



# Common Security and Defence Policy Module

## *Theresian Military Academy, Austria*

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## External Evaluation Report

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## **Executive summary:**

In the context of the European initiative for the exchange of young officers in their initial education, inspired by Erasmus, the European Union (EU) Member States want to promote a European culture of security and defence during the first education and training of the future national military elites. As a first and concrete step in this direction, the Implementation Group of the Initiative established within the European Security and Defence College (ESDC), with the supported by its Secretariat, prepared training modules to be addressed to cadets and aimed at introducing them to the concepts, mechanisms and challenges of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Starting in 2010, the Austrian Theresian Military Academy (TMA) organised this module as a regular part of its educational offer and invited cadets from all the Member States to take part in this training. In December 2013, it organised a session of this module and convened European and international participants to share their lifestyles, cultures and opinions about the CSDP in an interoperable environment.

56 trainees coming from the military institutions of 8 Member States and the United States of America, including the cadets completing their third semester at the TMA, accepted this challenge. In order to obtain 2 ECTS credits that can be recognised in their home institutions as a part of their curriculum, the participants had to complete the two stages of a learning path and successfully pass an examination.

First, they had to go through the high standards content of an internet-distance learning module made available by the ESDC. This phase was successfully completed by all participants.

Following the completion of this phase, the cadets met at the TMA in Wiener Neustadt for a one-week residential module, held from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> December 2013. During these modules, the cadets attended lectures given by Austrian civilian and military scientists, academics and professionals working in the field of the CSDP and participated in syndicate workshops aimed at fostering ownership of their learning process. The detailed programme of the modules covered the main aspects of the evolution of the CSDP, including the study of its missions and operations. However, the provision of knowledge has only been a part of the success. Necessary skills and competence for a future actor of this policy were also an objective pursued by this seminar because these qualifications, such as the ability to communicate in a foreign language, are meant to sustain the knowledge and curiosity that were enhanced in Austria. Once again, the participants expressed their high level of satisfaction with the form, the content of this training and the important role played by the hosting cadets in the organisation of this event and formulated suggestions, based on the successes of the method chosen by the organisers, for future organisation of similar seminars.

“Interaction” has not only been the centre of gravity of the CSDP training. It has also been a social reality of the modules, thanks to the international participation especially, and a major contribution to their success. Friendships were created, new

attitudes toward the European Union and its CSDP were acquired, which are the seeds of a culture of interoperability.

As a global conclusion, then, it can be stated that the module organised by Austria not only attained a high level of satisfaction but also reached their objectives of spreading knowledge of the CSDP and conscience of the European constructive diversity. In the context of the initiative for the exchange of young officers, this success is undoubtedly a good step towards more ambitious achievements in the future and provide, in the same time, sources for further action and improvements. Member States and their military higher education institutions should continue organising similar seminars in order to give the opportunity to the largest number of military students to become efficient actors within the European Union in general and its Common Security and Defence Policy in particular.

## Introduction:

The profession of military officer is, by essence, one of the most internationalised profession. It requires not only an understanding of the complexity of the theatre of operation but also a mutual respect between the partners in the mission and positive attitudes toward the internationalisation of the responses to the threats. In the context of the European Union, the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) is not only a search for efficiency but also an incentive for reaching a common European identity. The European developments in the area require from them to be familiar with the principle of interoperability and its multiple aspects. Interoperability of the national armed forces for a European action, interoperability of the services, given that complex missions require complex responses, and interoperability with the civilian actors with view to act comprehensively for the security and defence of the Union and its Member States. As a matter of fact, the young commissioned officers may be called, soon after their commissioning, to lead soldiers in a multinational operation. These multi-fold objectives make it highly necessary to train the future officers, as soon as possible in the course of their training, to their role and responsibilities in the cohesion of the CSDP.

In a political declaration of November 10<sup>th</sup> 2008, the 27 Ministers of Defence of the European Union agreed on the shapes of an initiative for the exchanges of young officers in the course of their initial education, inspired by Erasmus<sup>1</sup>. An implementation group was tasked to define the main actions to be taken by the responsible institutions for the education and training of the future military elites. In the context of an ever-developing CSDP, this group started to work on the definition of the main axis of this Europeanization of the military higher education with the particular objective of stimulating a common culture of security and defence proper to insure the continuation of the progress made. Two main directions were particularly emphasized: the education and training of the young officers to the CSDP and the provision of a European environment in the different aspects of the initial education and training. There is however a third lines for action that has been progressively developed by the group, which is intended to combine these two aspects: the common training of European military students<sup>2</sup> to the concepts of the CSDP. As soon as December 2008, the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) had prepared a version of its *Orientation Course* adapted to a cadets' audience. The Implementation group of the Initiative, which started to work at the beginning of 2009, prepared the needed material for allowing the willing institutions to use it in the organisation of their own CSDP modules.

As a first remarkable realisation of the Initiative, the Ministry of Defence of Portugal and the three military academies of Navy, Army and Air Force organised the first one-week seminar entirely dedicated to the learning of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP/CSDP) in September 2009. In order to provide also an adequate learning environment, Portugal convened military students from all European Union Member States to participate to this training and share their views

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<sup>1</sup> Hereafter called he "Initiative".

<sup>2</sup> Hereafter called "students" or "cadets".

on the CSDP with their Portuguese counterparts. The EU Spanish Presidency, on the basis of this first success and the lessons learnt from the Portuguese precedent, organised similar events in Spain in March 2010. In January 2010, the Austrian Theresan Military Academy (TMA) decided, with the support of the Austrian Ministry of Defence and the ESDC, to organise this module within its premises and to open it to European participation. Its aim was to provide this knowledge on CSDP to all of its cadets, as a regular part of its educational offer. Two modules were organised in October and November 2010. In parallel, the Greek Ministry of Defence organised a similar module at the Hellenic Air Force Academy in November 2010. The Austrian TMA, in October 2011, organised again two CSDP modules and one in December 2012, and opened them to European and international participation.

