



Thinking security,
doing development?
The security-development
nexus in European policies
towards Tajikistan

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working paper 12
December 2012



Abstract

Tajikistan is a poor and underdeveloped country that is partly dependent on external donor support. The country faces a series of threats to its stability. Some of these threats are locally driven, such as poverty, unemployment, migration, corruption and bad governance. Others are externally driven, such as the tense relationship with Uzbekistan and the potential increase of negative spillover from Afghanistan. This paper assesses European donor approaches to Tajikistan within the context of a security-development nexus. It also compares European donor policies to those of the broader donor community.



**MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN
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EUCAM-SD

This working paper is published as part of the EUCAM-Security and Development project that is implemented by FRIDE and the Karelian Institute of the University of Eastern Finland. The EUCAM-SD is a key component of the EUCAM programme and focuses on the links between security challenges in the Central Asian region and the need for development in the broadest sense, including governance, poverty reduction, ethnic tension and social equality. The project aims to offer new insights and creative thinking on Europe's role in promoting security and development in Central Asia. EUCAM-SD is supported by the Wider Europe Initiative of the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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ISBN (Online): 978-84-614-6870-6

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Introduction

In Europe, Central Asia is seen through the prism of two competing policy discourses. One discourse argues that Central Asia presents an opportunity for Europe to strengthen its energy security. The other sees the region as a source of instability and security threats. Tajikistan is largely considered within the second discourse. It appeared on the Western radar in the context of the U.S. intervention in Afghanistan in 2001, when Dushanbe partly broke with the dominant orientation towards Russia. It began to receive political support and economic assistance from Washington and, later, from Brussels. Since 2002, Tajikistan has begun to pursue an 'open door' policy, aiming to cooperate with all states that have an interest in the country, especially those with an economic stake.¹ European interests in and cooperation with Tajikistan are modest compared to those of Russia and China. But the European Union (EU), along with several of its member states, is growing concerned about the stability of the country, as well as about the security threats it faces that could directly or indirectly affect Europe.

Tajikistan is a poor and underdeveloped country with limited economic potential. The country is isolated. Its borders with Kyrgyzstan and China are largely located in mountainous areas, so it is not well connected to these countries. Afghanistan offers few economic opportunities. And the border with Uzbekistan, on which Tajikistan largely depends, is often closed because of the tense relations that have existed between the two countries since the early

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1990s. Tajikistan's main sources of income consist of remittances from Tajiks working in Russia, one large aluminium plant, some cotton production, drug trade through its porous border with Afghanistan and development aid.

The country faces a broad range of security threats, of which several are linked to underdevelopment and poverty. The lack of educational and employment opportunities for Tajikistan's youth could in the future lead to instability, whether secular or religious in nature. This risk factor is exacerbated by authoritarian leadership, weak governance capacity and widespread corruption. Meanwhile, relations with Uzbekistan have degenerated from bad to worse over Tajik plans to build the Rogun dam. This project is fiercely rejected by Uzbekistan, which fears greater Tajik control over the flow of water north, essential to Uzbek agriculture, most importantly cotton production. Uzbekistan is also not pleased about the prospect of Tajikistan becoming a serious rival in electricity exports to other countries in the broader region. The water management question is essential to Tajikistan's plans to tackle severe power shortages by generating electricity from hydropower. Tajikistan's leadership has a lot of political capital invested in the Rogun plans. To some extent, inflows of assistance are largely used to 'muddle through' while waiting for better times when Rogun is built, ensuring cheap electricity and a boost in exports.²

In Europe, the biggest concern about Tajikistan's security is connected to Afghanistan. Tajikistan shares with Afghanistan a 1,300 kilometre border that is difficult to control. The continuous and expanding drug trade across this border is a direct security problem for Europe. It is also a major issue for Tajikistan, which has seen addiction and HIV infections in the country increase. Along with the drug problem, the EU and NATO are concerned about the possible negative impact of NATO troop withdrawal over the coming years and about the ways in which an uncertain future for Afghanistan might affect the wider region. On top of this, internal instability is aggravated by clashes between local warlords and the authorities. This was the case in the Rasht Valley in the autumn of 2010, and in the autonomous region of Gorno-Badakhshan in the summer of 2012 in fights for control of drug trafficking by groups with support from the government or from local, Pamiri-based, powerful figures. Most of these concerns are shared by the Tajik political elite. But Tajik leaders constantly

¹ L. Jonson, *Tajikistan in the New Central Asia, Geopolitics, Great Power Rivalry and Radical Islam* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006), p. 59.

² M. Brill Olcott, *Tajikistan's Difficult Development Path* (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2012), p. 7.

stress links with Afghanistan and radical Islam as the main threats. This presumption is increasingly doubted by local and foreign observers, who think internal causes are at the heart of these events and of most other security threats to Tajikistan.

Security was an underlying concern in the 2007 EU Strategy for Central Asia. The EU's activities in support of security can mostly be traced back to human security. They seem to incorporate a link between security and development. Beyond the EU's Border Management Programme (BOMCA) in Central Asia, little to no direct support is given to 'hard security' matters. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, which are the poorest countries in the region, receive the bulk of EU and bilateral European development aid. Among bilateral European donors, Germany leads in terms of aid flows and presence on the ground. Non-European actors are also concerned with security in Tajikistan. Although the concerns of China, Russia and the U.S. are similar to those of Europe, their approach to development differs. China seeks to support Tajikistan in developing infrastructure. Russia is keen to play a more direct role in border management. The U.S. largely sees Tajikistan as an adjunct to their Afghanistan policy, but it gives substantial support to Tajikistan under the heading of 'peace and security'.

European policies towards Tajikistan focus on two main issues: security and development. European policymakers, along with many within the academia and think-tank environment, claim that development and security are inextricably interlinked. This means that security is necessary for development, and development is necessary for achieving basic levels of security. But this obvious link is not always so clear in actual development policies. This working paper aims to give an overview of European development assistance to Tajikistan and discuss the extent to which European donors link security concerns to development policy in their relations with Tajikistan. The paper examines Europe as a diversified actor, comprised first and foremost of the European Union and its member states, but also including non-EU members and organisations in which Europe plays a decisive role, in particular, the OSCE and NATO.

The paper starts out with a brief expose on the security-development nexus and how it can be linked to Tajikistan. The central part of the paper discusses European donor approaches and looks into the reasons for Europe's engagement in and with Tajikistan. The third part briefly assesses activities by other donors in comparison to Europe and discusses

donor coordination, conditionality and leverage. The conclusion outlines a few key components of European aid in the light of a security-development nexus.

This paper was developed as a EUCAM team effort. The authors thank Nafisa Hasanova and Tika Tsertsvadze for their background research and input as well as other associates and researchers in the EUCAM network for their views on and reviews of draft texts. Along with extensive desk research, the report is based on a series of interviews with politicians, diplomats, government officials, representatives of international organisations, academics and experts from civil society in Tajikistan.

1. The problematic security-development nexus

The EU Strategy for Central Asia, as well as subsequent reporting on its implementation, point to a link between security and development in the region and to the need to address 'security broadly speaking'.³ The idea of human security is put forward and poverty alleviation is emphasised as a means to deal with security threats. The strategy also focuses on governance and the fight against corruption. The introduction to the 2012 review of the strategy stresses that security and development are interlinked and mutually reinforcing concepts, a point of view that is repeated later on specifically in relation to Tajikistan.⁴ This and other reports recognise internal security threats within Tajikistan, but more emphasis is given to Afghanistan and to Tajikistan's porous border with its southern neighbour. So, Tajikistan's security as seen through EU policy documents is chiefly linked to broader regional security threats that affect Central Asia, such as drug trafficking and terrorism. Less important are national threats, characteristic of most Central Asian countries but with national roots, such as poverty, corruption, bad governance, local radicalisation and so on.

Several organisations and authoritative policy documents state a link between security and development. But there is little agreement on a clear formula. Moreover, the link remains contested both in policy and academic communities. Three main criticisms of and doubts about the security and

³ Joint Progress Report by the Council and the European Commission to the European Council on the implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia, Brussels, 28 June 2010, <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st11/st11402.en10.pdf>

⁴ Progress Report on the Implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia. Review and outline for Future Orientations, July 2012, http://www.eeas.europa.eu/central_asia/docs/20120628_progress_report_en.pdf.

development nexus have been consistent over the last decade. These criticisms, to some degree, can be applied to the case of Tajikistan.⁵

Firstly, linking security and development can result in the securitisation of development rather than the 'developmentalisation' of security. For development actors, securitisation of a development issue may raise their prominence on the political agenda, which can lead to immediate action, political prioritisation and mobilisation of funds. But many in the development sector remain concerned about the subordination of development to the West's domestically inspired security priorities.⁶ On a national basis, development aid workers in Western countries worry about merging foreign affairs, defence and development budgets. They are anxious about funds moving from development agencies to defence organisations.

