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## **EU's Use of Private Military and Security Companies' Services: Filling the Capabilities- and Consensus-Expectation Gaps?**

Both academic studies and internal EU documents have established that contracting Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs) services by the EU is nowadays a widespread practice, despite the persisting lack of EU-level regulation and significant divergence in Member States' national regulatory frameworks. PMSCs have been used primarily to support and sustain EU activities abroad, i.e. both civilian and military Common Security and Defence Policy missions and European External Action Service delegations and diplomatic missions. In this paper, we conduct a congruence test of two explanations for the use of PMSC services by the EU. First, building on Christopher Hill's "capabilities-expectations gap" concept, we examine whether PMSCs have been contracted to provide manpower that the EU and its member states lack completely or which they do not possess in sufficient quantity and/or quality when they are needed by an EU mission. Second, building on Asle Toje's "consensus-expectations gap" concept, we further explore whether PMSCs have been used to circumvent Member States' unwillingness to provide manpower that they actually possess, thereby helping circumvent existing political constraints on EU power projection abroad.

### **What discipline or branch of humanities or social sciences do you identify yourself with?**

Security Studies/International Relations

### **If you are submitting an Open Panel proposal, have you included all four abstracts in attachment?**

No, I am submitting a Closed Panel abstract

### **Are you a PhD student or early-career researcher?**

No

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