In December 2013, in accordance with its decision to propose it as a regular offer in its academic programme, the Theresan Military Academy organised for the fourth consecutive year a CSDP module. First, the cadets were offered the possibility to get an introductory overview of the CSDP through the completion of an internet-distance learning module, using the means of the ESDC network. Then, they were invited to come to the Theresan Military Academy, in Wiener Neustadt, for the residential part of the seminar, following a predefined programme<sup>3</sup>.

In order to insure the quality of the training to be provided with regard to the general objectives defined by the Initiative, the Theresan Military Academy asked support for an external evaluation of the conduct of the module, which is hereby provided in collaboration with the European Studies Unit of the University of Liege. The evaluation was conducted by an external evaluator<sup>4</sup>, attending the lectures on the field, discussing with the participants, the lecturers and, more generally, witnessing the life of the module. Therefore, the evaluation was based on observations from the field and the collection of data from the participating cadets and the organisers themselves. The method that was used for collecting the insights is inspired by the Kirkpatrick's model for the evaluation of training and professional modules<sup>5</sup>, followed by the ESDC for the evaluation of its activities, and its four stages:

- Evaluation of the satisfaction of the participants (level 1 subjective outcomes);
- Evaluation of the acquisition of knowledge through the taking part to the module (level 2, objective differential between similar general knowledge questionnaires administered before and after the module);
- Evaluation of the outcomes of the new *acquis* regarding the work performed by the participants after the module (level 3);
- And the possible evaluation of the outcomes for the organisation that required from its human resource to undertake the training (level 4)<sup>6</sup>.

Using this method, and on the basis of questionnaires prepared by the evaluator and the organisers and using a 1 (corresponding to a negative assessment / "no") to 6 (corresponding to a positive assessment / "yes") scale, satisfaction assessments

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<sup>3</sup> The programme of the residential module is attached in Annex 1 to this report.

<sup>4</sup> The external evaluator was also the external evaluator for the previous editions of the CSDP modules in Austria and CSDP modules organised previously in other Member States.

<sup>5</sup> Donald L. Kirkpatrick & James D. Kirkpatrick, *Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels*, San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1998.

<sup>6</sup> The level 4 investigations may be conducted later at the end of the academic year 2013-2014 in order, for the sending institutions, to be able to "measure" to the possible extent the impact of the seminar.

were made. They represent an important part of the observations presented in this report. Furthermore, following the chronological logic of this unique initiative, teachings from this experience were drawn with the objective of providing resources for future organisers of similar modules for young officers.

In order to allow the reader to find more rapidly the concrete information he or she needs for identifying the added values of this module, the same structure was adopted for this report than for the external evaluation report issued for the 2010, 2011 and 2012 Austrian editions. However, this report is, in no way intended to strictly compare the respective strengths and weaknesses of the different experiences. Even though the organising team is the same since the first edition in 2010 and that it has implemented “corrective” measures based on the lessons learnt from these previous editions, which will be sometimes referred to for analysis of the solutions found, the module organised in 2013 is original and has its own logic. Therefore, even if lessons learnt from previous experiences will be taken into due consideration, the main object of this evaluation is to highlight the quality of the choices operated for this module.

The seminar held in Wiener Neustadt in December 2013 issued its own lessons and will become, for possible future organisations, a precedent. Furthermore, in the broader context of the Initiative, other seminars on different topics of interest for the European cadets will be soon or again organised. Some of the lessons learnt from this Austrian experience on CSDP modules, when relevant, can possibly be used as a source for inspiration for the Member States or their educational institutions which would be willing to organise these courses.



## **Common Security and Defence Policy: fully integrated in the Austrian officers' education**

The CSDP module is a component of the TMA educational offer that is fully integrated in its core programme. Therefore, all Austrian cadets since 2010 are required to complete the module as a part of their third semester's academic education. Beyond the fact that CSDP is now a topic with which all the future military officers will be familiar with when commissioned, posted and sent to international operations, this means that Austria organises the CSDP module(s) every year. Starting in 2013, with the organisation of a CSDP module only two weeks after the Austrian one, the Italian Army Application School followed this example and added the CSDP module to its curriculum. Therefore, the lessons learnt from this 2013 module, itself based on the lessons learnt from the experience acquired in 2010, 2011 and 2012, is expected to prepare the ground for a continuous running of these modules, not only for the organisers but also for the stakeholders such as the European education and training institutions which have sent or intend to send students to the CSDP modules.

The Austrian experience of these modules is specific to many regards although it is not an exceptional event but the regular organisation of a module of the TMA's academic programme. When it comes to this characteristic, the process of external evaluation is inextricably connected to the sovereign specificities of the Austrian educational system. Even though it is not in the capacity of the external evaluator to assess them, it is important to report about these contextual elements in order to provide – perhaps not an exhaustive but a comprehensive – view on the organisation of the CSDP module.

### **The complete recognition of these benefits in the curriculum**

Similar to the previous CSDP modules that were organised in Portugal, Spain and Greece, an objective of the Austrian organising team has been that this first contact with CSDP is recognised as a valuable experience in the training of the participants. Owing to the fact that this module is a compound of the TMA's training programme and that the institution and its education fully comply with the prescriptions of the Bologna process, the award of European credits ECTS<sup>7</sup> is compulsory when it comes to the Austrian participants. The TMA, as agreed by the Implementation Group of the European initiative for the exchange of young officers in December 2011, offered 2 credits to all the European participants while they have followed the same learning path.

In addition, the Austrian cadets were all given, as will be further developed hereafter, tasks related to the organisation of the seminar. Their ability to fulfil these tasks, which required dedication of both time and skills, together with their active participation in the discussions and their successful completion of the learning path is assessed and recorded as an element of their military curriculum. The different

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<sup>7</sup> European Credit Transfer System.

experiences of the first three years of the organisation of these modules in Austria demonstrate that the shape of CSDP module, as designed at the European level, nonetheless allows creativity in order to adapt to the national cultures and traditions in military higher education.

