

International Politics:  
Perspectives from Philosophy and Political Science

2

Steve Schlegel

# International Organizations and State Failure Prevention

The Dilemma of the OSCE Operations in Kyrgyzstan  
and Tajikistan 1998–2017



**Nomos**

International Politics:  
Perspectives from Philosophy and Political Science

edited by

Prof. Dr. Christian Neuhäuser, TU Dortmund University  
Prof. Dr. Christoph Schuck, TU Dortmund University

Volume 2

Steve Schlegel

# International Organizations and State Failure Prevention

The Dilemma of the OSCE Operations in Kyrgyzstan  
and Tajikistan 1998–2017



**Nomos**

**Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek** lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data is available on the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>

a.t.: Dortmund, Technische Univ., Fakultät Humanwissenschaften und Theologie, Diss., 2018

Original title: "Field Operations as a Tool for Structural Conflict Prevention in Weak States. The Cases of the OSCE Operations in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan 1998–2017"

ISBN 978-3-8487-5612-4 (Print)  
978-3-8452-9787-3 (ePDF)

#### **British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data**

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-3-8487-5612-4 (Print)  
978-3-8452-9787-3 (ePDF)

#### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Schlegel, Steve

International Organizations and State Failure Prevention

The Dilemma of the OSCE Operations in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan 1998–2017

Steve Schlegel

369 p.

Includes bibliographic references.

ISBN 978-3-8487-5612-4 (Print)  
978-3-8452-9787-3 (ePDF)

1st Edition 2019

© Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden, Germany 2019. Printed and bound in Germany.

This work is subject to copyright. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publishers. Under § 54 of the German Copyright Law where copies are made for other than private use a fee is payable to "Verwertungsgesellschaft Wort", Munich.

No responsibility for loss caused to any individual or organization acting on or refraining from action as a result of the material in this publication can be accepted by Nomos or the author.

## Acknowledgments

This work is an updated version of the original dissertation “Field operations as a tool for structural conflict prevention in weak states. The cases of the OSCE operations in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan 1998-2017,” submitted to the Faculty of Human Sciences and Theology at the Technical University of Dortmund, Germany. This work would not have been possible without the substantial support of several people and institutions. First of all, I would like to thank my primary supervisor Prof. Dr. Christoph Schuck as well as the whole team of the Department of Philosophy and Political Science at the Technical University of Dortmund for their constant support of this work, useful comments, and general advice. Furthermore, I would like to express special thanks to Prof. Dr. Reimund Seidelmann and Prof. Dr. Udo Vorholt for their support, comments, and recommendations. Next, I would like to thank the Volkswagen Foundation for its generous funding of two Central Asia projects in the course of which this work has been created and without which this would not have been possible. I would also like to thank the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, the OSCE Office in Tajikistan, the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna, the Library of the Centre for OSCE Research in Hamburg, the United Nations Geospatial Information Section, and especially the OSCE Documentation Centre in Prague (formerly Research and Documentation Centre) for their support of my work – above all, my time as a researcher-in-residence in Prague proved invaluable. Special thanks go to Farhod Atamatov, Pál Dunay, Alice Nemcova, Jenniver Sehring, and Arne Seifert for their support of my research. This work would also not have been possible without the support of several former OSCE mission members of both the mission in Kyrgyzstan and the one in Tajikistan as well as national experts. While most of them preferred anonymity and quotations in this work usually refer to open sources, the information provided by them was of invaluable help to prevent misinterpretation of open-source documents. The publication of this work would not have been possible without the excellent proofreading by Carol Oberschmidt, layout by Rika Althoff, and editorial support by Beate Bernstein and Nina Katharina Hauer. Finally, I would like to give special thanks to Julia Dumin for her comments, proofreading, and support of this research. Any remaining mistakes are of course mine alone.

Dortmund, January 2019

Steve Schlegel



## Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	5
List of Abbreviations	11
List of Figures	13
1. Introduction: <i>Weak States</i> as a Challenge for International Security	15
2. Research Design	21
2.1 The methodological paradox of researching conflict prevention	21
2.2 Method selection	24
2.3 Case selection	30
2.4 A note on data availability and data collection	39
3. Theorizing Fragile Statehood	41
3.1 The state as a level of analysis	41
3.2 A typology of definitions of fragile statehood	46
3.3 The three dilemmas of a <i>weak state</i>	57
3.3.1 The Internal Security Dilemma	58
3.3.2 The State Leader's Dilemma	61
3.3.3 The Liberalization Dilemma	68
3.4 Combining the three dilemmas with Schneckener's model of fragile statehood	73
3.4.1 Security function	74
3.4.2 Welfare function	79
3.4.3 Legitimacy/rule-of-law function	85
3.5 Conditions of aggregation of <i>weak states</i>	88
3.5.1 Status quo	88
3.5.2 Breaking points and transitions	89
3.5.3 Downward spiral	91
3.5.4 Upward spiral	93
3.6 Interim conclusion: Theorizing fragile statehood via cumulative theory building – potential points of criticism	95

## Table of Contents

4. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan within the Model of <i>Weak States</i>	97
4.1 Kyrgyzstan	97
4.1.1 Overview and time frame of investigation	97
4.1.2 The three dilemmas of weak statehood in Kyrgyzstan	101
4.1.2.1 Internal Security Dilemma	102
4.1.2.2 State Leader's Dilemma	108
4.1.2.3 Liberalization Dilemma	125
4.1.3 Consequences for the three state functions	136
4.1.3.1 Security function	137
4.1.3.2 Welfare function	143
4.1.3.3 Legitimacy/rule-of-law function	152
4.1.4 Interim conclusion: Kyrgyzstan as a <i>weak state</i>	155
4.2 Tajikistan	156
4.2.1 Overview and time frame of investigation	156
4.2.2 The three dilemmas of weak statehood in Tajikistan	165
4.2.2.1 Internal Security Dilemma	165
4.2.2.2 State Leader's Dilemma	182
4.2.2.3 Liberalization Dilemma	193
4.2.3 Consequences for the three state functions	202
4.2.3.1 Security function	202
4.2.3.2 Welfare function	209
4.2.3.3 Legitimacy/rule-of-law function	216
4.2.4 Interim conclusion: Tajikistan as a <i>weak state</i>	219
5. The OSCE Operations in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan	221
5.1 The OSCE's role in Central Asia: A general overview	221
5.2 The OSCE operation in Kyrgyzstan	228
5.2.1 Mandate and operation development	228
5.2.2 Activities within the three functions	232
5.2.2.1 Security function	232
5.2.2.2 Welfare function	248
5.2.2.3 Legitimacy/rule-of-law function	256
5.2.3 Interim conclusion: Possibilities and limitations of the OSCE in Kyrgyzstan	272
5.3 The OSCE operation in Tajikistan	276
5.3.1 Mandate and operation development	276
5.3.2 Activities within the three functions	279
5.3.2.1 Security function	279
5.3.2.2 Welfare function	290
5.3.2.3 Legitimacy/rule-of-law function	298