In Tajikistan, this criticism has been proven at least partly true where European donors are concerned. The EU and European states have little security involvement in the country, and that involvement does not extend much beyond expressions of concern. One reason for European states' minor involvement in hard security in Tajikistan (and in Central Asia as a whole) is its geographical distance from Europe. European states are keenly aware of Russia and China's role as powerful neighbours. And Europe has insufficient political interest or capability to play a bigger geopolitical role in the region, along the lines of that of the U.S. Since Europe is a minor (or even non-existent) hard security actor in Central Asia, it has tried to connect security to development in order to at least play a soft security role. But here also, perceived security threats risk undermining pure development work by, for instance, overemphasising Tajikistan's borders as a risk factor that can be remedied through development aid at the expense of other development needs.

The only EU 'hard security' engagement in Tajikistan is on border management. It could be argued that this is securitisation of development aid. The EU has mostly delivered on equipment, infrastructure and some training of security forces, while other objectives involving supporting cross-border trade and developing border regions have not been reached. This is partly due to the fact that the Tajik authorities perceive increased interaction with neighbouring regions in Afghanistan as a threat

rather than an opportunity to foster development. Although Europeans talk about linking development strategies to security concerns, it is often difficult to see how this link is implemented, apart from in border management support where the link does not seem to match the development objectives.

Another criticism of the security-development nexus is that linking security and development can lead to confusion and incoherence. The security-development nexus is often put on a par with the concept of human security, which was defined by the UN in 1994 and has been criticised as being too broad and too vague. Detractors say that while 'human security' has been a useful tool for focusing the attention of the security community on the individual, it has not yet proven its value either from an academic or from a policy perspective.⁷ Since there is no single narrative of security and development, 'the content or form of the nexus is not clear' and 'different discourses imbue the nexus with different meanings'.⁸

This analysis can certainly be applied to European donor assistance activities in Tajikistan. As this paper shows, European donors pay lip service to the security-development nexus and even to human security. But they do not make clear what they seek to achieve in terms of security and development – there is no broader narrative. So far, the political discourse on Tajikistan focuses on security threats that could eventually have an effect on security in Europe but of those interviewed, many civil society organisations and officials of donor organisations in Tajikistan did not emphasise security threats. Instead, they stressed purely development issues such as poverty, unemployment, corruption and energy shortages. Many of the development workers present on the ground suggested that urgent development challenges override the security concerns that are the centre of debate among Western officials and Tajik political elites.

The final criticism of the nexus states that there is little evidence to suggest any practical gain in linking security to development. Critics point out that empirical studies have failed to confirm the practical strength of the connection between poverty and international terrorism or intra-state war.⁹ The efficacy of linking security and development remains

⁵ N. Waddell, 'Ties that bind: DFID and the emerging security and development agenda', *Conflict, Security & Development*, 6:4 (2006), p. 538.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ A. Jägerskog, 'Applying the human security concept', *Conflict, Security & Development*, 4:3 (2004), pp. 309-312.

⁸ M. Stern and J. Öjendal, 'Mapping the Security – Development Nexus: Conflict, Complexity, Cacophony, Convergence?', *Security Dialogue*, 41:5 (2010), p. 6.

⁹ Waddell, *op.cit.*, p. 541.

contested. It is largely used as a political tool for manoeuvre between different interests and priorities within particular governments and institutions and in relations between donor countries and recipient states.

In Tajikistan, it can be argued that the security-development nexus has even contributed to the consolidation and legitimisation of an authoritarian regime that is unwilling to take steps towards reform. The Tajik government uses the threat of destabilisation to justify, on the one hand, its authoritarian tendencies and, on the other, the need for substantial donor support.¹⁰ To an extent, Tajikistan's (and Central Asia's) importance for regional security has discouraged donors from being stricter with Tajikistan's government about support and results.

This tendency can be illustrated by the lack of international attention to anti-corruption programmes. For development assistance to be effective, high-level corruption needs to be addressed, especially where budget support is in place or where implementation of foreign funded projects is carried out by domestic authorities. But no progress is being made in Tajikistan on fighting corruption. Some donors even claimed to have given up on the matter, treating it simply as a fact of life. Donors to Tajikistan do not set strict demands on fighting corruption, even though they agree that it weakens the development and security of the country. Meanwhile, the Tajik elites regard corruption as a basis for staying in power, and thus, as the root of their perceived stability. Although donors and recipients speak the same language, they have completely different notions of what constitutes development and security in Tajikistan.

These three criticisms of the link between security and development underline the existing and potential ineffectiveness of development efforts. But they do not necessarily undermine the idea that security and development are interlinked. On a positive note, the nexus has also increased the attention given to the impoverished country. It has brought in many international donors who might have otherwise ignored Tajikistan in favour of focusing strictly on development areas in Africa, the Caribbean or Southeast Asia where they have established a long-term presence and expertise.

To conclude, the security-development link can be regarded as positive as long as donors have Tajikistan's

broader long-term security and development at heart. The link becomes blurred when the primary drivers are short-term European security interests, such as the security implications of troop withdrawal from Afghanistan. It is also a matter of concern when the link solely serves the purpose of the largely corrupt Tajik governing elites, who seek to strengthen their position by stressing security threats and benefiting from government directed aid.

2. Europe's approach to security and development in Tajikistan

2.1. The European Union

The European Union is a latecomer to Tajikistan, which appeared on the foreign policy agenda only after the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. Before that, Tajikistan was primarily seen as an impoverished far-away former Soviet state, where Europe could do little besides its allocation of €328 million emergency aid – although that still made Tajikistan the largest aid recipient in the Central Asian region.¹¹ After September 11, 2001, the EU Council decided to strengthen bilateral relations with Central Asian countries by enhancing political dialogue, supporting border management and focusing on poverty reduction, social and economic development, good governance and water management. EU assistance to the region through the TACIS programme was doubled from €25 million annually to €50 million.¹²

In 2007, the EU presented a Strategy for Central Asia which boosted political dialogue with Central Asia states. In 2010, the EU converted its mission in Dushanbe to a full-fledged delegation, and in the following year, the EU-Tajikistan Partnership and Cooperation Agreement entered into force. This agreement set up structures for bilateral dialogue, in the form of annual minister-level meetings and a technical-level cooperation committee. In addition, the European Parliament is involved in Central Asia through a Parliamentary Cooperation Committee as well as a multilateral inter-parliamentary dialogue with Central Asia countries. However, the parliamentary delegation is 'very weak', according to a European Parliament official, due to the lack of strong interest in the region among parliamentarians.

¹¹ In 1992-2001, the European Commission allocated €328 million to Tajikistan, mainly through humanitarian, food and macro-financial assistance. Technical assistance was limited to €8 million, allocated in 1994 and 1995. See Commission of the European Communities, *Strategy Paper 2002-2006* and *Indicative Programme 2002-2004 for Central Asia*, 30 October 2002, p. 36.

¹² Commission of the European Communities, *Strategy Paper 2002-2006* and *Indicative Programme 2002-2004 for Central Asia*, 30 October 2002, p. 5.

¹⁰ A. Cooley, *Great Games, Local Rules. The New Great Power Contest in Central Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 24.

The EU Central Asia Strategy outlines seven priorities, which include 'security and stability'.¹³ Security threats are seen through the prism of Central Asia's geographic location, in particular its proximity to Afghanistan. In the 2010 progress report on the Strategy's implementation, the link between development and security was stressed, especially with regard to poverty alleviation, which was premised as 'a means to combat the dangers of radicalisation'.¹⁴ Two years later, the EU produced a more in-depth review, in which it argues that 'EU interests in the Central Asian region are best served by promoting comprehensive security and development, which are inter-linked and mutually reinforcing. Without security, there can be no development and without political, sustainable economic and social development, there will be no long term security for the states and the people of the region.'¹⁵

The firm focus on Afghanistan as a potential threat to the stability of Central Asia in general and Tajikistan in particular is at the centre of the EU's 2012 progress report. Under the heading of common threats and challenges, the report highlights security concerns such as terrorism, organised crime, human trafficking and the drug trade. Other security threats are mentioned, such as inter-state tensions and instability as a result of poverty and corruption. But they are not given the same prominence as the negative spillover effects from Afghanistan, which the EU fears might increase over the coming years following the withdrawal of NATO. As the report states, 'Tajikistan faces a particular challenge given its 1,300 km long border with Afghanistan where the EU is heavily engaged with its border management and other programmes and remains committed to continue to support security and development, including in border regions.'¹⁶

Since 2003, the biggest EU security investment in

Central Asia has been BOMCA, a regional programme aimed at improving border management and reducing drug trafficking. Tajikistan is the largest recipient of BOMCA resources, obtaining about one third of the programme's budget, which amounts to €33,555,405 of EU funding plus €2.74 million given by UNDP since the programme's initiation in 2003, which will last until 2014.¹⁷ Apart from BOMCA, Tajikistan indirectly benefits from BOMNAF (Border Management in Northern Afghanistan), which is run from the Dushanbe-based UNDP office. It also participates in the EU's Central Asia Drug Action Programme (CADAP), which focuses on drug demand and assists Central Asian governments in developing policies to prevent and tackle drug addiction. And Tajikistan is part of the activities of the Almaty-based Central Asia Regional Information Centre (CARICC), funded by the EU and member states, which also combats illicit drug trafficking.