When looking at the strict calculation of the number of ECTS in terms of students' workload<sup>8</sup>, it may be asserted that 2 is a correct estimate. In average, students need 7 hours for completing the IDL<sup>9</sup> and the programme of the residential phase of the module amounts slightly more than 30 hours of contact with the CSDP topic.

Additionally, at the end of the residential phase, the TMA awards certificates of attendance, provided by the ESDC and signed by the High-Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union and Vice-President of the European Commission, Baroness Catherine Ashton, as well as, for those who successfully completed the module, diploma supplements emanating from the TMA's authorities and describing the objectives and content of the module and the number of ECTS attached to it.

### **An examination for passing the module**

In line with the philosophy of the Bologna process and the fact that the module is a core component of the TMA's educational programme, the Austrian organising team conditioned the award of the 2 ECTS to the successful completion of an examination, since 2010. Only the Austrian and European students who had both attended and succeed to the examination were entitled to "validate" the credits and receive the diploma supplement.

The examination was aimed at assessing the knowledge acquired by the participants, as well as their progresses in understanding the CSDP topics and their articulation. The instrument used for the examination was the level 2 questionnaire set for the evaluation of the module itself. At the beginning of the residential phase, the participants were asked to answer 12 questions picked among 24 possibilities and chosen randomly by the computer. The participants thus had different tests. At the end of the module, 12 questions were again selected but, this time, asked in the same way to all the students. Therefore, the course director was able to look at the progresses of all participants between the beginning of the residential phase and the end of the module. Contrary to previous Austrian editions of the module, the participants were not invited to take part to a similar survey of their global level of knowledge on CSDP at the beginning of their learning process, *i.e.* the IDL phase. It would be interesting, for next editions, to resume this practice in order to follow on the evolution of this knowledge and, therefore, the efficiency of the educational choices operated. For "passing" the examination<sup>10</sup>, the reference was the individual results of the participants at the last round of level 2 evaluation, meaning at the end

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<sup>8</sup> In the European Higher Education Area, the numbers of ECTS are usually calculated on the basis of students' workload (between 25 and 30 for 1 ECTS) and learning outcomes.

<sup>9</sup> See Sylvain Paile, Common Security and Defence Policy Modules 2012 External Evaluation Report, Armis et Litteris 28, Theresianische Militärakademie - Wiener Neustadt, Schutz & Hilfe, 2013, 80p.

<sup>10</sup> According to the regulations of the Austrian TMA, the examination is passed only with more than 50 per cent of correct answers.

of the module. The participants were all informed about this evaluation process and, as regards the Austrian cadets, made aware of the importance of the successful completion of this module for their curriculum already in at the end of the academic year 2011-2012.

If, on the principle, the use of a knowledge assessment as an examination leading to the award (or not) of ECTS credits is fully in line with the practice of the European military institutes and the prescription of the Bologna process and is in position to ease and accelerate the recognition by the sending institutions of this *acquis*, the use of the level 2 questionnaires is normally not adapted to this purpose. First, the level 2 questionnaire is merely shaped for assessing the global level of knowledge acquired by the students but not the knowledge itself. It was drafted for assessing the efficiency of the module in spreading knowledge on CSDP mechanisms and issues, but not specifically on “EU and NATO cooperation”, for example. In this module, this risk has been mitigated thanks to communication and exchanges between the organising team and the lecturers so that all the questions would be dealt with in the learning process. Then, the fact that the questionnaire is given a value of test, with the additional pressure of the result for the students, makes it difficult to use it also, as originally intended, as a “dispassionate” instrument for all CSDP modules for the assessment of the improvements of the global level of knowledge about CSDP in general.

It shall be proposed for next editions, therefore, that the level 2 questionnaire - possibly updated - is used only for the purpose of the evaluation of the module at its different stages (beginning of the IDL, beginning of the residential phase, end of the residential phase) and that a separate test prepared by the organising team in close collaboration with the lecturers, possibly with 12 more questions, is used for the examination of the participants at the end of their learning path.

### **An approach based on qualifications**

The CSDP module is an integral part of the Austrian officers’ basic education. Therefore, the organising team considers that it is not a “one-shot” action but a yardstick on the longer road of the acquisition of qualifications that characterise an Austrian officer. While the basic education extends beyond the acquisition of knowledge, meaning skills and competences, the TMA fully integrated these dimensions in their CSDP educational project. A matrix of learning outcomes<sup>11</sup> to be fostered by the CSDP modules were defined and used for measuring the self-development of the future Austrian military elites. Evaluators<sup>12</sup>, then, attended the syndicate groups’ work, switching groups during and between the sessions in order to compare their views on the cadets’ accomplishments, and observed the work and interaction of the members through the glasses of these learning outcomes. The expected outcomes were categorised in 4 main sections, namely:

- “Special knowledge”;

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<sup>11</sup> This matrix is attached to this report in Annex 2.

<sup>12</sup> These evaluators were officers accompanying European delegations of participants to the module, from France, Poland, Romania and Austria. They did not know the Austrian cadets, therefore, and had a neutral view on their achievements during the module. Personnel of the TMA also took part in the observation.

- “Decision-making and responsibility”;
- “Social competence”;
- “Personal competence”.

Each of these sections were defined and illustrated by examples for the use of the matrix by the evaluators.

These outcomes do not correspond to the external evaluation inspired by the level 3 of the Kirkpatrick’s model. They are focusing on the education of an officer as a whole, not only with regard to the European dimension of defence policies. In the Austrian educational system, these matrices are used for monitoring the self-development of the cadet, his/her leadership abilities notably, and his/her progresses with regard to the qualifications that are deemed necessary for becoming an Austrian officer. These instruments may be referred to, for example, when a cadet fails an exam for the second time and defend his/her case in front of a commission. The TMA envisages that individual “certificates of competences” made out of the observations by the lecturers themselves or by specific evaluators for wider audiences like in the CSDP modules, become generalised in the future.

