

## **Effect of peace support operations and peacekeeping operations on transitions of power**

Peacekeeping operations have a moderate impact on transitions of power. The two quantitative studies in this cell find that peacekeeping missions positively impact democratisation and, hence, democratic transitions.

Geographical region: Sub-Saharan Africa, Global

Effect: Moderate effect ( $g = 0.138$ )

Confidence in study findings: Low confidence as just two studies

### **Short summary**

Peacekeeping operations are expected to have a positive effect on transitions of power. The two studies in this cell find that peacekeeping missions have a moderate effect on democratization and transitions of power. Democracy mandates for missions significantly increase the likelihood of democratic transitions, especially with civilian personnel. Peace-building missions enhance the probability of democratic outcomes.

### **Long summary**

#### *The Intervention*

Peace Support Operations (PSOs) and Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs), where

1) PSOs encompass all multi-functional operations, conducted impartially, normally by States or by international or regional organizations, such as the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), the African Union (AU), or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), involving military forces and diplomatic and humanitarian agencies, and are designed to achieve a long-term political settlement or other specified objective, and

2), the deployment of UN peacekeepers into countries in a post-conflict setting. This involves the deployment of international troops and police, who work with local civilian peacekeepers to provide security to an area (UN Peacekeeping n.d.). Operations with primary or secondary objectives to prevent, halt or reduce the risk of atrocities are also considered within this category. (DDR not found in this cell).

#### *How is the intervention expected to work?*

The deployment of Peace Support Operations and Peacekeeping Operations with democracy mandates and activities may have an effect on transitions of power through increasing democratization. Greater mission capacity, such as longer duration, more personnel, especially civilian personnel compared to military personnel, and more resources, may enhance democratization outcomes and so support transitions of power.

### *Evidence base*

This cell contains two studies, both of which are quantitative studies. Blair (2023) and Steinert (2014), both focus on UN peacekeeping operations and democratization. Blair (2023) uses the Peacekeeping Mandates (PEMA) dataset to code two treatment variables and is rated medium confidence as it is a non-experimental study. Steinert (2014) employs multinomial logistic regression analysis to assess the impact of UN peacebuilding missions on democratization trends in 103 post-civil war countries, of which 31 experienced a UN peacebuilding mission and is rated as low confidence as it is a non-experimental study and lacks a clear description of the intervention.

### *Evidence findings*

Blair (2023) finds peacekeeping with either democracy mandates or activities increase democratization, leading to a democratic transition. The effect is larger when there is a mandate and is larger if there are more personnel, especially civilian personnel rather than military. Support to elections is the most effective approach to improving electoral democracy, other activities are not statistically significant.

Steinert (2014) reports that democratization is significantly more likely if a UN peacebuilding mission is deployed, with a 68% probability of increased democracy in host countries compared to 34% in non-host countries. Descriptive statistics suggest that greater mission capacity, such as longer duration and more resources, may enhance democratization outcomes, although this relationship is not statistically significant.

### *Included studies*

**Blair (2023)** assesses the effects of UN peacekeeping missions on democratisation in Africa since the end of the Cold War (1991 to 2016). Specifically, they address three issues: mandates, composition of peacekeeping missions, and tactics.

The authors use the Peacekeeping Mandates (PEMA) dataset to code two treatment variables: UN peacekeeping missions with a democracy mandate, and those carrying out democracy-related activities despite not having the mandate. Democracy-related activities are voter education, assistance to political parties, assistance to democratic institutions such as parliaments, and assistance in planning and conducting elections. Sensitivity analysis is conducted including assistance to media and civil society organisations (for which the results do not substantially change). The number of countries with peacekeeping missions with democracy mandates and activities has grown markedly since 2001. The authors code the number and composition of peacekeepers from the Providing for Peacekeeping (PFP) project. The outcome is the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) electoral democracy index. This study is rated medium confidence as it is a non-experimental study.

The study finds that peacekeeping missions have a positive effect on democratization, which inevitably leads to a positive effect on transitions of power.

**Steinert & Grimm (2014)** examines the effectiveness of United Nations (UN) peacebuilding missions in democratizing war-torn states, with a focus on missions that include democracy

promotion components in their mandates. The context involves post-civil war countries where the UN has deployed peacebuilding missions to foster democratic transitions.

The research employs a multinomial logistic regression analysis to assess the impact of UN peacebuilding missions on democratization trends in 103 post-civil war countries, of which 31 experienced a UN peacebuilding mission. The study uses Freedom House data to measure democratization, comparing rankings from the first mission year to those five years later. The analysis controls for various factors, including battle deaths, peace agreements, and oil wealth, to account for selection bias in mission deployment. The study is rated as low confidence as it is a non-experimental study and lacks a clear description of the intervention.

The study finds that peacekeeping missions have a positive effect on democratization.

#### *Confidence assessment*

The cell is rated low confidence as there are just two studies.

#### **Other outcomes in this cell/study**

- Community and state governance/Access to justice, rights and public services