



Implementation Group

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Progress Report on the implementation of the European initiative for the exchange of young officers “inspired by ERASMUS”

Introduction

1. Subsequent to the Council's adoption of the European young officers' exchange scheme, modelled on Erasmus, on 10 November 2008, an Implementation Group (IG) was established in January 2009. This IG meets in the format of a project-oriented configuration of the Executive Academic Board of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC). Since the report of the HR of 2010, the Implementation Group has convened in plenary three times in Brussels and once in Cyprus. Other meetings at working group level have taken place, both in Brussels and elsewhere.
2. After the initial quick progress achieved in 2009, during 2010 this work was continued and consolidated. Some issues were revisited and refined in the light of additional information. Work on the original quick wins was considered closed and the remaining actions to be taken were all consolidated as separate lines of development.
3. However, after the initial enthusiasm, progress during 2010 was relatively slower, due to the more difficult topics to be treated on the one hand, but also due to the lack of resources on the ESDC Secretariat side and limited commitments on the Member States side to take forward some of the identified lines of development. Therefore, the level of ambition has to be revised and the feasibility of some of the lines of development need to be addressed in a more systematic way. A questionnaire was distributed to the Member States in preparation for this report and so far 11 Member States have replied.
4. Either through this questionnaire or another notification to the ESDC Secretariat or in the ESDC Steering Committee, 3 Member States indicated that they had conducted an exchange, making use of the Framework Arrangement, put in place early in 2010 as a result of the 2008 Council Decision. The ESDC Secretariat was asked by some Member States to compile a list of Member States that are willing to use the Framework Arrangement, serving either as a standard or an optional basis for exchanges.

I. PROGRESS ON THE LINES OF DEVELOPMENT

Development of a system of equivalences for the military part of the initial training

5. During its meetings on 27 January 2010, the ESDC Steering Committee was informed of this system and at its meeting on 24 February 2010 the Steering Committee agreed to adopt this system under silence procedure as part of a single decision together with the Framework Arrangement.
6. After this decision was taken and despite prior consultation with the Commission's DG for Education and Culture, the Commission had serious concerns regarding the creation of a separate system for military higher education. During the Implementation Group meeting in June, additional information was given to the Group, showing that the existing ECTS could also be used for the exchanges under the Initiative. Considering the initial premise of the Initiative to use existing systems whenever possible, the term 'MECTS' was changed in favour of the use of 'ECTS', based on the workload for the exchange students. A system allowing a correct and standardised way of describing the workload during the exchanges was adopted instead. The concrete description of this system can be found on the Emilyo website and on the Austrian Theresian Military Academy website. (<http://www.miles.ac.at>).

Comparison of courses based on competences

7. In order to be able to compare the outcomes of vocational courses in different Member States, a 'common vocabulary' for the description of learning outcomes needs to be developed. For the academic training, the existing qualification frameworks should be used.
8. In 2010 the subgroup started to collect the necessary information to bring this line of development forward. Regrettably, the number of Member States that have provided the necessary information remains limited, making it more difficult to come up with a comprehensive solution. Nevertheless, under its Swedish Chair, the subgroup is striving to come up with a proposal.
9. The outcome reached by this subgroup is essential to take forward the work on other lines of development, such as the proposed database.

Develop IDL specific content

10. No specific advances have been made in this area, partially due to the lack of an IDL manager in the ESDC Secretariat's team since September 2010.
11. Nevertheless, the ESDC Secretariat, working closely together with the Romanian National Defence University and the organising institutions of the common modules, managed to provide IDL support to all the Common Modules on CSDP, making use of existing course material. The follow-up of the progress of the participating students was successfully delegated to the organising teams of the common modules.

Create a database to facilitate exchanges

12. This database should in future provide two distinct functionalities:
 - a) Offer the possibility of finding one or more (best) matches to the training outcomes or competences that are provided in a military academy: the detailed stocktaking has clearly indicated that the development of such an application is not yet feasible, since most Member States are either still in the process of implementing a qualifications framework
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in the academic field, or use national qualification frameworks that do not allow direct comparison between the national systems. In this context, it becomes essential to see the first conclusions of the line of development 2. This functionality will therefore be postponed until the conditions mentioned above have been met.

- b) Provide a clearing-house function enabling training institutes and students to offer or identify opportunities for exchanges: although it is estimated as being technically feasible, so far insufficient resources have been made available to take work ahead.
13. Meanwhile, work has started on the creation of a 'database' of lecturers who are able and willing to lecture on topics of the common modules. This database will be made available to all the training providers. The interim solution for this database consists of a simple Excel file, containing the contact information for lecturers identified by the Member States. In the long term, a more integrated stable solution can be envisaged.