The guidelines provided to the observers, under the form of these matrices, did not correspond either to the description of the modules such as it appeared on the standard course’s curriculum<sup>13</sup> or on the diploma supplement. The reason is that this experience of re-centralisation on qualifications is only at a start. The matrices are an effort from the TMA for describing learning outcomes and for taking them more into account, as it is prescribed by the Bologna process. The intention of the organisers in the future is to harmonise these descriptions according to the (expected) outcomes of the line of development 2 of the Initiative<sup>14</sup>. In doing so, it may become possible, for instance, to finalise these certificates of competences and communicate them to the sending institutions at their request. In the CSDP modules, indeed and even though the European cadets have also been followed, the outcome-based monitoring has had a limited impact.

Finally, the internal evaluation of the outcomes also encompassed the role played by the Austrian cadets’ support of the organisation of the modules. Their participation in the organisation of the events, indeed, fostered organisational qualifications which have been monitored by the course director and somehow “recorded” for the continuation of their curriculum at the TMA. Furthermore, their role has also been stressed in the level 1 “satisfaction” questionnaire and (extremely positive) comments have been provided by all participants, including the European and international guests.

The successful completion of the learning path was thus assessed through 3 types of criteria: the knowledge through the level 2 questionnaire used as a test, the involvement in the organisation of the module assessed by the course director, and the skills demonstrated by the evaluators in the syndicate groups.

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<sup>13</sup> Available on the ESDC website: <http://esdc.mil-edu.be/>.

<sup>14</sup> The line of development 2 of the Initiative aims at creating a framework of qualifications focused on military higher education. From these qualifications, the military institutes are expected to implement them in describing learning outcomes for some or all of their courses.

## **The internal assessment of the quality**

Owing to the fact that the CSDP modules are, for the TMA, an integral part of the educational programme, the quality of the modules has – like any other course according to the Bologna prescriptions – to be reviewed under quality assurance mechanisms. After the CSDP module, therefore, the quality will be assessed internally through questionnaires distributed to the Austrian students. These questionnaires, which assess the satisfaction of the students and their perception of the coherence of a given course or vocational training with other courses, for example, are then analysed by a structure within the TMA and followed-up by the chain of command. This structure also organises regularly reviews of the opinions of former TMA students who are posted. These feedbacks “from the field” allow improving the quality of the lectures and training of the future Austrian officers within the premises of the Academy. It may logically be thought that the CSDP modules will be an essential element of this specific internal evaluation in the future.

Finally, as the TMA’s quality assurance system follows the European standards, the quality of the Austrian education and training is also reviewed through external mechanisms. It follows notably the ISO 9001 standards in this area and is comprehensively assessed every five years by external evaluators.

## The shape and audience of the module

Before entering the conduct of the seminar, it is necessary to introduce further some elements of the context, such as the organising team, the programme, the pedagogical contributors and the audience, which are specificities of these modules and are likely to clarify observations that will be made along this report.

### The organising team:

Like in 2010, 2011 and 2012, the managers and organisers of the CSDP module, were the International Office of TMA's Institute for Basic Officer Training, which also represents Austria in the European Implementation Group of the Initiative. The Course Director for the module being also in charge for the international relations of the Institute, he had thus not only the experience of the CSDP module but also the technical expertise on CSDP and on the organisation of the international events.

Like in 2011 and 2012, the choice was made by the organisers to leave room for the action of the Austrian cadets, which had not only the task of being hosting students but also the role of co-organisers. The managers, indeed, wanted to give more responsibility to the hosting cadets, including the students hosted for a longer period of time than the module, and foster their capacity for managing elements of the module and contributing to the success of an important international event in their curriculum and for the life of the Academy. The different tasks were defined by the Course Director and freely distributed to the cadets, each Austrian cadet being in charge of one or the other aspect and being evaluated for the completion of this task.

The global objective of their participation in the organisation was the "integration of the European and international participants", in providing them with a friendly and learning-prone environment. Their mission implied not only the daily life at the Academy during the module, e.g. in "accompanying" a foreign cadet, but also the preparation and management of aspects touching on all activities inside and outside the classrooms<sup>15</sup>. The intention behind this delegation of power was to make the Austrian cadets<sup>16</sup> responsible before the managers and the lecturers but primarily before their comrades and their fellow European colleagues, and to leave them learning from their own experiences... And from their possible mistakes.

Their preparation and the implementation of the different aspects left between their hands from the first to the very last days of the modules have been observed, though not "controlled", by the Course Director. In the context of this external evaluation, it does not belong to the evaluator to assess the success or not of these achievements but only to report, on the basis of the level 1 surveys, about the satisfaction of the participants (and participants-organisers) and testify about the – undoubted – adequacy of the approach chosen of letting the role of the hosting cadets developing

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<sup>15</sup> Even inside since referents had been also designated for welcoming, introducing and accompanying the different guest lecturers and for being leaders of the syndicate groups.

<sup>16</sup> It must be noticed that some of the European cadets have been given tasks to fulfil within the syndicate groups, such as presenting the results of their works to the other participants.

to this extent. It is, indeed, a first way for the participants to develop ownership for their learning path.

### **The programme:**

Even though the core of the programme of the CSDP modules has been defined as early as November 2008 when the ESDC adapted its Orientation Course for a cadets' audience, it is interesting to notice that the practice of these modules in Portugal, Spain and now in Austria left space, nonetheless, for creativity and innovation in the choice of additional topics which give a particular colour to these modules.

