress towards achieving their objectives, while others are simply not implemented and fail to achieve any or all of their intended goals.

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