Encouragement for national implementation of the programme

14. So far, none of the Member States has offered to take the chair of this specific line of development. As a consequence, the Chairman of the Implementation Group has kindly assumed this responsibility on a purely temporary basis, to at least start work on this important issue.
15. The Chairman has continued his efforts to be present at meetings of the Commandants and Superintendents of the Single Service institutions to provide them with further information and to align the efforts of the Initiative with the efforts done at Single Service level.
16. During the meeting in September, several proposals were made to improve communication on the initiative, amongst others to launch a newsletter containing relevant exchange offers.

Military Lifelong Learning Programme

17. Under the chairmanship of the Vice-Rector for External Relations of the Czech Defence University, a subgroup meeting took place in Brno in June 2010. At this meeting five Member States interested in longer-term exchanges under the Commission's Erasmus programme came together and promised to exchange offers and to provide the best possible conditions for the exchange students.
18. The participants planned a meeting in February 2011, to better coordinate these offers. Meanwhile, this meeting was cancelled due to very low interest (only 4 institutions expressed the desire to attend) and the offers will be collected electronically. The next meeting of the subgroup will be organised in Brussels on 21 September in the margins of the Implementation Group meeting.

Develop other common training modules

19. In 2009, the Implementation Group decided to continue to develop up to 5 new modules per year. The subjects for these modules can be proposed by Member States. Each module will follow a process of identification, development and validation, as stated in the 2010 report.
20. Unfortunately in 2010, only one common module (on communication) was approved. A second module on Law of Armed Conduct was proposed and will be further discussed at the Implementation Group meeting in February 2011.
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Financial aspects

21. Several Member States asked for financial support from the EU Budget in support of the exchange activities falling under the Initiative.

II DETAILED STOCKTAKING

22. The European Studies Unit of the University of Liège conducted a detailed stocktaking in support of the Initiative during 2009. The final report, printed by the Council Secretariat, was presented to the Implementation Group on 25 May 2010. Subsequently it was also presented to the ESDC Steering Committee, Politico-Military Working Party (PMG) and European Union Military Committee. It is also available in electronic form on the Emilyo website (<http://www.emilyo.eu>).
23. The results of the detailed stocktaking were indispensable for the work on several lines of development for the implementation of the Initiative. The report provides a scientific basis for further development of the work plan for the Implementation Group. It should be updated as appropriate, subject to ESDC Steering Committee guidance, in order to offer a permanent conceptual reference for all exchange programmes and projects.

III EXCHANGE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED UNDER THE INITIATIVE

24. In the course of 2010, a total of 416 young officers participated in one of the 6 common modules that were organised by Spain (3 simultaneous modules in March 2010), Austria (2 separate modules in October and November) and Greece. All the modules were subjected to an external evaluation and received excellent feedback from the participants. All module objectives were largely attained, including the affective objectives (to convince the young officers of the added value and importance of CSDP). So far, 20 Member States have participated actively in the Initiative by sending students to at least one of the exchange activities.
25. On top of these modules offered for international participation, the curriculum of the Common Module has been integrated into the national curriculum in different Member States.
26. Austria has also made available under the Initiative a common module on Peace Support Training and on Alpine Training.
27. Some third countries have expressed an interest in participating in the Initiative and this issue could be considered at the appropriate level.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

28. Even if progress on the remaining lines of development was slower than at the beginning of the implementation of the Initiative, the number of exchange activities under the Initiative and the positive appreciation concerning the common modules indicate that the Initiative is well on its way. Especially the common modules of one-week duration seem to be widely accepted by the Member States and should be continued and further developed. The major procedural cornerstones are in place with the Framework Arrangement and with the
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guideline for calculating workloads, allowing proper use of the ECTS for the exchange activities run under the Initiative.