The themes proposed in Austria were:

- The European Union;
- EU Operations (EUFOR Chad, EUTM Mali);
- EU Relations to Third Parties;
- Capability Development;
- EU-UN relations
- CSDP history;
- CSDP and the Lisbon Treaty;
- Future Perspectives of CSDP;
- Human Rights;
- Europeanization of Basic Officers Education;
- EU and NATO security cooperation: lessons learnt from Afghanistan for the future common military and political operations.

Eventually, this programme appears to be now a “classical” one for the CSDP modules conducted at the TMA since the topics chosen – and many of the lecturers – were the same as in 2010, 2011 or 2012. Some differences, however, appeared, mainly due to the issue of availability of lecturers. Lectures on the European Security Strategy and the crisis management procedures were not programmed for this reason. However, new highlights were proposed. The opening lecture made the link between the CSDP and the necessity to “harmonise” the basic officer’s education. A focus was made, in the study of the missions and operations on the military operations more than on the civilian missions as to emphasise the relevance of CSDP for the professional future of the majority of the audience. For the same reason, the sequence of the learning units was changed compared to previous years, thus leading to a change in the logic of the learning path. As the choice was made to divide the class in two groups for the lectures – the lecturers thus provided the same lecture twice in the day – those on the CSDP history, the Lisbon Treaty and the future of the CSDP have been provided in different sequences for the two groups, which possibly made the learning path more difficult for some of the participants. In addition, this series of lectures on the basics of CSDP was provided at a late stage of the module.

The lectures, besides, had different durations (from 45 minutes to two hours) with view, in the organisers’ intent, to adapt the programme to the most immediate needs – operational more than tactical – of a newly commissioned officer.

Then, it must be noted that, compared to the previous year, the number and time globally dedicated to group work (“syndicates”) was reduced with view to comply with

the availability of the different lecturers, which may be reflected in the comments from the participants.

### The opening lecture



The Austrian organisation team, indeed, pursued interaction as a key for the learning process of the participants in the module. The method used, was not limited to lectures but attempted to develop interaction among the students and between the students and the lecturers in order to promote self-learning processes. For three topics (“EU relations with third parties”, “Capability development” and “EU-UN relations”), before the lectures, syndicates convened for “discovering” the topics and making group researches aimed at answering to questions or fulfilling particular tasks in relation with the lectures. Once their tasks were completed, the syndicate groups had to designate two presenters who had to brief the other syndicate groups of the same half of the class and the other half of the class, in front of the lecturer, before they attended the lecture. In proceeding like this, all the students were briefed before the lecture. They were authorised, as well as the lecturer, to ask questions on the researches made. However, most important, the half of the class that did not make the researches on the topic of the following lecture had only as a prior knowledge the viewpoints and information provided by their colleagues from the other half of the class. The syndicate groups and the designated briefers, therefore, were responsible in front of all their fellow participants for the outcome of their work, thus reinforcing the ownership of the cadets for their learning path.

The syndicate groups were composed of 7 students, mixing Austrian and foreign students, and made their researches separately, based on the material they received for the CSDP module – the Handbook on CSDP, mainly – or for the cases they had to study, and they had access to the internet. As for their briefings, the syndicate groups were constrained to 8 to 10 minutes timeframes, thus forcing them to exercise their abilities to analysis, synthesis and reporting not only within but also outside the small groups.



It must be noted, however, that syndicate tasks were not organised for every lecturing units, due to the lack of time allowed for the module. The organisers had thus to make a selection of topics for which they considered important to treat them through syndicate work in priority. Due to the necessity of the planning of the week and the availability of lecturers, however, it was not possible to systematize the organisation of syndicate work prior to all lectures. This may be reflected in the comments from the participants.

A syndicate group preparing a forthcoming lecture:



Although it did not provide additional workload for the students, because no preparation before the course was needed, this configuration supposed that the lecturers prepared questions or case studies before their intervention. Eventually, the continuous interaction between the lecturers and the organisers allowed the smooth running of the CSDP module.

In addition to the educational programme, more “social” events were formally planned and directed by the hosting cadets during the week the participants stayed at the Academy. A guided tour of the castle of the Academy was provided on the first evening for an insight of Austrian cadets’ life. A sport session, consisting in small competitions between the syndicate groups, was organised by the cadets on the first day, as an icebreaker and a contribution to the birth of an *esprit-de-corps* among the participants. A formal party was organised by the cadets after the sport session at the cadet’s club on this same first day and they also organised informal activities outside the walls of the Academy on the fourth day... Notably! On the last day, after the module, the foreign cadets were also offered the possibility to have a tour of the Military Museum and the city of Vienna before leaving.

**The lecturing team**

It is also necessary, in order to give a clear picture of the Austrian modules, to present briefly the knowledge providers, *i.e.* the lecturers. Indeed, the backgrounds of the different speakers can help understanding comments from the participants. Therefore, it is possible to evaluate them as a whole, *a priori*. The team was composed of 12 lecturers, one of them being both the key-note speaker and a lecturer. One must note, in addition, that 4 of them were European and that several were civilian lecturers with relevant experience in the CSDP, thus providing the broadest picture of the policy.

This configuration of the team allows saying that no specific teaching on the Austrian views on CSDP was necessary, while most of the lecturers practice CSDP on a day-by-day basis in their functions, notably within the ministries. However, the European background of a large number of them also witnessed the reliability of the content of their return from experience to the participants. Some of them also expressed their interest in principle for contributing to other common modules created or to be created in the framework of the European initiative for the exchange of young officers.