BOMCA is divided into phases, each of which has its own budget, implementation structure and focus. The UNDP's country offices have been the implementing partners in all five republics since the initiation of the programme. Up until 2010, BOMCA focused on investment into border infrastructure development and equipment. Launched in July 2011, the current, eighth phase of BOMCA focuses on institutional reform and capacity building. This emphasis of BOMCA is one of the key challenges for the programme, given that Central Asian governments are much more willing to submit 'wish-lists' for renovation of cross-border points and modern equipment rather than training programmes for border staff.¹⁸ The 2010 National Border Strategy of Tajikistan, developed with the support of international donors (Finland and the OSCE), is 'in implementation purgatory', as one analyst put it.¹⁹ This is due to the absence of will on the part of the Tajik government to abandon the current non-transparent military-based system of border control, as well as the dearth of resources for maintaining an effective border guard service.

Donor coordination for border management is well developed, and BOMCA performs an administrative function. Since 2005, a technical-level Border International Group (BIG) has convened monthly and involved all the donors to border management, namely: the EU Delegation; the embassies of

¹³ The seven priorities are: human rights, rule of law, good governance and democratisation; youth and education; economic development, trade and investment; energy and transport links; environmental sustainability and water; combating common threats and challenges; and inter-cultural dialogue. European External Action Service, 'The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership' in *The European Union and Central Asia: the new partnership in action*, http://www.eeas.europa.eu/centralasia/docs/2010_strategy_eu_centralasia_en.pdf.

¹⁴ Joint Progress Report by the Council and the European Commission to the European Council on the implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia, Brussels, 28 June 2010, http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kazakhstan/documents/eu_kazakhstan/joint_progress_report_eu_ca_strategy_en.pdf, p. 2.

¹⁵ Progress Report on the implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia Implementation. Review and outline for Future Orientations, July 2012, http://www.eeas.europa.eu/centralasia/docs/20120628_progress_report_en.pdf.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ BOMCA, 'About Us', *Border Management Programme in Central Asia*, 20 June 2012, <http://www.bomca.eu/en/about-us.html>.

¹⁸ G. Gavrilis, 'Central Asia's Border Woes and the Impact of International Assistance', Central Eurasia Project Occasional Paper Series 6, Open Society Foundations, New York, 2012, p. 20.

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 33.

the U.S., Germany, the UK, France, Japan and the Russian Federation; the Russian Advisory Team; the International Organisation for Migration; the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); the OSCE; and BOMNAF. These meetings serve as a forum for exchanging information so as to avoid duplication and improve cooperation.

In EU circles as well as in Dushanbe, BOMCA has been heralded as an important and successful project, since all Central Asian countries are participating, even if half-heartedly, in its various activities. However, there are a number of unresolved issues that cast doubt on BOMCA's impact in contributing to secure and open borders in the region. Firstly, the quantity of renewed border posts and equipment has not translated into an increase in drug seizures. In fact, drug seizures in Tajikistan have even decreased compared with the mid-2000s.²⁰ No major drug lord or network has ever been brought to justice – an indicator that no serious work is being done to bring down the well-organised drug mafias or to effectively counter the criminal groups.²¹ Several researchers and critical observers contend that drug-trading networks have infiltrated Tajik government circles, which ensure the protection of drug flows across the border.²²

Critics also say that by providing aid to unreformed law enforcement agencies, such as the Ministry of Interior and the National Security Committee, donors have contributed to the consolidation of an authoritarian regime that uses law enforcement agencies to oppress political opposition.²³ Offering assistance in stopping drugs to a government that is part and parcel of these networks does not make sense. And by strengthening security agencies, donors risk increasing government capacity to stay in power by employing repression, while showing no inclination to reform.

The choice of UNDP as an implementing agency could reinforce the link between development and security, since UNDP is a major development organisation and works on poverty reduction. But little connection

exists between EU border management aid and development efforts. In Tajikistan, border management aid coordination is separated from development aid coordination. BIG is not a part of the clusters and working groups system of the Donor Coordination Council. Several interviewees have suggested that more attention should be given to the ways in which security-related efforts contribute to the development of local communities at the border. To do this, border management programmes should engage with the local population and civil society to evaluate the impact of the border regimes on the border regions. Local organisations are in a better position to provide first-hand information on issues related to day-to-day border crossings.²⁴ One step in the right direction on this is BOMCA's recent pilot initiative in Kyrgyzstan's Batken oblast, which borders Tajikistan. The initiative is aimed at establishing dialogue between border guards and the local community.²⁵

Securing borders between Central Asia and Afghanistan seems to be the EU's major security concern. But Brussels also provides development aid through a wide range of funding mechanisms and projects. The EU's assistance strategy for the broader Central Asian region further links EU development cooperation with the EU's security interests. The EU Regional Strategy Paper for Assistance to Central Asia for the period 2007-2013 says that the EU seeks to promote stability and security in the countries of Central Asia. It aims to do this by assisting them in the pursuit of sustainable economic development and poverty reduction, and by facilitating closer regional cooperation, both within Central Asia and between Central Asia and the EU.²⁶

For the period 2007-2013, the EU has allocated €750 million for the implementation of EU-Central Asia Strategy, financed through the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI). Through its bilateral component, Tajikistan has been allocated €128 million for the seven-year period, making it the largest beneficiary of EU aid in Central Asia.²⁷ EU financial assistance is divided among three main sectors: Social Protection (Health & Food Security), Agriculture

²⁰ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 'Seizures', in *World Drug Report 2011* (Vienna: UNODC, 2011), http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/WDR2011/Seizures_2011_Final.pdf, pp. 63-65.

²¹ F. De Danieli, 'Counter-narcotics policies in Tajikistan and their impact on state building', *Central Asian Survey*, 30:1 (2011), pp. 129-145.

²² De Danieli, *op.cit.*; Gavrilis, *op.cit.*; see also L. Paoli, I. Rabkov, V.A. Greenfield and P. Reuter, 'Tajikistan: The Rise of a Narco-State', *Journal of Drug Issues* 37:4 (2007), pp. 951-980.

²³ De Danieli, *op.cit.*, p. 130. For more critical views of the impact of international aid on Tajikistan's democratic development see S. Nakaya, 'Aid and transition from a war economy to an oligarchy in post-war Tajikistan', *Central Asian Survey*, 28:3 (2009), pp. 259-273.

²⁴ Gavrilis, *op.cit.*

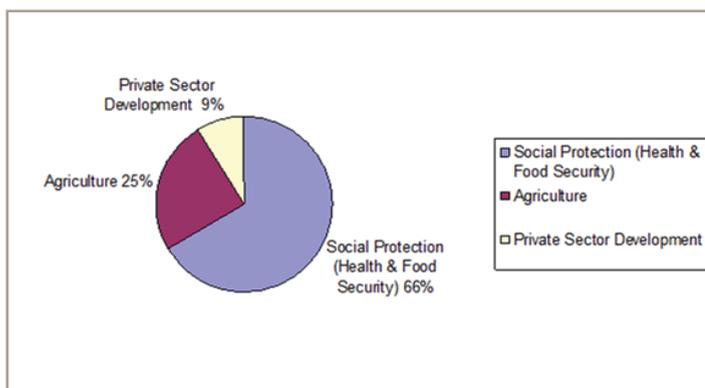
²⁵ Gavrilis, *op.cit.*, p. 41.

²⁶ European Community Regional Strategy Paper for Assistance to Central Asia for the period 2007-2013, 27 April 2007, http://www.eeas.europa.eu/central_asia/rsp/07_13_en.pdf, p. 3.

²⁷ Central Asia Indicative Programme (2007-2010), http://eeas.europa.eu/central_asia/rsp/nip_07_10_en.pdf, p. 5; and the Central Asia DCI Indicative Programme 2011-2013, http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tajikistan/documents/eu_tajikistan/ca_dci_2011-2013_final_en.pdf, p. 16.

and Private Sector Development. A series of smaller amounts are allocated through other EU instruments; for example, the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) funds governance and democratisation projects.

Figure 1 EU assistance to Tajikistan 2007-11
(based on EUCAM calculations)



Within the DCI, the EU provides aid to Tajikistan in the form of sector budget support, technical assistance and grants. A Sector Policy Support Programme (SPSP) was introduced in 2007, which succeeded the EU global financial instrument for food security, active in 2005-2006 in Tajikistan. Under the SPSP, the EU committed up to €14 million, of which €5 million is technical assistance, to support social protection in Tajikistan.²⁸ Sector budget support makes the EU a key donor to Tajikistan, because no other institution deploys this kind of aid instrument. The only exception is the World Bank, which provides general budget support, although its funding is linked to reforms in certain sectors.²⁹

Based on its previous experience of providing budget support for food security, the EU has argued that sector budget support gives it stronger leverage to push forward the reform process in a chosen sector. Sector budget support can be closely tied to a sector policy dialogue with the government and key stakeholders. And sector budget support is seen as increasing local ownership of the reforms. To improve the efficiency of its aid, the EU focuses on a series of areas to assess the eligibility of a recipient country, ranging from the broader macroeconomic framework to specific criteria such as the budget and medium-

term perspectives.³⁰ These criteria, however, do not include hard benchmarks. Specific conditions added in particular cases are sometimes not precise enough, which gives the Tajik government considerable room for manoeuvre. Because the allocation is fungible, the recipient can use the funds in any way it pleases, as long as the objective is met. This means that funds can be used for matters that the EU would potentially not support, while the main objectives are only perfunctorily addressed.