29. The Initiative now faces more difficult challenges, like developing a 'common vocabulary' to describe training outcomes and then to develop an effective database to facilitate reporting and finding appropriate exchange opportunities. Further alignment and cooperation with the Single Service Conferences of Commandants or Superintendents is also a key issue.
 30. In the light of these challenges, continued support by the interested Member States and notably by the rotating Presidencies remains paramount, even under the new institutional set-up. Close cooperation and exchange of information with the EU Institutions and notably with the Commission will continue, so as to be able to make best use of existing procedures and instruments from the Commission's Lifelong Learning programme.
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Implementation Group Tentative work plan 2011

		Dec-10	Jan-11	Feb-11	Mar-11	Apr-11	May-11	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11
Level				22 Feb AM SG Chair meeting 22 Feb 9th IG meeting Brussels				17 Jun 10th IG meeting Cyprus			21 Sep 11th IG meeting Brussels	14 Dec (TBC) 12th IG meeting Brussels		
European Level		Compare courses based on competences (see remark 5) LoD 2												
		Develop common training modules LoD 8												
		Develop IDL-specific contents LoD3												
		Continuous (linked to LoD 8)												
		Create IT platform Sec + MS LoD 4												
		Military Life Long Learning Programme LoD 7												
National		Encourage MS to apply Bologna/Erasmus, engage in exchanges, recognise training in other MS and to teach in other languages/ communication strategy Permanent LoD 6												
Common Modules														
Multinational (EUAFA, EUMACS, Naval Academies Conf.)		16-18 Mar EUAFA Brussels												

User:
In Margins: LoD 7 meeting

**Institutes/ Actors engaged in the EAB/Implementation Group
for the implementation of the
European Initiative for the exchange of young officers inspired by Erasmus**

1	BE	Defence Staff (Brussels)
2		Royal Military Academy (Brussels)
3		University of Liège
4	BG	Ministry of Defence (Sofia)
5		National Military University
6		Permanent Representation in Brussels
7		Naval Academy
8	CZ	University of Defence (Brno)
9		Ministry of Defence (Prague)
10	DE	Armed Forces Staff (Berlin)
11		Air Force Training Command (Cologne)
12	EE	National Defence College (Tartu)
13	EL	Hellenic National Defence General Staff (Athens)
14		Hellenic Army Military Academy
15		Hellenic Air Force Academy
16		Hellenic Naval Academy
17	ES	General Directorate for Military Education (Madrid)
18		Army Academy
19		Air Force Academy
20		Naval Academy
21	FR	French Defence Joint Staff (Paris)
22		Permanent Representation in Brussels
23	IE	Infantry School / Military College (Curragh/Kildare)
24	IT	CASD (Rome) (provides also Chairman of the Implementation Group)
25		Naval Academy (Livorno)
26		Naval Education and Training Inspectorate (Rome)
27		Air Force Academy (Pozzuoli/Naples)
28		Carabinieri Corps General Command (Rome)
29	CY	National Guard HQ (Nicosia)
30	LV	National Defence Academy (Riga)
31	LT	National Military Academy (Vilnius)
32		Permanent Representation in Brussels
33	LU	Permanent Representation (Mil) in Brussels
34	HU	National Defence University (Budapest)
35	MT	Headquarters Armed Forces of Malta
36	NL	National Defence College (Breda)
37	AT	Austrian Military Academy (Vienna)
38		Military Representation in Brussels
39	PL	Ministry of Defence (Warsaw)
40		Naval Academy
41		Air Force Academy
42	PT	Ministry of Defence (Lisbon)
43		Permanent Representation in Brussels
44	RO	Ministry of Defence (Bucharest)
45		National Defence College (Bucharest)
46		Permanent Representation in Brussels
47		Land Forces Academy
48		Air Force Academy
49		Naval Academy
50	SI	Officer School/Doctrine, Development, Education and Training Command
51	SK	Armed Forces Academy
52	FI	Defence Command (Helsinki)
53	SE	National Defence College (Stockholm)
54	UK	Permanent Representation in Brussels

Overview of all Common CSDP Modules conducted

Member States	Sep 2009 PT	Mar 2010 ES ¹	Oct 2010 AT	Nov 2010 AT	Nov 2010 EL	Total	
AT	2		34	33	3	72	
BE	3	4			3	10	
BG		2				2	
CY		1				1	
CZ	2					2	
DE	2	6	3		3	14	
DK						0	
EE	2			3		5	
EL	2	6		2	218	228	
ES	3	33			7	43	
FI	2					2	
FR	1	7		2	5	15	
HU	2	1			1	4	
IE						0	
IT	1	6		2	2	11	
LT						0	
LU						0	
LV						0	
MT	1					1	
NL	2	2				4	
PL	2	8			4	14	
PT	6	6			3	15	
RO	2					2	
SE		4				4	
SI	2	2				4	
SK						0	
UK						0	
Observers						0	
TOTAL	37	88	37	42	249	453	total for 2010: 416
Number of participating Member States:							20

¹ Spain conducted the Common CSDP Module in parallel at the military academies of the Army, Air Force and Navy.