The availability of lecturers for common modules in general remains a challenge for the organisers for their planning and programming, even though, in the example of the 2013 Austrian module, these organisers endeavour to communicate with them as early as possible, a year before the module. Concretely, this question has led sometimes to “less logical” sequence of lectures during the residential phase, e.g. a series of lecture on the history of the CSDP, the Lisbon Treaty and the future of the CSDP provided on the fourth day of the seminar though dealing with basic concepts for studying the policy and its functioning. A “pool” of lecturers, therefore, should be made available to any potential organiser of the CSDP module, bearing in mind that a CSDP-related expertise may be desirable for other common modules, or simply for other courses. In the framework of the Initiative, a database of volunteers was created and includes also experts from outside the education and training institutions, such as the European bodies. It is important for both the substance and the shape of these modules that such database is regularly fed and updated.

### **The participants:**

56 cadets<sup>17</sup> from 8 Member States<sup>18</sup> of the European Union as well as the United-States of America took part to the CSDP module organised by Austria. The international participation amounted 50 per cent of the audience, which is the highest level in comparison with the previous modules organised by Austria. The class of participants also comprised cadets from the United-States and Lithuanian military academies, who were staying at the TMA for a semester at least in the framework of an exchange arrangement.

In the same way, it must be noted that the breakdown in terms of armed force branches showed an obvious misbalance in favour of the Army, as demonstrated by the following figure. This must be connected to the characteristic of the Austrian national armed forces, for which cadets are mostly Army cadets. A consequence of

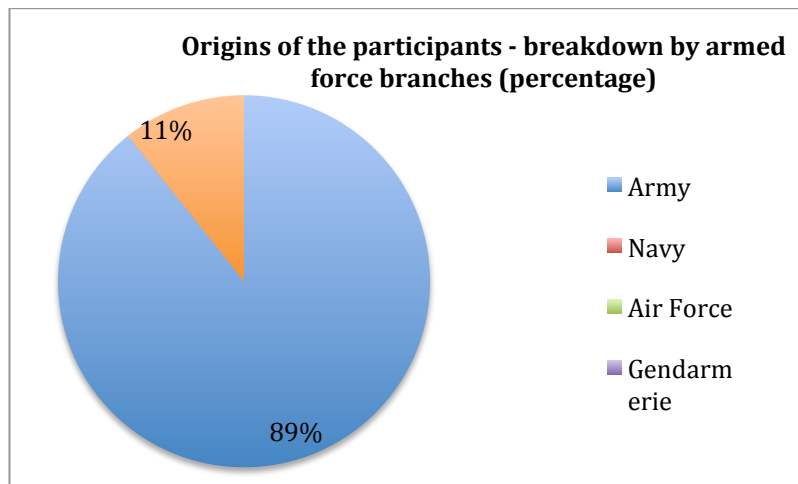
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<sup>17</sup> This number including the six civilian students, they will nonetheless be hereafter be referred to as belonging to the group of “cadets” for reasons of convenience.

<sup>18</sup> Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Italy, Lithuania, Poland and Romania.

the lack of other “colours” on the picture is that the apprenticeship of inter-services interoperability is more difficult, or, at least, remain theoretical.

Six civilian students, studying at the Polish Jagiellonian University in Krakow, with which the TMA engaged in Erasmus exchanges, also took part to the CSDP module. Two of them were PhD candidates interested in the topic of the CSDP. All of them took part, as regular participants to all the activities proposed during the module.



Finally, it must be noted that only 6 participants were female students, representing only 11 per cent of the audience, which is somehow equivalent to their participation in previous modules.

As will be illustrated hereafter, international representation is one of the keys for the success of the common CSDP modules. Therefore, an adequate communication on these events is fundamental. To this regard, it must be stressed that the fact that the TMA already organised such modules the years before, that it clearly expressed its intention to organise them every year from 2010 on and that it communicated the approximate dates of the 2013 module as soon as in December 2012 have proved efficient in spreading adequate information on these modules. Furthermore, the CSDP module could also benefit from the role played by its organiser in the conduct and management of the international policy of the TMA, both multilaterally and bilaterally.

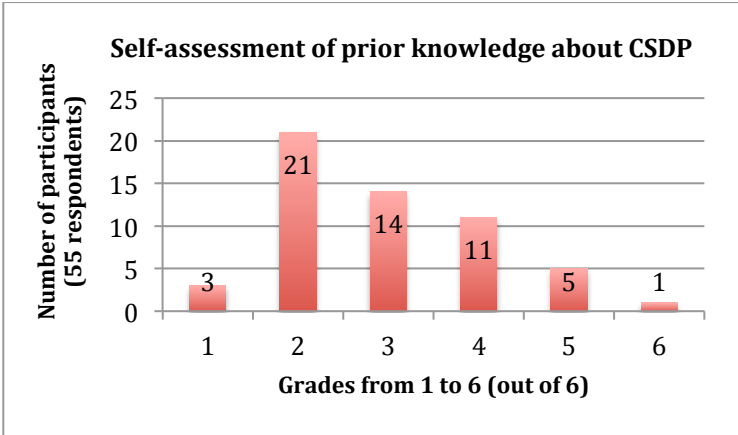
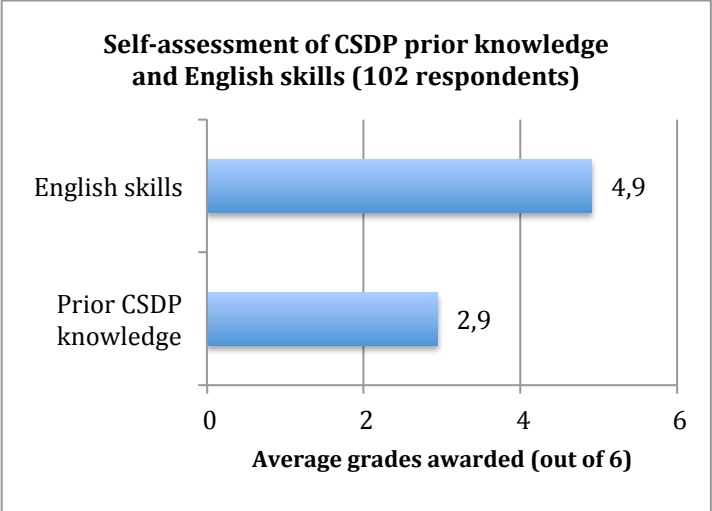
28 of the participants were Austrian cadets in their third semester of education, which corresponds to first cycle studies (bachelor level). 15 of their international colleagues<sup>19</sup> were studying at the same academic level, 11 at the second cycle level (master level) and 2 at the third cycle level (doctorate). However, even if one may wonder if the CSDP module is not too high-level for the majority of cadets, the level of studies did not play any role – after a close look – in the results of the examination. Regarding the Austrian cadets, more particularly, it must be recalled that they had been briefed on the importance this module would have on their curriculum, the examination procedures and the organisation of the IDL and the residential phases, a few months before the start.