5.3.3 Interim conclusion: Possibilities and limitations of the OSCE in Tajikistan	307
6. Field Operations as a Means of Structural Conflict Prevention: Generalizing the Findings	311
6.1 Differentiating causes and symptoms	311
6.2 Options and limitations of field operations	314
6.2.1 Security function: Preventing the worst	314
6.2.2 Welfare function: Necessity despite being ineffective	316
6.2.3 Legitimacy/rule-of-law function: Rebuilding lost trust and mediating crucial cases	318
6.3 Resulting dilemmas: Unwanted interference or becoming part of the game	320
7. Conclusion and Outlook	325
Bibliography	329
Appendix: Cartographic material of the region	367



## List of Abbreviations

ATS	Austrian schilling
BTI	Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index
CA	Central Asia
CALO	Central Asia Liaison Office (of the OSCE)
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
CPC	Conflict Prevention Centre (of the OSCE)
CSCE	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
CSI	Community Security Initiative
DPT	Democratic Party of Tajikistan
ECA	Europe and Central Asia
EU	European Union
EULEX Kosovo	European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo
FSI	Failed State Index/Fragile State Index (renamed in 2014)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GKNB	Государственный комитет национальной безопасности (State Committee of National Security; official acronym of the Kyrgyz Secret Service)
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IJU	Islamic Jihad Union
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRPT	Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
IWPR	Institute for War and Peace Reporting
KGB	Комитет государственной безопасности (Committee for State Security, official acronym of the Soviet Secret Service)
MoI	Ministry of the Interior
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NBT	National Bank of Tajikistan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCEEA	Office of the Co-ordinator of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

### *List of Abbreviations*

ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (of the OSCE)
OMON	Отряд милиции Особого Назначения (Special Purpose Police Unit; used in most post-Soviet States)
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PDPT	People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan
SCNS	State Committee of National Security (Official acronym of the Tajik Secret Service)
SNB	Служба национальной безопасности (National Security Service; official acronym of the Kyrgyz Secret Service under Bakiev; later renamed GKNB)
SPMU	Strategic Police Matters Unit (of the OSCE Secretariat)
TALCO	Tajik Aluminum Company
TSARII	Центральное агентство развития, инвестиций и инноваций (Central Agency for Development, Investment and Innovation in Kyrgyzstan under Bakiev)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDPA	United Nations Department of Political Affairs
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo
UNMOT	United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNTOP	United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peace Building
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USCIRF	United States Commission on International Religious Freedom
USD	United States Dollar
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UTO	United Tajik Opposition

## List of Figures

Figure 1:	Typology of conflict prevention	23
Figure 2:	List of preventive comprehensive political field mission	33
Figure 3:	Criteria for fragile states according to Brock et al. 2012, p. 18	50
Figure 4:	Typology of definitions of fragile states	53
Figure 5:	Continuum of fragile states according to Schneckener 2006, p. 26; author's own adjustments	56
Figure 6:	Core dilemmas of weak statehood without symptomatic factors	74
Figure 7:	Symptomatic factors of the <i>security</i> function	78
Figure 8:	Symptomatic factors of the <i>security</i> and <i>welfare</i> functions	84
Figure 9:	Symptomatic factors of the <i>security</i> , <i>welfare</i> and <i>legitimacy/</i> <i>rule-of-law</i> function	87
Figure 10:	Breaking points and transitions between the dilemmas of a <i>weak state</i>	91
Figure 11:	Authorized international staff of OSCE field operations in Central Asia 1998-2017	225
Figure 12:	Official budget of OSCE activities in Central Asia 1998-2017	226
Figure 13:	The OSCE's ability to tackle symptomatic factors in the <i>security</i> function of Kyrgyzstan	248
Figure 14:	The OSCE's ability to tackle symptomatic factors in the <i>welfare</i> function of Kyrgyzstan	255
Figure 15:	The OSCE's ability to tackle symptomatic factors in the <i>legitimacy/rule-of-law</i> function of Kyrgyzstan	272
Figure 16:	The OSCE's ability to tackle symptomatic factors of weak statehood in Kyrgyzstan	274
Figure 17:	The OSCE's ability to tackle symptomatic factors in the <i>security</i> function of Tajikistan	290
Figure 18:	The OSCE's ability to tackle symptomatic factors in the <i>welfare</i> function of Tajikistan	297
Figure 19:	The OSCE's ability to tackle symptomatic factors in the <i>legitimacy/rule-of-law</i> function of Tajikistan	307
Figure 20:	The OSCE's ability to tackle symptomatic factors of weak statehood in Tajikistan	309
Figure 21:	Map of Central Asia	367
Figure 22:	Map of Kyrgyzstan	368
Figure 23:	Map of Tajikistan	369



## 1. Introduction: *Weak States* as a Challenge for International Security

While *weak*, *failing*, and *failed states* can by no means be considered new phenomena in world politics – in fact they have existed since the emergence of the modern state – they did not become a focal area of research or of politics until the end of the Cold War.<sup>1</sup> The consequences of state failures like the humanitarian catastrophes in Somalia, Ruanda, and the former Yugoslavia forced fragile states into the public debate. After the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the perspective changed once again.<sup>2</sup> After that, the so-called *failed states* have not only been seen as locations of regrettable, but in the end negligible human suffering, but also as “threats to global security and well-being, from transnational terrorism to international crime, humanitarian catastrophes, regional instability, global pandemics, mass migration and environmental degradation.”<sup>3</sup>

By now, there is almost no national or multinational security strategy that forgoes defining *failed states* as a security risk.<sup>4</sup> During the last 20 years, several external interventions into *failed states* occurred. However, according to Brock et al., “there is no evidence that international society has the capacity (within a meaningful time frame) to make fragile states strong, viable and capable of serving their populations. The resulting hesitant engagement is fraught with problems. As we have seen in the unhappy cases of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan and Haiti, even decades-long, expensive interventions may not lead to stronger and more viable states and may at times do even more harm than good.”<sup>5</sup> The

---

1 For notable exceptions see e.g. Jackson/Rosberg 1982. / Migdal 1988.

2 Cf. Fukuyama 2004a, p. X/XI. / Anderson 2004, p. 2.

3 Patrick 2006, p. 3. / for a similar argument cf. Milliken/Krause 2003, p. 12. / UN 2004, para. 19-23. / Fukuyama 2004a, pp. 92/93. / Suhrke 2015, p. 555.