The EU's sector budget support is plagued with a host of difficulties and shortcomings that impede the tool's effectiveness. Other problems involve weak state institutions, including a lack of professional personnel; the absence of genuine political commitment to reform; and the donor-driven nature of national strategies and action plans, including a shortage of reliable external evaluation.³¹ Brussels strongly supports Tajikistan in efforts to improve Public Finance Management (PFM) by focusing on issues such as internal financial control and the budget preparation process. But although noticeable improvement has been made, Tajikistan is starting from a low base, and as one official noted, change is slow.

A number of interviewees in Dushanbe say that the EU does not use sector budget support as leverage to push reforms in Tajikistan. Some added that the reason is that the Tajik government prefers cheap Chinese loans to the EU's support. Indeed, interviews with government officials reveal that although EU support to social sector development is appreciated, the government would like to see more EU aid and private investment for the development of economic sectors such as banking, industry, energy and agriculture.

Besides border control, sector budget support and several technical assistance projects, the EU also provides assistance in promoting human rights and democratic governance in Tajikistan. This is mainly carried out through the EIDHR, which allocates €900,000 to the country every two years in the form of grants to local and international NGOs. Along with

²⁸ 2007 EU Action Fiche Republic of Tajikistan, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/aap/2007/ec_aap-2007_tj_en.pdf.

²⁹ The IMF works through its Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility in Tajikistan which provides for concessional lendings. This approach incorporates some aspects typical of budget support, such as setting requirements on reform and monitoring mechanisms. The Asian Development Bank provides grants and technical assistance which also resemble budget support but are aimed at concrete projects. Neither can be considered pure budget support.

³⁰ The seven areas of assessment are: sector policy and strategy; budget and its medium-term perspectives; sector and donor coordination; institutional setting and capacity issues; performance monitoring systems; macroeconomic framework; and public financial management (PFM) systems. See EuropeAid, 'Support to Sector Programmes', July 2007, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/delivering-aid/sector-approach/documents/guidelines_support_to_sector_prog_11_sept07_final_en.pdf.

³¹ 2007 EU Action Fiche Republic of Tajikistan, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/aap/2007/ec_aap-2007_tj_en.pdf, pp. 5-6; and the 2009 EU Action Fiche Republic of Tajikistan, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/aap/2009/af_aap_2009_tjk.pdf, pp. 2-3.

this, the DCI's Non-State Actors and Local Authorities thematic programme allocated €3.3 million between 2007 and 2013 to NGOs from the EU and Tajikistan. This funding was earmarked for strengthening participatory development and inclusion of vulnerable groups, capacity building for local civil society organisations working on development issues and supporting dialogue between civil society and state actors.

The main criticism of the EU's support to civil society is that it mostly promotes well-established and strong NGOs, which in Tajikistan are few in number. The sustainability of EU and other foreign funding to civil society is a concern. After attempts to interview for this paper Tajik NGOs who had received EDIHR funds in the past, it turned out that many of the NGOs had ceased to exist. NGO representatives who were interviewed criticised the EU for the complicated application process and the stringent conditions placed on funding.³² Lengthy procedures and the need to attract at least 10 per cent of co-funding are obstacles for many small organisations. From another perspective, civil society representatives often criticise Tajik NGOs as not having a genuine will to represent societal interests. Instead, they say, these NGOs are just a type of business sustained by foreign funding. Given the low level of sustainability among civil society organisations in Tajikistan, more efforts are needed to provide systematic support for the institutional foundations of civil society. A strong and sustained civil society that can offer services and perform oversight of government policy and spending is an essential aspect in forwarding internal stability – and thus is part and parcel of a security-development nexus.

Another widely expressed complaint by civil society and government representatives alike is that a large share of EU funding is given to Western consultancy firms. The work completed under expensive contracts awarded to foreign advisers is seen as short-term and not sustainable. Critics claim that consultants come and go, that the reports they produce are seldom discussed or shared with Tajik actors, and that the EU and member states themselves make little use of the projects' products.

Even though the EU is involved in a large number of development aid initiatives, there does not seem to be a clear security-development nexus at the base of

the EU's activities. Activities such as sector budget support and civil society support have specific development objectives in mind. BOMCA is concerned with security support, while its attached development objectives remain weak. So, the security-development nexus remains largely rhetoric, confined to policy documents that express concerns about security while mostly engaging in development programming. Nonetheless, it can still be argued that development programming will have a beneficial impact on the long-term security situation.

2.2. *European bilateral approaches*

In the review of the Strategy for Central Asia, the EU urges its member states to play an active role: 'The implementation of the Strategy has been a common endeavour of EU institutions together with member states via sharing of leading roles in different areas and regular coordination meetings aimed at enhancing synergies and complementarities while avoiding overlap.'³³ In Tajikistan, coordination between the delegation and EU member state embassies is fairly easy, because only the three biggest EU member states, Germany, France and the United Kingdom, have embassies there. Donor coordination is part of a broader picture, in which Europe does not distinguish itself from other key donors and actors such as international financial institutions, the UN agencies, the U.S. and to a lesser extent Russia, as will become clear in the next section.

Because the EU is not one overarching unified actor, European national policies play an important role in Central Asia. Their activities, though nationally planned and implemented, are as a general rule in line with EU policy. So, they can be seen as additional activities in support of broader European policies, although they primarily serve national trade, development and security interests. Germany, non-EU member Switzerland and the UK outrank other European countries in aid delivery. Sweden used to have an active development aid presence in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan through SIDA, but it decided to close its offices as part of a larger development aid restructuring process. Other Nordic countries, including non-EU member Norway and, more recently, Finland,³⁴ have stepped up and increased development aid and programming in Tajikistan.

³² See also V. Axyonova, 'EU Human Rights and Democratisation Assistance to Central Asia: In Need of Further Reform', EUCAM Policy Brief 22, January 2012, http://www.eucentralasia.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Policy_Briefs/PB_EUCAM-22.pdf.

³³ Progress Report on the implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia Implementation. Review and outline for Future Orientations, July 2012.

³⁴ For more information about Finnish development aid to Tajikistan, see T. Lipiäinen, 'Finland and Central Asia', EUCAM National Series Policy Brief No. 10, November 2012, http://www.eucentralasia.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Policy_Briefs/National-PB10-FN.pdf.

Table 1. ODA to Tajikistan by EU institutions and European countries (net disbursements) in USD millions

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EU institutions	25.29	21.76	35.96	33.45	15.95	31.14	37.32	36.64
Austria	0.14	0.06	0.14	0.03	0.09	0.07	0.76	0.13
Belgium			0.09	0.01		0.3	0.32	
Cyprus				0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	
Czech Republic	0.03	0.05	0.13	0.09	0.01	0.07	0.04	0.08
Denmark			0.09	0.17	0.39		0.03	0.49
Finland	0.57	0.06	0.19	0.32	1.73	1.76	1.66	0.81
France	0.17	0.26	0.58	0.55	4.68	5.89	4.68	0.19
Germany	4.67	5.42	8.33	8.7	12.56	22.17	26.12	34.68
Greece		0.2				0.29	0.01	
Estonia				0.02				
Hungary								0.01
Ireland				0.1		0.48	0.18	0.02
Italy	0.73			0.02	0.22	0.01	0.42	0.01
Latvia			0.02					
Lithuania						0.01		0.01
Luxembourg	0.34	0.42	0.53	0.34	0.36	0.29	0.43	0.32
Netherlands	1.11	1.19	0.89	0.02	0.07	0.78	0.32	0.55
Norway	1.85	1.47	1.97	1.74	3.19	2.71	3.14	3.2
Poland	0.01	0.01		0.03	0.05	0.11	0.07	0.04
Slovak Republic	0.18	0.21					0.68	
Slovenia						0.01		
Spain			0.02	0.05	3.04	2.49	6.31	0.02
Sweden	1.78	3.12	4.56	8.86	13.85	12.54	9.13	5.31
Switzerland	13.41	17.04	9.95	11.91	11.18	11.96	12.86	13.8
UK	1.09	1.52	4.4	6.96	4.52	7.72	4.48	12.52

Source: OECD

While in absolute figures, European bilateral assistance has increased (especially from Germany and the UK), the total number of donors has decreased since 2010. Of course, budget cuts as a result of the economic crisis are the root cause. Most donors either provide token amounts of assistance or choose not to engage with Tajikistan, which is for most European countries not a part of their geographical area of interest. Neither is it sited in a region in which national development agencies have in-depth experience, such as in Africa or elsewhere where European states nurture ties with former colonies.