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<sup>19</sup> Including the participants from the United-States.

As seen from the graphs below, these participants, independently from their level of studies, considered that they were unfamiliar with the CSDP before the module, as they rarely had the opportunity to approach this topic during their higher education. As observed on the field, notably from the discussions held in syndicate on the first days of the residential phases, the participants had effectively little prior knowledge of the European Union (its mechanisms, the relations between its institutions and the Member States and policies) and the CSDP but showed curiosity and interest for these topics, especially with regard to technical aspects such as the missions, the capabilities' development or the perspective for future developments. Some of them even stated, in their comments, that they regarded the CSDP as a new form of "alliance", similar to NATO.

Furthermore, the participants considered<sup>20</sup> that they sufficiently managed the English language for following the module. The CSDP module, indeed, requires that the participants are able to read the IDL, the material, follow the lectures, communicate in the syndicate groups, ask questions if needed in English and, in general, interact with their comrades.



<sup>20</sup> All along the external evaluation processes, as introduced earlier, the participants were invited to answer to questionnaires using a 1 to 6 scale, 1 being the weakest/"no", 6 being the level of certainty/"yes".

## The IDL: a self-introduction to CSDP

The TMA, as it is the practice in the CSDP modules set in the framework of the Initiative, opted for introducing the cadets to CSDP through internet-based distance learning (IDL) studies, using the ESDC IDL resource. The IDL preparatory module was made available on an ILIAS Learning Management System administered by the ESDC and provided by the Romanian National Defence University. As stated, the cadets had to complete this module, opened three months before the arrival of the participants at the Academy, as an integral condition for completing the course and validate the ECTS credits. Two sections of the ESDC IDL course, called “Autonomous Knowledge Units” (AKUs), were chosen:

- “History and context of the CSDP development” (AKU1) containing explanations and illustrative documents related to the evolution from the origins of the cooperation (the birth of the WEU, the European co-operation, the shaping of the CFSP) to the developments of the CSDP (foundation and links with the CFSP);
- “European Security Strategy” (AKU2) starting from before the ESS, then going through the adoption of ESS, its content, main characteristics, role and impact, and finishing with the ESS revision prospects.

The AKUs consist in synthetic texts presenting the topic and recommended reading, usually short essential documents, illustrating and explaining a subject area. They were prepared, for a use by the European Security and Defence College in its different activities, in cooperation with highly recognised scientific societies, such as the Geneva Centre for Security Policy for AKU1 and the Egmont Institute for International Relations for AKU2. Therefore, it does not belong to this evaluation to review the content of the IDL module but only the *bien-fondé* of its contribution as an integral part of the modules on the CSDP for the European cadets. It should be noted, however, that the content and level of these training materials was specific to ESDC course audiences, different in some respects from the cadets taking part in the CSDP modules. All participants completed the IDL phase in time.

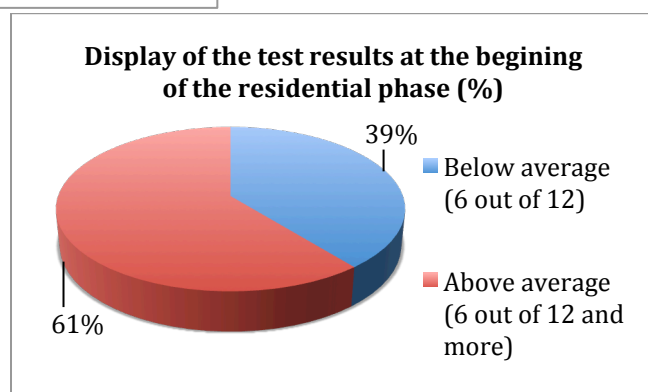
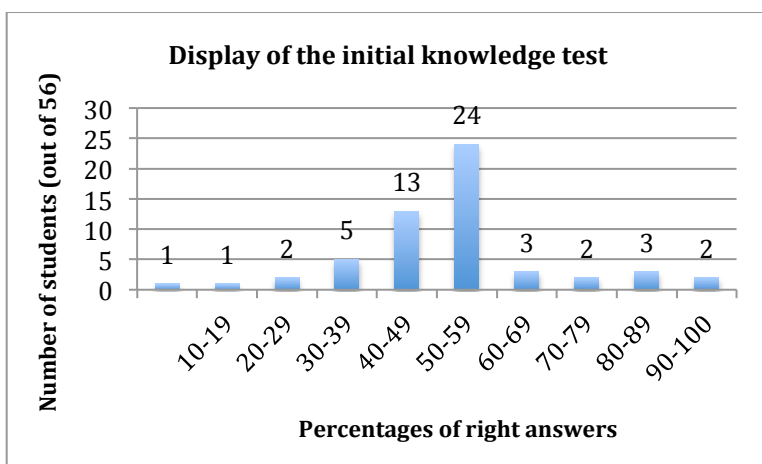
The cadets went through the AKUs, fulfilling a short knowledge test at the end of each of them, in order to confirm they achieved the learning objectives. The results from these tests will not be made available because they do not give relevant information regarding the evolution of their knowledge. They had to succeed in the AKU1 test, after as many attempts as necessary, before acceding AKU2, and succeed in AKU2 test in order to complete the module. For the support of the cadets in their learning, a series of links toward relevant institutions or scientific societies’ websites were made available on the IDL platform. Moreover, some learning material was made available to the participants already on the ILIAS platform: the CSDP Handbook, reedited in 2012 and prepared by the ESDC Secretariat and the Austrian Armed Forces, and an extract of the “EU Acronyms and Definitions” prepared by the EU Military Staff and aimed at providing learners with vocabulary of the CSDP. A forum is also accessible to the participants if they want to report on technical aspects or communicate on administration, technical support or on the content of the AKUs. It is operated and moderated by the ESDC.