4 Cf. Auswärtiges Amt 2004, p. 5. / Auswärtiges Amt/Bundesministerium der Verteidigung/Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung 2012, p. 2. / European Union 2003, p. 4./ United Nations, General Assembly Resolution A/59/2005, para. 19. / United States of America, Executive Office of the President 2015, p. 1. / European Union 2016, p. 28.

5 Brock et.al. 2012, p. 162. / see also: Klare 2004, p. 117. / Chauvet/Collier 2008, p. 345. / Suhrke 2015, p. 555.

authors conclude that “[...] interventions themselves most often enhance fragility, prevent normal political developments and at best threaten and at worst destroy the trust and institution building required to address problems of fragility.”<sup>6</sup>

In the light of such failing interventions into ongoing conflicts, the former president of the World Bank, Robert Zoellick, consequently argues in favor of supporting fragile states to prevent them from failing in the first place: “Today, post-conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts have received the bulk of development assistance. This is understandable. It is hard to get donors to pay attention to something that has not yet happened. But conflict *prevention* must be a better way to ensure stability and peace than picking up the pieces after conflict has destroyed societies, institutions and lives.”<sup>7</sup>

Yet, such an approach would need an elaborate understanding of the root causes of state failure, going beyond the collection of unconnected data. One of the first persons to foresee the state failure debate,<sup>8</sup> the journalist Robert Kaplan, acknowledged: “In 1994, immediately after this article [= “The coming anarchy”, St.Sch.] was published, I began a journey by land – roughly speaking – from Egypt to Cambodia: through the Near East, Central Asia, the Indian sub-continent, and Southeast Asia. [...] By the time I reached Cambodia, I realized that while I could still identify the destructive powers that I had seen in Africa, I understood their root causes less than I thought I did.”<sup>9</sup> However, while the lack of understanding for root causes admitted by the journalist Kaplan in 1996 is excusable, the academics Milliken/Krause, Carment/Prest/Samy as well as Brock et al. still criticize the current lack of theoretical cohesion between the respective academic studies – even though fragile statehood has by now become a focal area of research more than one decade later.<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, while research on post-conflict peacebuilding in *failed states* remains a growing academic field, the topic of how to prevent *weak states* from failing remains under-researched, with only a few notable ex-

---

6 Brock et.al. 2012, p. 136.

7 Zoellick 2008/09, pp. 71/72, italics in the original version.

8 See Kaplan 2001 [1994].

9 Cf. Kaplan 1996, p. 9.

10 Cf. Milliken/Krause 2003, p. 13. / Carment/Prest/Samy 2010, p.1. / Brock et. al. 2012, p. 14.



ceptions taking on this specific perspective.<sup>11</sup> Using these observations as starting points, this work aims to contribute to theory building in the field of fragile statehood, especially in the field of conflict prevention. Therefore, it will be based upon a qualitative model developed by Rotberg and later refined by Schneckener, which has been largely ignored by a professional world relying mainly on quantitative analyses.<sup>12</sup> One of the core points of this model, which will be discussed in detail later, is the differentiation of fragile states into *weak*, *failing*, and *failed states*.

*Weak states* can be described as overall stable states for which becoming a *failing state* is a realistic worst-case scenario. The aim of this work is to examine which options and limitations external actors have when attempting to support such *weak states*. To achieve this aim, the work of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in the Central Asian (CA) states Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan will be analyzed using the method of focused, structured comparison by George/Bennett. There are three reasons for using these cases for analysis:

1. The former poorhouses of the Soviet Union, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, can be seen as ideal types of so-called *weak states*, as will be shown in Chapter 4.
2. By comparing the three dimensions of fragile statehood with the three dimensions of the OSCE's work, a striking congruency can be identified at least on the conceptual level. Thus, even though the OSCE is one of the most under-researched international organizations, it has the potential to address all dimensions of fragile statehood.
3. Field missions of international organizations aiming to stabilize so-called *weak states* are a relatively new phenomenon in world politics. Such engagement of international organizations is in most cases either not comprehensive enough to be considered a "field mission" or deployed re-actively, after a *weak state* has spiraled into a *failing state*. The OSCE's field missions in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan can currently

---

11 Cf. Schneckener 2006, p. 16. / A similar approach is suggested, but not implemented by Carment and Risse/Leibfried; cf. Carment 2004, p. 145; Risse/Leibfried 2011, p. 269.

12 See Chapter 3.2.

be considered the longest ongoing comprehensive and preventive operations in the world.

Thus, while this work is based on a two-case comparison, which limits the empirical transferability to other cases, it can be seen as a first step to opening up the under-researched field of structural prevention of state failure. On the one hand, political practitioners are often faced with the need for decisions without having a theoretical base. As UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon said, “[p]olicy, however, cannot wait until the knowledge base is perfected.”<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, Menkhaus describes the stabilization of fragile states as a so-called “wicked problem,” meaning that “[e]very solution to a wicked problem is a ‘one-shot operation’ – that is, there is no opportunity to learn by trial and error [...]”<sup>14</sup> However, if it is impossible to learn by trial and error within the attempt to stabilize a fragile state while that fragile state at the same time remains a threat to international security, it is paramount to come to a more systematic understanding of fragile statehood by learning from a variety of cases. Combining both observations with the mixed record of post-conflict peacebuilding as well as imminent crisis reaction to *failing* or *failed states* (e.g. Afghanistan, DR Congo, Mali, Libya, Ukraine), the shift of focus towards *weak states* becomes understandable.

### *Scope and hypotheses of this work*

This study aims to contribute to theory building in the field of fragile statehood theory to increase our knowledge on how state failure can be prevented in the first place as well as to examine the options and limitations of external support for such *weak states*. To achieve this, it will incorporate both a conceptual as well as an empirical level of analysis. In order to make a structured approach towards these levels of analysis possible, four hypotheses have been formulated, which will be tested in the course of this study:

1. If the central dilemmas of weak statehood exist, the symptomatic factors of weak statehood can also be identified. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are both *weak states* in the sense of the model developed in this work.