Over the past decade, Germany's engagement in the Central Asian region has mainly been driven by the prospect of energy supplies from the region, as well as by the security threats, most importantly terrorism and transnational crime, that link Central Asia to Afghanistan and the Greater Middle East.³⁵ Germany also has a direct security interest and presence in

the region through its airbase in Termez, Uzbekistan, which is used for ISAF troop transit.

Germany was the first – and, until recently, the only – EU member state with embassies in all five Central Asian capitals. Germany's engagement has incorporated a broad range of issues. It has involved itself in development cooperation, cultural cooperation and protection of German minorities in the region, although there are few in Tajikistan. And it has had a security involvement as part of its participation in the intervention in Afghanistan. Compared to the number of EU officials working on the ground in Central Asia, Germany has substantially more staff working in embassies and in the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) offices.³⁶ Since the start of its development cooperation with Tajikistan in the mid-1990s, Germany has made available some €123 million to the Central Asian state.³⁷ The bulk of development aid is channelled through GIZ, with an annual budget of €14-15 million. Since 2006, Germany's KfW Development Bank has provided approximately €11 million in grants and €3 million in loans to Tajikistan.³⁸

The first priority of development cooperation is sustainable economic development. Germany provides assistance to small and medium-sized businesses, especially in the agriculture sector, through microcredit finance services, reform of vocational education and development of local tourism. It prioritises healthcare, with KfW financing infrastructure projects such as the rehabilitation of hospitals, while GIZ³⁹ supports the training of medical personnel. GIZ also focuses on renewable energy, energy saving and efficiency, for example, by carrying out projects in the Gorno-Badakhshan region, where GIZ has an office.

Through its regional programme for Central Asia, GIZ runs a variety of projects. Areas of involvement include development of judicial authorities, trade

³⁶ M. Emerson and J. Boonstra (eds.), *Into EurAsia Monitoring the EU's Central Asia Strategy*. Report of the EUCAM Project (Brussels; Madrid: CEPS; FRIDE, 2010), p. 61.

³⁷ Federal Foreign Office, 'Foreign and European Policy – Bilateral Relations – Tajikistan', March 2010, http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Aussenpolitik/Laender/Laenderinfos/01-Nodes/Tadschikistan_node.html.

³⁸ State Committee on Investments and State Property Management of the Republic of Tajikistan, 'Foreign Aid Report – 2010', http://amcu.gki.tj/eng/images/OVP/OVP_eng.pdf, p.25.

³⁹ Since 1 January 2011, GIZ, the German Society for International Cooperation, has united three development cooperation organisations under one roof: the German Development Service (DED), the German technical cooperation (GTZ) and Inwent-Capacity Building International.

³⁵ R. Krumm, *Central Asia – The Struggle for Power, Energy and Human Rights* (Berlin: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2007), http://www.fes.de/kompass2020/pdf_en/CentralAsia.pdf, p. 9.

and economic cooperation, sustainable use of natural resources and water management.⁴⁰ In 2011, the German Federal Foreign Office and the KfW launched a foundation to assist regional integration between Pakistan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan (PATRIP). This initiative supplies investment to small and medium scale social and economic infrastructure (for example, bridges, roads, markets and health care points) with the aim of facilitating cross-border exchanges.

Germany's development cooperation with Central Asia preceded its security engagement with the region. However, since its involvement in regional security began, its development efforts have been reinforced. In the security arena, Germany contributes to the OSCE Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe. It also delivers training to customs officers to identify precursors for drug production, and it offers training opportunities in Germany to members of the armed forces of the Central Asian republics.⁴¹ The security-development link seems very present in Germany's approach to Tajikistan, in the sense that development aid, especially such initiatives as PATRIP, is seen as contributing to better security in the broader region by improving the economic and social situation.

France has been among the leading European nations in the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. The French Ministry of Foreign and European Relations says that 'the French commitment to Afghanistan and the support provided to it by Tajikistan have led us to revise upwards our political dialogue with the latter country'.⁴² France is the only Western country that has had a military presence in Tajikistan since 2002. Dushanbe airport hosts between 170 and 230 French military personnel along with two cargo planes to provide technical support to NATO operations in Afghanistan.⁴³ Initially, the airbase served for all air operations including combat support, but today, it is only involved in logistics. According to the ambassador in Dushanbe, France has contributed €50 million (of which €20 million is a loan) for the construction of a new international airport terminal in Dushanbe. France also cooperates with Tajikistan on military training and expertise and provides support for

teaching French in the Tajik military.⁴⁴

The French Agency for Development (AFD) gives no aid to Tajikistan. Even though France's engagement with Tajikistan is limited to a security agenda, Paris has no plans to end its diplomatic presence in Dushanbe when the Afghanistan mission is complete. France is different from other European member states, in that it engages on the diplomatic front and on security matters (plus promotion of French culture), but chooses not to engage in development cooperation. It leaves development to the EU and the other organisations to which it contributes. In this way, French policy stays straightforward by largely ignoring the security-development nexus.⁴⁵

Tajikistan is also important to the UK for its impact on regional security and links to Afghanistan. The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) has provided bilateral development assistance since 2003, as one of the few European donors present on the ground. Even amid budget cuts, the UK maintained its embassy in Dushanbe and opened a new embassy in Bishkek in 2011. This extended its diplomatic presence to all five Central Asian states. DFID regional coordination was recently relocated to Dushanbe, signalling the UK's increased interest in Tajikistan.

Since 2003, DFID bilateral aid, including humanitarian assistance, has grown from £688,000 (about €1 million) in 2003-2004 to £9 million (over €10 million) in 2010-2011.⁴⁶ In Tajikistan, DFID prioritises the promotion of sustained and inclusive economic growth and good governance. The largest projects funded by DFID during the last years have focused on the creation of business activity, employment in rural areas, assisting labour migrants, and support for public finance management reform. The number of projects is limited since the UK seeks to increase its impact by focusing on a limited set of aid priorities. Because it has few staff in the country, DFID works closely with other organisations, especially the

⁴⁰ GTZ, 'Programmes and projects in Tajikistan', <http://www.gtz.de/en/weltweit/europa-kaukasus-zentralasien/1850.htm>.

⁴¹ Federal Foreign Office of Germany, 'Germany and Central Asia', 2010, <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/cae/servlet/contentblob/347906/publicationFile/4028/ZASstrategieengl.pdf>.

⁴² Ministère des affaires étrangères et européennes, 'Tadjikistan', *France Diplomatie*, 20 June 2011, <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/pays-zones-geo-833/tadjikistan-465/index.html>.

⁴³ D. Trilling, 'Tajikistan: French Air Detachment in Dushanbe Quietly Carries Out Afghan Mission', *EurasiaNet*, 18 May 2009, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav051809.shtml>.

⁴⁴ Ministère des affaires étrangères et européennes, 'La France et le Tadjikistan: Présentation', *France Diplomatie*, 2 July 2012, <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/pays-zones-geo-833/tadjikistan-465/france-tadjikistan-1240/presentation-4444/index.html>.

⁴⁵ For more information on French policy towards Tajikistan, see S. Peyrouse, 'France and Central Asia', EUCAM National Series Policy Brief No. 9, November 2012, http://www.eucamcentralasia.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Policy_Briefs/National-PB9-FR.pdf

⁴⁶ Comparison between DFID annual reports and accounts for 2008-2009 and 2010-2011. See DFID, *Annual Report and Resource Accounts 2008-09* (London: The Stationery Office, 2009), <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications1/departamental-report/2009/volume2.pdf?epslanguage=en>; and DFID, *Annual Reports and Accounts 2010-11* (London: The Stationery Office, 2011), <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications1/departamental-report/2011/Annual-report-2011-vol1.pdf>.

OSCE and GIZ, who often play a greater role in project implementation. Though the UK plans to provide aid to fewer countries worldwide, its assistance to Central Asia is intended to continue, with an average of £14 million (€17.5 million) per year for Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan until 2015. UK development efforts in Tajikistan have been closely linked to security concerns in Central Asia and the border with Afghanistan. In this way, the UK has recognised the link between development and security in the region.⁴⁷

The Swiss Cooperation Office opened in Dushanbe in 1998. Assistance to Tajikistan is governed by the Swiss Development Cooperation Strategy for Central Asia, which also covers Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.⁴⁸ Switzerland provides on average about \$15 million (approximately €11.6 million) per year to Tajikistan, and spends about \$6 million (€4.56 million) annually on regional programmes. Swiss aid focuses on four areas: private sector development and trade; health care reform; drinking water and sanitation; and rule of law. In addition, the regional component of Swiss programming promotes cooperation on water management and cultural projects. Switzerland mainly implements its aid through international organisations and international NGOs. Small-scale projects are supported through a special fund. Switzerland has gained a reputation as a long-term development actor in the region. The country attaches special importance to human rights: the Swiss government has held bilateral consultations with Tajikistan on human rights issues since 2010.

Whereas Germany and Switzerland were already offering development assistance in Tajikistan in the 1990s, the UK and France's arrival in Tajikistan is plainly connected to the international intervention in Afghanistan. Germany and the UK adhere to a security-development narrative. Switzerland's activities are purely related to development cooperation, and those of France are diplomatic and security oriented. When the approaches of non-resident European countries are taken into account, it is evident that there is no clear-cut European security-development nexus approach. If such an approach exists, it is largely promoted through the EU and the OSCE, on which most countries rely for the bulk of their aid and security activities in Central Asia. Besides, European

national policies disagree on the importance they attach to aid or to security. And within the security sphere, countries differ on the importance they give to spillover from Afghanistan versus specific national security threats to Tajikistan.

2.3. The OSCE and NATO

Along with the EU and European states, the OSCE and NATO can also partly be regarded as 'European actors', because their membership is largely made up of European states, which bear a major share of their costs.

The OSCE has been present in Tajikistan since 1994, when it opened a field mission to contribute to the peace settlement during the civil war.⁴⁹ Currently, the OSCE has its main office in Dushanbe as well as five field offices. From 2007 to 2012, the OSCE budget in Tajikistan gradually increased, from €3.9 million, or 2.3 per cent of the total OSCE budget, to €6.3 million, or 4.2 per cent. The number of staff rose from 74 to 158 people.⁵⁰

The security-development nexus has always been important to the OSCE. With its background of comprehensive security, it links the politico-military, economic-environmental and human dimensions of security. Balancing between these three areas, most particularly the politico-military and the human dimensions, has become increasingly difficult for the OSCE over the last decade. Participating states 'east of Vienna' want the OSCE to take up a stronger security role and to have less involvement on democratisation and human rights. West European states and the U.S. see the human dimension as the OSCE's most important work. Suspicion about OSCE interference in domestic governance has caused resistance to the OSCE in Central Asia. Uzbekistan has scaled down the OSCE mission to a Project Coordinator, and the other three Central Asian states have OSCE centres instead of full-fledged missions. But Tajikistan was persuaded by the Spanish OSCE Chairmanship as well as several high-level European visits to invest in the OSCE.

Tajikistan chose not only to subordinate itself to OSCE planning and implementation, but to take an active part in the OSCE efforts. Nonetheless, Tajik authorities

⁴⁷ For more information about UK policy towards Tajikistan, see A. Walker, 'The United Kingdom and Central Asia', EUCAM National Series Policy Brief No. 1, July 2012, http://www.eucentralasia.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Policy_Briefs/PB3_UK.pdf.

⁴⁸ Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, *Cooperation Strategy for the Central Asia Region 2007–2011* (Berne: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, 2007), http://www.swiss-cooperation.admin.ch/centralasia/en/Home/ressources/resource_en_162032.pdf.

⁴⁹ In 2002, the Mission was turned into the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe, similar to those that exist in other Central Asia countries. In June 2008, the OSCE and the Tajik government agreed on a new and more robust mandate for the OSCE's work. The Centre was renamed as the Office, obtaining a budget and staff increase.

⁵⁰ The OSCE budget is relatively small, with €148 million per year as of 2012, but the OSCE makes use of extra-budgetary funds that mostly derive from European participating states.

have continued to downplay democratisation, to the frustration of OSCE staff. In times of election, relations between the OSCE and Tajikistan tend to become slightly less friendly, when the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights publishes negative reports on elections that are in general neither free or fair. But the OSCE has established itself as an important player in the security and training field. It also works actively on border issues, a matter that is important to its participating states, from Europe to the U.S. and from Russia to Tajikistan itself. Where the EU and UNDP seek to promote donor coordination in this sector through the BOMCA project, the OSCE aims to bring together all relevant Tajik agencies (border control, customs, ministries etc.) with representatives of the main donors on border control.

As part of the OSCE revival in Tajikistan, the country was granted an OSCE Border Management Staff College, which is funded by a group of 14 Western participating states. The college in Dushanbe provides training to border, customs and drug control agency officers from OSCE participating states and Afghanistan. But the organisation of training programmes and enrolment from other Central Asian republics remains problematic.⁵¹ It is unlikely that the college will turn into a full-fledged OSCE institution in the near future. Overall the increase in activities has created a flourishing OSCE mission. It has stepped up the number of projects it carries out in the politico-military dimension, while maintaining its activities in the human dimension, even if these activities seem to bear little fruit.

NATO plays a very limited role in Tajikistan. Tajikistan was the last Central Asian state to join the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme in 2002, and since then, only minor developments have taken place. Cooperation with Tajikistan has been hampered by practical issues, including resource shortages and insufficient English language capacities.⁵² Nevertheless, Tajikistan has shown growing interest in NATO in recent years, as demonstrated by Tajik President Emomalii Rahmon's visit to NATO Headquarters in February 2009. During the visit, he said his country was willing to expand cooperation in the fight against terrorism, border security, crisis management and civil emergency planning. Dushanbe has also expressed interest in participating in the Planning and Review Process (PARP). This

process is an exercise that most PfP members engage in with NATO in order to unify structures and enhance interoperability for possible joint peacekeeping operations. NATO is establishing a trust fund under PfP for the destruction of obsolete ammunition. And every year, NATO funds a summer academy in Tajikistan to familiarise young people with NATO.

However, overall engagement is low. Russia and Collective Treaty Security Organisation (CSTO) membership comes first for Tajikistan in the sphere of hard security cooperation. Meanwhile, cooperation with NATO on the democratic reform of the armed forces has not really taken off in Tajikistan. In many PfP countries, NATO participates in the security-development nexus by assisting and advising on the reform of armed forces to make them more effective as well as democratic. But this has so far not happened in Tajikistan.

3. Europe and the broader development landscape

3.1. Non-European donors

Donors to Tajikistan can be grouped into three blocks: Western OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members; countries that do not follow DAC guidelines; and private foundations. The first group includes mostly Western donors, who are united around a set of standards and a philosophy of development assistance. This outlook is defined, for example, in the Millennium Development Goals and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. In Tajikistan, the donors that follow the OECD-DAC model are the European donors, the U.S., Japan, multilateral financial institutions such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and UN agencies.

Among the bilateral donors in the OECD-DAC group, the U.S. is one of the largest donors to Tajikistan. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has provided aid to Tajikistan since 1993. U.S. assistance to Tajikistan has been increasing steadily, to reach a peak of \$58 million (approximately €42.5 million) in 2010. In a recent Congressional hearing, it became clear that Washington plans to double aid to Tajikistan through the Foreign Military Financing Program, while other Central Asian countries will receive the same amount as before.⁵³ This clearly indicates the importance the U.S. attaches to Tajikistan's security after the military

⁵¹ Gavrilis, *op.cit.*, p. 24.

⁵² EUCAM, 'Interview with James Appathurai, NATO Special Representative to the South Caucasus and Central Asia', *EUCAM Watch 11* (2012), http://www.eucentralasia.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Newsletters/EUCAMWatch-11.pdf.

⁵³ R. Weitz, 'Congress Reviews Central Asia (Part Two): Non-Security Issues', *Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 9:147 (2 August 2012).

drawdown in Afghanistan.

The other non-European DAC group donors are less involved in security matters in Tajikistan, and can be described as traditional development actors. Japan provides development assistance to Tajikistan through multilateral bodies and through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), which opened an office in Dushanbe in 2006.⁵⁴

The World Bank and Asian Development Bank are two leading multilateral donors to Tajikistan. Both have increasingly switched to funding programmes through grants, due to Tajikistan's foreign debt levels. As a result, concessional loans disbursements from the WB's International Development Association have sharply decreased since 2010, while grant allocations have increased.⁵⁵ The WB provides \$26 million (approximately €20 million) of budget support per year on average, while the ADB mostly finances big infrastructure projects.

The United Nations assists Tajikistan through 21 specialised agencies, programmes and funds, with over 700 staff on the ground, representing the tenth largest UN presence in the world. Of European countries, Germany, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland are major contributors to the UNDP's work in Tajikistan. The assistance given is substantial. But some other donors and civil society experts argue that UNDP is one of the least critical donors, and is often seen as being too close to the government. This is partly due to Tajikistan's direct involvement in programmes as a UN member.