---

13 United Nations, General Assembly Resolution A/63/677, para. 44.

14 Menkhaus 2010, p. 86.

2. If a state is a *weak state* in the sense of the developed model, neither the central dilemmas of a *weak state* nor the symptomatic factors derived directly from these dilemmas can be influenced by the OSCE.
3. However, the type of the *weak state's* core dilemma does make a difference. If the state's weakness mainly derives from the State Leader's Dilemma, the OSCE can even less influence symptomatic factors than in a state where the state's weakness derives from the Liberalization Dilemma.
4. As the OSCE cannot access the core dilemmas of weak statehood, the mission itself falls into a dilemma: In order to at least be able to prevent a *weak state* from becoming a *failing state*, it must stay in the country for as long as possible. In turn, to stay in the country for as long as possible, it has to forgo fostering reforms that are against the interest of the host government, consequently rendering the OSCE unable to contribute to the development of the *weak state* in question towards a *consolidated state*.

Based upon these hypotheses, the structure of the following study has been developed:

Chapter 2 will outline the research design of this study, including a discussion of emerging problems when researching conflict prevention. Furthermore, it will elaborate on why the method of focused, structured comparison was chosen instead of other methods and finally, it will give a more detailed explanation of the case selection.

Chapter 3 will then clarify the spectrum of fragile statehood, including a clear definition of how to distinguish *consolidated*, *weak*, *failing*, and *failed states*. Furthermore, the model of state functions borrowed from Schneckener and Rotberg will be refined by combining it with the concept of the Internal Security Dilemma described by Job, the State Leader's Dilemma described by Migdal, and the Liberalization Dilemma described by Paris. This way, the interconnectedness of these functions as well as the dynamics between them can be modeled. In the end, the possible transformation of a *weak state* into a *consolidated* or *failing state* by a so-called upward or downward spiral of state stability will be discussed.

Chapter 4 will provide a detailed analysis and classification of the states Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, applying the model developed in Chapter 3, therefore testing hypothesis 1.

*1. Introduction: Weak States as a Challenge for International Security*

Chapter 5 then will take this analysis as a starting point and shift the focus of analysis on the work of the OSCE's field mission in both countries, hereby testing hypothesis 2 and 3.

Chapter 6 will draw conclusions from the previous chapters and hence will evaluate hypothesis 4.

In conclusion, Chapter 7 will provide an outlook both towards further possible research steps as well as implications for policy makers based on the findings of this study.

## 2. Research Design

Before the theoretical framework for this work is introduced, several considerations regarding the research design of this study need to be discussed to clarify its scope and limitations. These considerations include the methodological paradox of researching issues of *prevention*, the method selection followed by the selection of cases as well as a note on data collection. Afterwards, Chapter 3 will deal with the actual development of the theoretical model used in this study and with the operationalization of this model.

### *2.1 The methodological paradox of researching conflict prevention*

As the explicit aim of this study is to contribute to the field of conflict prevention by analyzing the prevention of state failure, it has to be noted first that researching questions of prevention is met with a fundamental paradox: It is impossible to find empirical proof that the non-occurrence of violent conflict is the direct result of successful conflict prevention.<sup>15</sup> Could it not also be that the conflict at hand was less likely to escalate than other conflicts in the first place? Or that the preventive measures taken by outside actors contributed to de-escalation, but the crucial efforts were made by the conflict parties themselves, making it impossible to precisely evaluate the “success” of the preventive measures? Of course, it is also possible that preventive action really did prevent a violent conflict, but in this case successful prevention at the same time destroys any proof of its success as the prevented conflict never occurred.<sup>16</sup> In such cases, a counterfactual analysis is impossible; contrary e.g. to chemical experiments, in the course of which a certain reaction can be repeated over and over while adding or not adding specific reagents. Thus, any study aiming to contribute to conflict prevention research has to find a way of dealing with this paradox.

---

15 Cf. Lund 1998, p. 58. / Guilmette 1998 (online publication). / Ramsbotham/Woodhouse/Miall 2014, p. 144.

16 Cf. Lund 1998, p. 53. / Guilmette 1998 (online publication).

## 2. Research Design

To complicate matters even more, prevention itself has to be considered an extremely broad study field with various possible starting points, methods, and time frames, as illustrated by Lund's fire prevention analogy: "Fire prevention methods differ in their strategies toward the problem, such as enforcing fire codes on house builders, requiring fire-proof materials, educating home dwellers to install fire alarms, speeding up fire engine response times, and locking up convicted pyromaniacs (but definitionally exclude fighting a raging fire)."<sup>17</sup> The same applies to conflict prevention. While every approach to conflict prevention has its own values, not all of them can be covered in the same study. Furthermore, while studies on every subtype of prevention have to deal with the aforementioned paradox, every possible subtype requires a specific research design to deal with it. Therefore, the broad field of conflict prevention itself must first be broken down into subtypes in order to be able to specify the limits of the method developed in the next chapter.

To narrow down the field of conflict prevention, this study follows an approach that George/Bennett call *block building*, which allows to systematically specify the context to which results may transferred.<sup>18</sup> The authors suggest structuring a complex field of study into various subtypes or "building blocks,"<sup>19</sup> each filling "a 'space' in the overall theory or in a typological theory. In addition, the component provided by each building block is itself a contribution to theory; though its scope is limited [...]. Its generalizations are more narrow and contingent than those of the general 'covering laws' variety that some hold up as the ideal, but they are also more precise and may involve relations with higher probabilities. In other words, the building block is self-sufficient; its validity and usefulness do not depend upon the existence of other studies of different subclasses of that general phenomenon."<sup>20</sup>

Therefore, within the scope of this work, the research field of conflict prevention will be distinguished according to a typology comprising two dimensions: The *first* dimension looks at whether the preventive measures are used to decrease the structural risk of violent conflict occurring or

---

17 Lund 1998, p. 28.

18 Cf. George/Bennett 2005, p. 78.

19 Ibid., p. 78.

20 Ibid., p. 78.

whether they are meant to defuse an acute crisis,<sup>21</sup> and the *second* looks at whether the preventive measures are employed comprehensively, meaning involving several policy dimensions, or whether they are employed in a selective way. Thus, four subclasses of the complex field of conflict prevention can be identified.