The second group is represented by non-DAC donors, most importantly, Arab countries, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan and Russia. Assistance from countries that do not conform to the OECD-DAC model has increased significantly since 2001. Non-DAC donors usually provide loans rather than grants. European actors and other DAC-affiliated donors in Tajikistan tend to focus on social sectors and poverty reduction while non-DAC donors mainly support large infrastructure profit-oriented projects. It could legitimately be asked whether the aid provided by non-DAC countries can truly be called development assistance, since they mostly act as investors in productive sectors of the economy. But Tajikistan seems happy to include them in its annual foreign aid reports. Given the Tajik government's interest in infrastructure investment

without front-loaded policy-related conditions, analysts expect the influence of non-DAC assistance to increase substantially in the next few years.⁵⁶

Russia remains the most influential actor in Tajikistan, with 7,000 troops based in three locations there. Until 2005, Russia was directly involved in controlling Tajikistan's border with China and, especially, with Afghanistan. With the help of significant Western assistance, Tajikistan has since taken over border control itself. Russia still has a substantial presence in the form of advisors and trainers, but Moscow is now again seeking a more direct role in guarding the border with Afghanistan. Its official reason for wanting more involvement is its concerns about trafficking in drugs, weapons and people, which has a negative impact on Russia. Russia's economic impact on Tajikistan is considerable, due to about one million Tajik labour migrants who work in Russia and sent home remittances. According to UNDP data, in 2010, the ratio of remittances inflow to GDP in Tajikistan was 41 per cent, putting the country at the top of the list in the group of Europe including post-Soviet countries.⁵⁷ But in terms of investment, Russia is more and more lagging behind China.

Russia is slowly turning into a development assistance provider in the classical sense, with a strong interest in post-Soviet countries. In Tajikistan and elsewhere, Russia channels substantial funds through multilateral organisations, such as the World Bank and the UN. In 2009, Russia founded the Eurasian Development

Table 2. Official development assistance to Tajikistan (net disbursements), USD millions

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
All donors	148.11	253.42	251.5	241.24	222.11	288.68	408.12	429.75
DAC countries	80.45	92.13	104.98	91.9	106.18	143.36	140.26	164.5
DAC EU members	10.6	12.25	19.82	26.13	41.51	54.79	54.85	55.05
EU institutions	25.29	21.76	35.96	33.45	15.95	31.14	37.32	36.64
U.S.	47.1	47.5	56.43	43.61	34.89	59.92	40.54	45.89
Japan	4.77	6.58	9.93	8.04	9.43	8.06	26.24	43.42
IDA (World Bank)	13.43	54.97	36.69	34.61	27.58	28.53	46.42	61.36

Source: OECD

⁵⁶ R. Aminjanov et al., 'Case Study on Aid Effectiveness in Tajikistan', Wolfensohn Centre for Development at Brookings Working Paper 13, 2009, p. 20.

⁵⁷ UNDP Office of the Senior Economist, 'Recent trends in remittances and migration flows in Europe and Central Asia: The best protection against economic crisis?', <http://europeandcis.undp.org/senioreconomist/show/065515FB-F203-1EE9-B5511CA5A95279B7>.

⁵⁴ JICA, *For a better tomorrow for all. Tajikistan brochure*, 2010.

⁵⁵ State Committee on Investments and State Property Management of the Republic of Tajikistan, *Foreign Aid Report-2010*, p. 25.

Bank (EDB) together with Kazakhstan to foster economic growth and regional integration. At the G8 summit in May 2012, Russian Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev announced the establishment of a Russian agency for international development along the lines of 'Western' practice.

China provides security assistance to Tajikistan through the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and bilateral agreements, by carrying out border management support and joint anti-terrorist exercises.⁵⁸ But the bulk of Chinese involvement in the country is based on investments and loans. Since 2007, Chinese foreign aid to Tajikistan has increased dramatically, mainly on the back of loans provided by the Export-Import Bank of China. China has become Tajikistan's largest creditor. China prefers to invest in strategic infrastructure such as energy, transport, mining and communications.⁵⁹ However, it is difficult to assess Chinese investment in Tajikistan, since little information is available on the subject.

Iran is a unique actor in Tajikistan since it is not one of the emerging donors, but is an important donor in Tajikistan due to the two countries' special relationship based on historic and linguistic links. Iran was the first country to recognise the independence of Tajikistan. However, until a few years ago, cooperation between Tehran and Dushanbe was not very intensive. Priority areas for cooperation between Tajikistan and Iran are energy, transport, water supply, road construction, trade and culture. Tehran also provides assistance in procuring military equipment and ammunition, as well as supplying training for Tajikistan's armed forces.

Rivals India and Pakistan are trying to increase their presence in Central Asia with regard to energy, geo-strategic and security interests. However, they are minor actors in Tajikistan. Pakistan especially is viewed with caution in Central Asia, because of the region's fears of radical Islam. Between 2001 and 2002, India used the Farkhor airfield facility as a hospital for anti-Taliban Afghan Northern Alliance fighters and a conduit for military equipment, munitions and intelligence.⁶⁰ But India prefers not to re-establish a military presence in the country. It has abandoned an

air base it renovated in Ayni near Dushanbe.⁶¹

Arab donors are mainly represented by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. Arab aid is distinguished from the DAC model by its focus on Arab countries and Islamic communities. The Islamic Development Bank (IDB), one of the largest Arab donor agencies, mainly lends to its member states, the members of the Organisation of Islamic Conference, and to Islamic communities in non-member states. Its lending is carried out in accordance with Sharia law, which prohibits the collection of interest on financial transactions. In Tajikistan, IDB provides concessional loans for investment projects in health, education, road infrastructure, energy and the agricultural sector. Several Arab funds lend to projects for the rehabilitation and construction of roads, hospitals, energy infrastructure, and for the construction and equipping of secondary schools, water supply and sewage systems.⁶² In contrast with most other non-DAC donors, Arab donors require a competitive bidding process, which allows local suppliers and contractors to implement projects.⁶³

The third group of donors is made up of private foundations and charities. The most active players are the Open Society Foundation (OSF), which focuses particularly on civil society development and democratisation, and the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). The AKDN is the largest private development partner to Tajikistan, providing well over half of all private aid flows. The AKDN started its operations in Tajikistan in 1993 in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBO), where people follow the Ismaili faith, a branch of Shiite Islam whose religious leader is the Agha Khan. But the network has expanded its activities to other regions of Tajikistan as well, and it maintains good relations with the government. The AKDN is not involved in security matters and mostly pursues purely development objectives, which are not seen as a threat by the government and are only rarely considered to represent interference in Tajik internal matters. The AKDN is especially known for constructing bridges and energy facilities in GBO, as well as for the Central Asia University that is building a new campus in GBO's capital Khorog. It also implements

⁵⁸ K. Rakhimov. 'Tadzhiksko-kitayskoye sotrudnichestvo v ramkakh ShOS. Chast' vtoraya', *Vremya Vostoka*, 2 September 2010, <http://www.easttime.ru/analitic/1/10/857.html>.

⁵⁹ Y. Korniyenko and T. Sakatsume, 'Chinese investment in the transition countries', European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Working Paper 107, 2009, <http://www.ebrd.com/downloads/research/economics/workingpapers/wp0107.pdf>.

⁶⁰ S. Ramachandran, 'India's foray into Central Asia', *Asia Times*, 12 August 2006, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/HH12Df01.html.

⁶¹ J. Kucera, 'Central Asia: Explaining India's Low Regional Profile', *EurasiaNet*, 2 December 2011, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/64625>.

⁶² The Saudi Fund for Development, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, the OPEC Fund for International Development and the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development.

⁶³ J. Walz and V. Ramachandran, 'Brave New World. A Literature Review of Emerging Donors and the Changing Nature of Foreign Assistance', Centre for Global Development Working Paper 273, 2010, p. 13.

micro-credit schemes that help small businesses and farmers.⁶⁴

3.2. Coordination, conditionality and leverage

Most Western donors think that coordination of assistance to Tajikistan is fairly effective, although this mostly applies to donors from the DAC group, who have come together in a Development Coordination Council. Non-DAC donors such as China, Iran, Kazakhstan and Russia have been invited to take part, but they only rarely show up to observe. In China's case, its reluctance to participate is in part because it does not see its investments and loans as pure development aid. The Asian Development Bank has taken the lead in overall coordination. Different donors have taken on five clusters, and each of the clusters consists of two or three working groups, also headed by one or two donors.⁶⁵ Some groups are more active than others. Support for border management is excluded from the structure. The work is guided by a National Development Strategy (2006-15) and Poverty Reduction Strategy (2010-12), which are Tajik government documents drafted with help from donors, along with a Joint Country Partnership strategy (2010-12) developed by the major donors. Development forums including most donors and Tajik representatives are organised almost annually. However, these forums have had limited results. Donors want to engage in critical debates and result-oriented discussions, but the Tajik side prefers to conduct a short high-level event and then move on to 'business as usual'.

Several Western donors complain that leverage over the Tajik government is limited and that aid conditionality is weak. Little progress has been seen on governance reform and efficiency, so most donors prefer to not grant budget support. Some donor representatives say that the lack of leverage derives from three problems that lie in the donors' method of operating and in perceptions of Tajikistan. Firstly, donors are constrained by bureaucratic habits. If funds have been allocated, they prefer to use them,

even if Tajik reporting procedures are not up to standard and only limited improvement has been observed. Unspent funding is a bureaucratic hassle that could result in lower budgets in the future.

Secondly, donors are concerned about the stability of Tajikistan. They prefer to engage positively with Tajik authorities rather than criticising and punishing underperformance. To some extent, this has a corrupting effect, since donors support the government in the hope of avoiding social unrest. Donors also shy away from criticising the Tajik government for its projects such as building the highest flagpole in the world and an enormous national library (without books), even though they govern one of the poorest countries in the world.