*First*, there are measures aimed at decreasing structural risks of violent conflict by employing a comprehensive set of actions. Prime examples for this subtype are the OSCE Field Operations analyzed in a later chapter of this work. *Second*, there are measures aimed at decreasing structural risks of violent conflict by employing selective means. Examples for this subtype are bilateral development programs in specific economic or political sectors as well as specific capacity building efforts such as stand-alone rule-of-law programs. *Third*, there are measures aimed at defusing ongoing crises by employing comprehensive means. A prime example for this subtype is the combination of preventive military deployment in Macedonia in 2001 and efforts of preventive diplomacy at the same time leading to the Ohrid Agreement, which probably prevented a Macedonian civil war. *Fourth*, there are measures aimed at defusing ongoing crises by employing selective means. Notable examples are fact-finding missions conducted to investigate incidents that could potentially lead to the escalation of a conflict, attempts of preventive diplomacy by third-party mediators, sanctions against potential conflict parties or preventive military deployments to deter a violent escalation. The following matrix sums up the four subclasses in the field of conflict prevention:

	Structural	Acute
Comprehensive	Preventive political field missions	Preventive military deployment combined with preventive diplomacy
Selective	Development aid, specific capacity building programs	Preventive diplomacy, fact-finding missions, sanctions, preventive military deployment

Figure 1: Typology of conflict prevention; author's own compilation.

---

21 Cf. Matthies 2000, p. 111. / Ackermann 2003, p. 341. / Ramsbotham/Woodhouse/Miall 2014, p. 144. / Rudolf/Lohman 2013, p. 8. / Stares 2015, p. 462.

## 2. Research Design

While studies of all of these four types of conflict prevention will find themselves in the situation of having to deal with the paradoxical immeasurability of a prevention's degree of success, an approach of assessment will take a different form according to which subtype is being investigated. Thus, as this work aims to analyze the structural efforts of comprehensive field missions, the approach sketched out in the next subchapter will be transferable only to other studies dealing with the first subtype.

### 2.2 Method selection

As a starting point for method selection, three approaches discussed in the current literature dealing with the question of how to select indicators for analysis will be briefly considered in the following: mandate achievement, missed opportunities, and effectiveness of policy instruments.

The *first* approach – mandate achievement – seems, at first glance, to be tempting to use when explicitly focusing on the work of international organizations based on mandates. Mandates hold an official status; they offer goals defined more or less clearly by the organization and can therefore be transformed into measurable indicators. However, mandate achievement has been criticized by Stedman to be an unreliable indicator to measure the work of international organizations because mandates can be purposely worded by international organizations in a very modest way in the first place, aiming “to inflate their success rate by purposely minimizing performance goals [...]”.<sup>22</sup> In other cases, missions can also be overburdened with unachievable mandates, making it almost impossible to compare several field missions by comparing the number of goals by mandate they achieved.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, mandate achievement, an easily measurable indicator at first glance, is rejected as an approach for this study.

The *second* approach is to use a research design focused on the process of escalation of violent conflicts, trying to identify so-called “missed opportunities”<sup>24</sup> for prevention as discussed by Jentleson. However, such an approach is limited by two inherent drawbacks: Firstly, while missed op-

---

22     Downs/Stedman 2002, p. 45.

23     Cf. *ibid.*, p. 46.

24     Jentleson 2005, p. 250. / similarly: Lund 1998, p. 49. / Ackermann 2003, p. 343.



portunities for preventive action might be identified, it cannot be assessed whether this preventive action would have been successful or not as “one can never be entirely confident in the conclusions drawn from what-might-have-been-scenarios [...]”.<sup>25</sup> Second, and closely related to the first approach, conclusions drawn from the identification of missed opportunities in a past case can hardly be transferred to policy advice on how to act in a present case.<sup>26</sup> Thus, while the ex-post analysis of missed opportunities has an epistemological value, it is not considered suitable for the aims of this study.

Instead, Lund suggests a *third* approach, which consists of “exam-in[ing] the effects in one or more emerging conflict settings when certain *policy instruments* are introduced.”<sup>27</sup> Such an approach, however, comes with an inherent drawback: Evaluating the efficiency of a specific policy instrument for conflict prevention is almost impossible as, on the one hand, the evaluation of efficiency would require reliable quantitative data, which in many possible cases is hard to collect, while, on the other hand, the causal connection between policy instrument and successfully prevented conflict cannot be identified due to the paradox of researching prevention.<sup>28</sup> Thus, the only possible research design would be a comparative study, based on a design using a controlled comparison in which two almost identical cases, which both are at risk of violent conflict and of which one escalates and one is prevented by external action, would be analyzed.<sup>29</sup> However, the empirical world does not offer suitable cases for such a research design.

Therefore, in this study, a *fourth* approach is created by a combination of elements of Jentleson’s and Lund’s approaches. This approach in turn is built on three steps:

The *first* step follows some of Jentleson’s considerations. As there is already a vast body of literature on state failure available, dilemmas and processes causing or contributing to state failure can be identified. Of course, one has to agree with Lund “that systemic factors do not directly cause violent conflicts. General *poverty* does not start wars, *people* do –

---

25 Jentleson 2005, p. 250.

26 Cf. Matthies 2000, p. 111.

27 Lund 1998, p. 50, italics in the original version. / similarly: Ackermann 2003, p. 343.

28 Cf. Rudolf/Lohmann 2013, pp. 16-18.

29 Cf. Stares 2015, p. 463.

when they act coercively to preserve their privileges, or seek to violently reverse their oppression and misery.”<sup>30</sup> The correlation that most *failing states* belong to the group of the poorest countries in the world (with the notable exception of Ukraine) does not mean that all countries with low economic indicators will inevitably become *failing states* sooner or later.<sup>31</sup> In fact, several of the poorest countries of the world have remained stable over decades. Similarly, arbitrary thresholds set up in indices defining every state as failed when it undercuts a certain score can easily be over-interpreted. Nevertheless, one has to consider such structural aspects as factors contributing to conflict escalation.

Therefore, a theoretical model identifying processes destabilizing a *weak state* will be developed.<sup>32</sup> The core of this model will be a set of three mutually reinforcing structural dilemmas.<sup>33</sup> The interdependences between these dilemmas and other symptomatic factors of weak statehood deduced from an established body of secondary literature will be analyzed to identify all processes perpetuating the status of a *weak state* or contributing to state failure.

In a *second* step, an empirical analysis will be conducted to find out which of these dilemmas and processes can be influenced by an external actor at all. While it seems tempting to analyze the question of the extent to which processes can be influenced, such an approach would require the existence of a way to measure effectiveness. However, the measurement of effectiveness of administrative reforms still lacks a theoretical basis,<sup>34</sup> as “service sector productivity is inherently hard to measure.”<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, the quantitative data required for such an approach would not be available in most cases, while qualitative assessment of project success by means of interviewing the persons that have conducted these very projects would be inaccurate. Therefore, an approach based on measuring effectiveness is unsuitable for assessing whether external programs contribute to prevention of state failure or not. Instead, the analysis of whether specific processes can be influenced by external actors *at all* allows for a Popperian logic of falsification,<sup>36</sup> as it is, in the case of this study, clearly

---

30 Lund 1998, p. 26.

31 Cf. Brock et.al.. 2012, pp. 58/59.

32 See Chapter 3.

33 See Chapter 3.3.

34 Cf. Ebinger 2013, p. 38.

35 Fukuyama 2004b, p. 193.

36 Cf. Popper 2005, pp. 9/18/104.

possible to identify those processes that are beyond the OSCE's capabilities.<sup>37</sup>

In a *third* step, it can then be assessed if and to what extent these processes that are beyond the OSCE's influence are major contributing factors in the destabilization of a state when additional triggering effects occur.<sup>38</sup> To conduct such an assessment, these symptomatic factors of weak statehood beyond reach will be analyzed from two perspectives: First, whether it is possible that they contribute directly to the emergence of non-state actors capable of challenging the monopoly on the legitimate use of force,<sup>39</sup> as this is the major contributing effect fostering the three dilemmas of a *weak state*. Second, it will be analyzed to which extent they influence the emergence of non-state actors capable of challenging the monopoly on the legitimate use of force indirectly. If the OSCE is either unable to influence all of those symptomatic factors directly contributing to the emergence of non-state actors capable of challenging the monopoly on the legitimate use of force, or if it is unable to influence most of those symptomatic factors contributing to the same effect indirectly, it will be safe to assume that it could not prevent a state failure in the event that additional triggering effects occur. If it is able to influence those symptomatic factors directly contributing to the emergence of non-state actors capable of challenging the monopoly on the legitimate use of force, but not those contributing indirectly, it might stall a further deterioration from *weak state* to *failing state* but be unable to contribute to the development towards a *consolidated state*. Only if the OSCE is able to contribute to symptomatic factors indirectly contributing to the emergence of non-state actors capable of challenging the monopoly on the legitimate use of force in all three state functions can it also contribute to a development towards a *consolidated state*. This way, an estimation to which extent external actors can contribute to the stabilization of a fragile state would be possible without having to judge whether a state failure was prevented or not – which in turn solves the methodological paradox of researching prevention for this particular study.

As such an approach requires a methodology in which one “can look at a large number of intervening variables and inductively observe any unex-

---

37 Cf. Rudolf/Lohmann 2003, p. 6.

38 See Chapter 3.5.

39 See Chapter 3.4.

## 2. Research Design

pected aspects of the operation of a particular causal mechanism,”<sup>40</sup> a case study-based inquiry has to be considered the most suitable approach to test the developed hypotheses. However, not all conceivable case study designs are equally suited for such an inquiry. Moreover, due to their inherent methodological constraints, none of the standard case study designs (single case study, classical controlled comparison, large-n comparative study) is considered suitable for the research objectives at hand:

First, single case studies lack transferability to different cases as “social reality is not reasonably treated as being produced by deterministic processes.”<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, as a successful prevention of state failure cannot be measured directly, no existing empirical case could be considered a so-called “crucial case”<sup>42</sup> which would make a test of contradicting theories possible to conduct, as none of these empirical cases would allow for analytical judgment to be made. In this particular research design, it would be impossible to analyze the relevance of different constellations of the three dilemmas mentioned before using a single case study. Therefore, single case studies on the prevention of state failure should be considered mainly plausibility probes “to determine whether more intensive and laborious testing is warranted.”<sup>43</sup>

Second, classical comparative research designs like the most similar case design or the most dissimilar case design share two inherent flaws, making them unsuited for this particular study. First, both are suited specifically to explain certain outcomes which in turn necessarily need to be directly measurable. However, the prevention of state failure cannot be assessed directly, as has been shown in the previous subchapter. Second, the most similar case design requires “two cases resembling each other in every aspect but one,”<sup>44</sup> while the most dissimilar case design would require cases resembling each other in *no* other aspects but one. Both preconditions are hardly to be found in the empirical world, making this formalistic approach unsuited for this study.

Third, King/Keohane/Verba argue that even for qualitative case studies the principle of “[t]he more, the better”<sup>45</sup> should be the guideline for case

---

40 Cf. George/Bennett 2005, p. 21.

41 King/Keohane/Verba 1994, p. 210.

42 Ibid., p. 209.

43 George/Bennett 2005, p. 75.

44 Ibid., p. 152.

45 King/Keohane/Verba 1994, p. 216.

selection. However, the number of existing empirical cases of a certain phenomenon is limited. Furthermore, in the specific area of conflict prevention, the field of research was explicitly narrowed down as the paradox of researching conflict prevention cannot be tackled for every type of preventive action in the same way. Moreover, as the principal level of analysis within a given subtype of prevention has to be the state level,<sup>46</sup> increasing the number of cases by analyzing sub-state entities like regions as proposed by King/Keohane/Verba to solve the problem of insufficient numbers of cases<sup>47</sup> cannot be transferred to this study. The same applies to their suggestion of adding historical cases to the comparison, as comprehensive field missions deployed to *weak states* are a relatively new phenomenon in world politics.<sup>48</sup> Thus, a comparative method suitable for drawing as much relevant information as possible out of a limited number of existing cases has to be found.

One way to analyze a small number of cases *and* to be able to draw conclusions valuable to other scholars' subsequent cumulative research projects is the method of structured, focused comparison developed by George/Bennett. "Structured" in terms of George/Bennett means analyzing all cases using exactly the same criteria, allowing for a standardized comparison between the cases.<sup>49</sup> Meanwhile, "focused" means that all cases will be analyzed with the same theoretical foundation providing a transparent "set of data requirements,"<sup>50</sup> allowing to draw conclusions for general theory-building beyond the particular cases at hand. While one has to consider this approach to be minimalistic to a certain extent, it is able to deal with the drawbacks of the classical approaches while avoiding using a simple descriptive and atheoretical procedure that is neither comparable to past nor useful for future research to build upon.

Similar to formalistic controlled comparison designs, this approach is based on dependent and independent variables as well as fixed parameters.<sup>51</sup> Within this study, the dependent variable to be explained is the ability of external actors to influence symptomatic factors which can destabilize a state. The independent variables are basically constituted by the

---

46 See Chapter 3.1.

47 Cf. King/Keohane/Verba 1994, pp. 219/220.

48 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 221/222.