Finally, donors fear that Tajikistan might attempt to seek greater Chinese and, to a lesser extent, Russian and Iranian involvement in Tajikistan. The Tajik government hints that the Chinese are willing to invest more, which would push Western donors 'out of the market'. The activities of non-DAC donors, and especially China, are expanding but it seems unlikely that this is fully down to the Tajik demand for diversified aid. Some experts believe that Tajikistan's government is concerned with rising Chinese influence, even as it considers a balance between foreign influences to be essential to stability.

Most non-European actors address both security and development. This is especially true for the three most influential countries: China, Russia and the U.S. In Washington's view, the security of Afghanistan is interlinked with the stability, security and economic development of the broader region. The New Silk Road initiative is seen as promoting a more secure Afghanistan through cross-border trade and investment. Despite the fact that the U.S. is revising its development assistance worldwide, Tajikistan remains among its priorities because of its link with Afghanistan.⁶⁶ Russia's focus in Tajikistan has always been on security. More recently, its aid to Tajikistan is connected to the Tajik membership in political and economic post-Soviet integration projects led by Moscow. China is also interested in both security and the economic development of Tajikistan. But like Russia, it seems to have a different understanding of the nature of development cooperation and how it should be promoted, and it acts mainly through loans,

⁶⁴ Also see J. Boonstra, 'Go Gorno Badakhshan', EUCAM Commentary 19, October 2011, http://www.eucentralasia.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Commentaries/Commentary_19.pdf.

⁶⁵ The five clusters are: (i) natural resources (FAO/UNDP), consisting of working groups on agriculture and land, water and environment; (ii) infrastructure (ADB), with working groups on energy and transport plus a sub working group on food security; (iii) human development (EU), with working groups on health, education and social protection; (iv) governance and public sector development (SCO/UNDP), with working groups on governance, public sector development and civil society; and (v) economic and private sector development (WB), with working groups on private sector development and macroeconomic issues.

⁶⁶ The amount of planned U.S. assistance to Tajikistan will nevertheless decrease in 2013 to \$37.4 million, as compared to \$45 million planned for 2012.

investments and trade.⁶⁷

The three big powers in the region link security and development. However, the understanding of what constitutes security and development is different from actor to actor. So, their approaches are also divergent. In that way, Chinese, Russian and U.S. approaches differ as much from each other as they do from European approaches to the security-development nexus.

Conclusion

The influx of international assistance to Tajikistan after 2001, including that provided by European donors, suggests that there is a link between security concerns and development objectives in the country. The number of European donors is relatively small and the continent is principally represented by the EU, Germany, the UK and Switzerland. Other European countries deliver support through their contributions to the EU, the OSCE and UN institutions, as well as through some bilateral projects. Europe has little security presence or programming in Central Asia and Tajikistan. But it is increasingly concerned with possible spillover effects from Afghanistan after 2014, when the bulk of NATO troops is set to have withdrawn. In the case of Tajikistan, this concern is largely translated into support for strengthening and reforming Tajik border control.

The EU's BOMCA programme is often heralded as a success, and indeed, it is an achievement to have gained the participation of all the Central Asian states. The Afghanistan-Tajikistan border is today the border of most concern for BOMCA. Support for border control has, however, not yet proven its value through increased drug seizures, high-level arrests of drug traders or mapping of cross-border links between radical Islamists. Neither has support for border management spurred increased trade levels in the border regions, nor has it improved social conditions. One underlying reason for the meagre results of BOMCA and other border programmes is that Tajik authorities seek short-term benefits in the form of equipment and refuse to think in terms of training and long-term planning. But the largest underlying problems are corruption and government elites who are said to be implicated in the drug trade. Even a fully efficient border control service would be helpless against directives from the top that order shipments to

pass without hindrance. Border control assistance to Tajikistan needs to be rethought. Because more direct European involvement through funding or actually itself monitoring the border is not on the cards, it makes sense to focus more on the social and trade aspects of borders and less on providing equipment and infrastructure.

Most correspondents interviewed for this paper praised donor coordination in Tajikistan. The main sectors are coordinated through working groups and (at least) Western OECD-DAC donors meet and plan together regularly. There is less enthusiasm among experts and commentators about the donor-recipient relationship and about ways of transferring assistance. Western donors often complain they have little leverage that could help encourage Tajikistan to actually perform on reform. The argument goes that if European donors were to make strict demands and place consequences on poor results, Tajikistan would come under the sway of Russia and, even more, of China. This is doubtful, since the Tajik economy and budget to a large degree rely on development assistance, of which Western donors still provide the largest chunk.⁶⁸ Moreover, Tajikistan is not about to abandon its open door policy and will continue to seek as many friends as possible. This makes it unlikely that European donors would be shown the door if they increased demands on implementing reforms. Of course, the change cannot be made from one day to the next. But a start should be made by European donors uniting against corruption, since it seriously undermines the effectiveness of delivery of aid.

The EU is one of the few donors that offers sector budget support. This practice seeks to increase capacity on the Tajik side and build a stronger practical working relationship between Tajik and European bureaucracies. It also makes it less staff-intensive for the EU to disperse its development budget. The practice has pro and cons and should be continuously assessed and monitored by the EU. Critics have a point when they worry that Tajikistan's high level of corruption could affect the use of funds. Most donors abstain from sector support for this reason. They also argue that it lacks transparency, on the part of Tajikistan reporting to the donor, and also on the part of donors who need to justify aid spending to the taxpayer.

In general, concrete projects are welcomed, both by

⁶⁷ S. Peyrouse, J. Boonstra and M. Laruelle, 'Security and development in Central Asia. The EU compared to China and Russia', EUCAM Working Paper 11, May 2012, http://www.eucentralasia.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Working_Papers/WP11.pdf.

⁶⁸ Official development assistance to Tajikistan has grown from \$123 million in 2000 to \$400 million in 2009. It makes up about 8 per cent of the country's GDP (\$5 billion in 2009) and a quarter of the state's budget (about \$1.5 billion in 2009).

Tajikistan's population and also by the government. A frequently heard complaint in Tajikistan is that people are informed about the amounts allocated on paper but see little in practice. Alongside low European visibility, both civil society and government representatives argue that too much European money goes to Western consultants who produce reports that have no significance for Tajikistan's development and probably little impact in Europe. Civil society representatives also complain that sector budget support and large projects where funding flows to the government do not make sense because of resistance to reform and widespread corruption. Concrete projects are needed, which should be implemented by professional organisations in cooperation with Tajiks, to build schools, community centres, infrastructure and so on. European donors cannot change their mechanisms for delivering funds overnight. But the balance should be reconsidered between, on the one hand, funding government through sector budget support and, on the other, supporting technical projects and concrete projects involving civil society.

Clearly, Europe does development and thinks security. Clarification about Europe's intentions would be welcome. Often, European donors are unsure of the reasons for their presence in Tajikistan. Are they there because Tajikistan is a development country or because of specific security imperatives attached to the country? The current argument regarding possible threats from Afghanistan is not the right basis for a security-development nexus in Tajikistan. These threats seem to be less urgent than home-grown threats and they largely serve the Tajik government in its efforts to avoid real reform. Europe's security-development nexus should be described differently, focusing on internal threats to security, which often have a governance, social or economic background. The EU's presence could gain more purpose with a new and stronger narrative about what Europe sees as security threats and what aspects of development aid could help remedy them. This narrative could be used to set clearer objectives. It would spur a more realistic debate with Tajik authorities about reform and security threats, and ensure that genuine security projects, such as those on border control, incorporate sufficient development aspects.

Europe is different from other large donors, especially China, Russia and the U.S. It plays less of a hard security role and focuses mostly on development goals. Europe has become a small but relevant actor in the game of external influence in Central Asia, and this holds true for Tajikistan as well. Its activities are

not undertaken because of potential large economic benefits or rivalry with other geo-political actors, but instead because of security concerns and development objectives. Europe can make a difference in Tajikistan. But it will have to play to its strengths by making development policy more effective and outlining concrete and realistic security objectives.



Established in 2008 as a project seeking to monitor the implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia, EUCAM has grown into a knowledge hub on broader Europe-Central Asia relations. Specifically, the project aims to:

- Scrutinise European policies towards Central Asia, paying specific attention to security, development and the promotion of democratic values within the context of Central Asia's position in world politics;
- Enhance knowledge of Europe's engagement with Central Asia through top-quality research and by raising awareness among European policy-makers and civil society representatives, as well as discuss European policies among Central Asian communities;
- Expand the network of experts and institutions from European countries and Central Asian states and provide a forum to debate on European-Central Asian relations.

Currently, the broader programme is coordinated by FRIDE, in partnership with the Karelian Institute and CEPS, with the support of the Open Society Foundations and the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The main outputs of the programme are a series of policy briefs and comprehensive reports on key issues facing the Europe-Central Asia relationship.

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