49 Cf. George/Bennett 2005, p. 70.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 70.

51 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 79.

## 2. Research Design

three central dilemmas influencing processes linked to the corresponding state functions: the Internal Security Dilemma, the State Leader's Dilemma, and the Liberalization Dilemma. However, as will be shown in Chapter 3.3.2, the State Leader's Dilemma can be seen as a result of reactions to the Internal Security Dilemma, while the Liberalization Dilemma can be seen as a result of reactions to the State Leader's Dilemma, which in turn can lead to the Internal Security Dilemma again. Furthermore, as will be shown in Chapter 3.4, different dilemmas influence different symptomatic factors. Therefore, case selection should represent the variance in which of these three mutually reinforcing dilemmas causes most of the specific symptomatic factors. As the Internal Security Dilemma is distinctive in cases in which the *Gewaltmonopol* (the monopoly on the legitimate use of force) is already crumbling,<sup>52</sup> therefore constituting *failing states*, cases which vary in whether the State Leader's Dilemma or the Liberalization Dilemma is more distinctive are to be preferred as these are the cases that constitute *weak states*. In terms of parameters, both cases will be influenced by the Internal Security Dilemma and share a similar geographical and historical context.

However, as will be shown in the next subchapter, finding cases that fit these requirements includes narrowing down systematically a wide range of cases that seem eligible at first glance, with only a very limited selection of suitable cases remaining after applying all criteria. Furthermore, one should keep in mind that, because of all the methodological problems described in the last two subchapters, research on conflict prevention still has to be considered a "low information setting,"<sup>53</sup> i.e. the testing of the hypotheses within this research design will only strengthen or weaken the developed theoretical framework, but not establish a completely new theory based on only one comparative study.<sup>54</sup>

### 2.3 Case selection

First of all, it must be noted that the term *preventive political field mission*, which has been established in Chapter 2.1, has not been defined yet. While classical peacekeeping missions based on a uniformed military

---

52 See Chapter 3.3.1.

53 Gisselquist 2014, p. 477.

54 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 478.

component can by now be considered well-defined both in international law as well as in political science studies, Johnstone observed that, “[t]he term ‘political mission’ is not well-specified,”<sup>55</sup> arguing in favor of defining them by their function, not by mandate or composition. Thus, as a first step, I will follow Gowan, who defines political missions as “primary civilian missions”<sup>56</sup> and distinguishes between those that “are tasked with *indirectly* contributing to stable and sustainable politics such as promoting good governance, justice or security sector reform [...]”<sup>57</sup> and those with “clear mandates to guide and sustain mediation processes.”<sup>58</sup> Transferring these two types of definition to the typology of preventive measures, the first can be easily placed into the ideal type of comprehensive and structural prevention, while the second can clearly be placed into the ideal type of selective and acute prevention. However, while an academically suitable definition of the ideal type of a *preventive political field mission* can be easily set up by using the first part of Gowan’s definition, matching currently deployed real-world missions with this definition is harder than it seems at first glance.

First, as the former UN Special Representative Ian Martin stresses, all modern UN missions include civilian components with e.g. capacity building functions, regardless of their position in the conflict cycle (preventive, peacekeeping, peacebuilding).<sup>59</sup> Thus, as the transition from one mission type to another is very fluid, it is extremely hard to classify a specific mission and particularly to distinguish between a post-conflict peacebuilding mission and a preventive mission, as peacebuilding by definition is a means to prevent a renewal of a conflict that has ended.<sup>60</sup> Second, different international organizations use different terminologies to classify their missions internally, which are neither congruent to the definition introduced above nor complementary to each other.

In the UN terminology on the one hand, *peacekeeping mission* and *special political mission* are solely budgetary categories, showing only whether the mission is paid for from the peacekeeping budget or the regu-

---

55 Johnstone 2010, p. 1.

56 Gowan 2010, p. 2.

57 Ibid. p. 2, emphasis in the original version.

58 Ibid, p. 2.

59 Cf. Martin 2010, p. 12.

60 Thus, Johnstone lists in his compilation several UN Missions both as “preventive” and as “peacebuilding”, cf. Johnstone 2010, p. 19.

lar budget, without regard for the function of the mission.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, political missions of the UN, while often lacking a clear mandate for structural conflict prevention, are at the same time often tasked with coordinating activities of other UN agencies, like UNDP or UNHCR, making them de facto missions which still can be classified as belonging to the field of comprehensive, structural prevention.

In the current OSCE terminology on the other hand, the term *mission* is historically reserved for field operations in conflict and post-conflict environments, while other field operations lack a consistent terminology and are given a wide range of denominations (e.g. centre, office, presence, project co-ordinator, etc.).<sup>62</sup> However, despite this relatively clear-cut distinction in terminology between “missions” and other field operations, they are actually not that different from each other in terms of structure, size, or mandate, as they are usually civilian, rather small (less than 60 international staff members and up to 140 national staff members), and are deployed with the consent of the host state for a pre-defined duration (even though the one-year mandates are usually extended).

Last, while the number of civilian EU missions deployed has increased vastly over the last two decades, all of these missions are too narrow in their scope to be considered “comprehensive.” Therefore, even though some missions have tasks similar to those of some branches of UN and OSCE missions, they cannot be considered comparable to them from a methodological perspective. Regardless of their official denomination within their organization’s terminology, all missions that can be considered *preventive comprehensive political field missions* are listed in the following table:<sup>63</sup>

---

61 Cf. Call 2011, p. 10.

62 Cf. OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions 2014, p. 11.

63 Sorted in alphabetical order of host states. Field operations which can be classified both as preventive as well as post-conflict peacebuilding are written in *italics*.



Mission	International Organization	Host state	Duration
OSCE Presence in Albania	OSCE	Albania	1997-
OSCE Office in Yerevan	OSCE	Armenia	1999-2017
OSCE Office in Baku	OSCE	Azerbaijan	1999-2014
OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Baku	OSCE	Azerbaijan	2014-2015
Advisory and Monitoring group in Belarus	OSCE	Belarus	1998-2002
OSCE Office in Minsk	OSCE	Belarus	2003-2011
<i>OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>	OSCE	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1995-
UN Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB)	UN	Burundi	2007-2010
UN Office in Burundi (BNUB)	UN	Burundi	2010-2014
<i>OSCE Mission to Croatia</i>	OSCE	Croatia	1996-2007
OSCE Office in Zagreb	OSCE	Croatia	2007-2012
OSCE Mission to Estonia	OSCE	Estonia	1993-2001
OSCE Mission to Georgia	OSCE	Georgia	1992-2008
<i>United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS)</i>	UN	Guinea-Bissau	1999-2010

## 2. Research Design

Mission	International Organization	Host state	Duration
<i>United Nations Integrated Peace-building Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS)</i>	UN	Guinea-Bissau	2010-
OSCE Centre in Astana	OSCE	Kazakhstan	1998-2014
OSCE Programme Office in Astana	OSCE	Kazakhstan	2015-
<i>OSCE Mission in Kosovo</i>	OSCE	Territory of Kosovo	1999-
OSCE Centre in Bishkek	OSCE	Kyrgyzstan	1998-2017
OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek	OSCE	Kyrgyzstan	2017-
OSCE Mission to Latvia	OSCE	Latvia	1993-2001
<i>OSCE Mission to Skopje</i>	OSCE	Macedonia (FYROM)	1992-
<i>OSCE Mission to Moldova</i>	OSCE	Moldova	1993-
OSCE Mission to Montenegro	OSCE	Montenegro	2006-
<i>United Nations Missions in Nepal (UNMIN)</i>	UN	Nepal	2007-2011
<i>OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya</i>	OSCE	Russian Federation (Chechnya)	1995-1998
OSCE Mission to Serbia	OSCE	Serbia	2001-
<i>United Nations Integrated Peace-building Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL)</i>	UN	Sierra Leone	2008-2014

Mission	International Organization	Host state	Duration
<i>OSCE Mission to Tajikistan</i>	OSCE	Tajikistan	1994-2003
OSCE Centre in Dushanbe	OSCE	Tajikistan	2003-2008
OSCE Office in Tajikistan	OSCE	Tajikistan	2008-2017
OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe	OSCE	Tajikistan	2017-
OSCE Centre in Ashgabat	OSCE	Turkmenistan	1998-
OSCE Mission to Ukraine	OSCE	Ukraine	1994-1999
OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine	OSCE	Ukraine	1999-
OSCE Central Asia Liaison Office	OSCE	Uzbekistan	1995-2001
OSCE Centre in Tashkent	OSCE	Uzbekistan	2001-2006
OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan	OSCE	Uzbekistan	2006-

Figure 2: List of preventive comprehensive political field missions; author's own compilation.<sup>64</sup>

As shown in the table above, a comprehensive field operation deployed with the sole intent of conflict prevention can almost be considered an ex-

<sup>64</sup> Based on: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, List of current field operations, online: <https://www.osce.org/where-we-are>, July 24, 2018. / Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, List of closed field operations and related field activities, online: <https://www.osce.org/closed-field-operations>, July 24, 2018. / United Nations/ Department of Political Affairs, DPA Special Political Missions. Overview, online: <https://www.un.org/undpa/en/in-the-field/overview>, July 24, 2018.

## 2. Research Design

clusive OSCE phenomenon, making Ackermann call the OSCE the organization “most advanced in terms of creating institutions with a preventive capacity.”<sup>65</sup> UN as well as EU missions are usually deployed in post-conflict scenarios, which – even though their main task is to prevent the outbreak of new violent conflict – is still a different context than a mission in a country that never experienced violent conflict in the first place. The comparability between these missions is limited further by the fact that especially EU missions, while formally fulfilling the criteria of a *preventive political field mission*, are often deployed in addition to military peace-building operations deployed by other organizations. Moreover, especially concerning resources and staff, huge differences can be observed between the field operations listed above.

Thus, when using this list to select the cases best suited to be analyzed in this study, five criteria are applied: missions of the same organization; with similar duration and resources at hand; variance in the independent variable; a similar context for the parameters; no large-scale interference by other international organizations.

First, as has been shown, international organizations use quite different mission structures when deploying field operations (integrated missions in the case of the OSCE; integrated missions or small political missions coordinating activities of independent sub-bodies in the case of the UN; several specific missions with clear-cut tasks in the case of the EU). Hence, in the current state of research, missions by different international organizations still lack comparability. Therefore, a research design based on comparing two missions from the same organization helps to minimize variance caused by different mission structures being applied, thus allowing to focus on the analysis of the question which processes destabilizing a *weak state* can be tackled by a field operation and which are beyond its capabilities.

Second, and closely related to the first criterion, the compared missions should have similar resources and capabilities at hand and should have been active for at least five years, as the work of every mission in the beginning is mainly hampered by logistical problems.

Third, there must be a variance in one of the independent variables to determine whether different dilemma structures among the analyzed cases lead to different outcomes or not. In this case, in Kyrgyzstan the core di-

---

65 Ackermann 2003, p. 344.

lemma of weak statehood changed from the State Leader's Dilemma to the Liberalization Dilemma with the revolution of 2010, while in Tajikistan the State Leader's Dilemma has remained at the core since the end of the civil war. Therefore, with a shifting variable in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan as a control case, it can be analyzed to which extent a shift in the core dilemmas of weak statehood in a *weak state* can influence the work of an international organization.

Fourth, despite the variance in the independent variable, the missions to be analyzed should be deployed in similar contexts, thus making it possible to minimize variance based on having to deal with completely different local phenomena.

Fifth and last, the missions to be analyzed should work without large-scale interference of other international organizations, i.e. without working parallel to another mission with a similar mandate (like the OSCE mission in Kosovo, EULEX Kosovo, and UNMIK) as well as without working parallel to accession negotiations to another organization, as the OSCE missions in the Baltic states did during the EU accession negotiations with these very states.

Thus, even though the methodological constraints of measuring prevention inhibit the application of a formal most similar case design, the criteria for selection still resemble the basic idea of such an approach. However, applying all of these criteria narrows down the number of suitable cases considerably.

First of all, OSCE missions offer the widest range of possible cases as most missions within the realm of the former Soviet Union are both deployed solely preventively as well as over a relatively long period of time, thus fulfilling the first two criteria. If these missions are narrowed down further by applying the third and fourth criterion, missions both in the Baltic Area as well as in Central Asia offer a similar context, while at the same time including a variance with regard to region. However, as soon as the fifth criterion is applied, the missions in the Baltic Area have to be excluded because all OSCE missions in this area worked at the same time the EU accession process of the Baltic States was taking place, making it almost impossible to distinguish between the EU's and the OSCE's influence on the processes within these cases. Meanwhile, in Central Asia only the OSCE operations in Tajikistan worked partly at the same time as the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT, 1994-2000) and the United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peace Building (UNTOP, 2000-2007). However, while the UN and the OSCE operations indeed worked with a certain overlap during the civil war in Tajikistan, in the