In previous editions of the CSDP modules, the IDL path ended with a satisfaction questionnaire (level 1 of Kirkpatrick’s model of evaluation) distributed by the ESDC

and to be filled online. In 2012 and 2013, this instrument was not included in the platform and the comments provided in the final satisfaction questionnaire for the entire module did not specifically highlight the role and quality of the IDL in the learning path. It could be suggested to include it again for future modules since it may contribute to updating and improving the IDL phase as proposed to these young participants. To this end, a reference to it in the final satisfaction questionnaire would not be contributing enough. Most participants, indeed, had completed the IDL long before the end of the module. Nevertheless, both the organisers and some participants reported that the AKUs provided a basic but adapted entrance-level knowledge for attending the residential part of the module.

In order to “measure” their progresses along the different stages of the modules, as already presented, investigations on the global level of knowledge on CSDP issues (level 2 in the Kirkpatrick’s model of evaluation) were conducted at the beginning of the residential phase and at the end of this phase. The multiple-choice answers, though the content of the questionnaires were not exactly similar from one student to another for the first session, were randomly shuffled in order to avoid “mechanical answers”.

It appears from the results of the first round of evaluation that the participants to the module form a rather homogenous “group” as regards their pre-existing knowledge on CSDP in general. The results obtained, as much in terms of average grade as in terms of repartitions below and above the 50 per cent of correct answers are similar to results obtained for previous editions of the CSDP module.



These numbers, even though the students had already completed the IDL phase, show that there are rooms for improvements, and that the mission of the residential phase, consequently, is relatively important. It must be noted that, due to the division of the class in two groups, half of it passed the entrance test after the first lecture on the European Union. Though several questions touched on this topic, this shall be taken into account in the observations that are made. For this reason, and with respect to other organisational aspects, such as the availability of lecturers for providing twice the same lecture, it may be suggested for smaller audiences such as the 2013 one<sup>21</sup> to keep the class as one unique group.

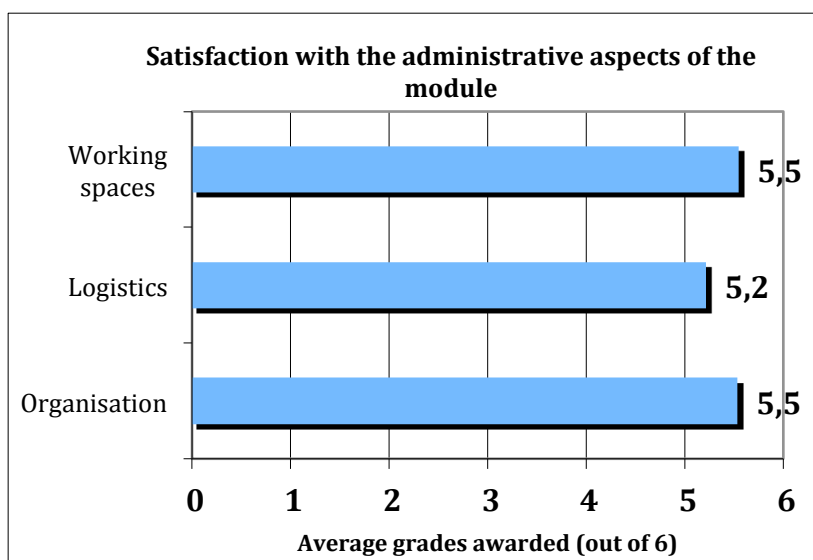
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<sup>21</sup> In comparison to previous years the TMA organised this module.

## The residential phase: learning and living CSDP

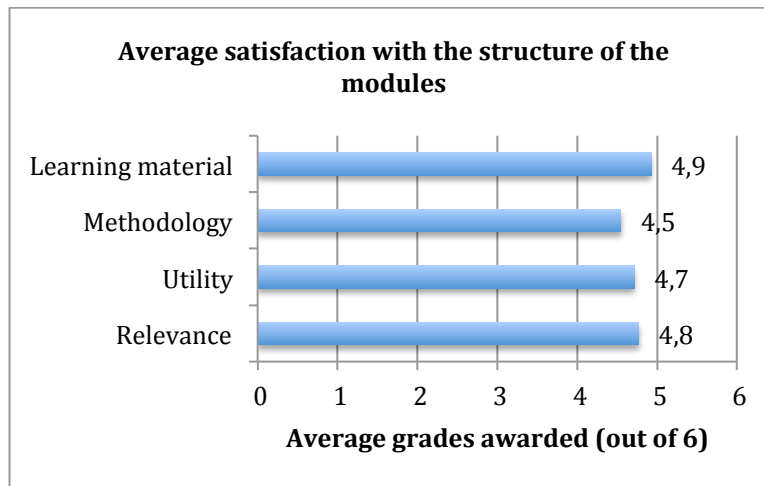
### The organisational aspects of the residential phase:

The formal administrative aspects of the CSDP module, as they were organised by the TMA, have met the satisfaction of the participants. As showed by the graph below, the grades they awarded to these administrative aspects (organisation, logistics, working spaces) are objectively excellent. The comments provided by the participants stressed the excellent organisation, including the role of the hosting cadets, the communication of the managers prior and during the modules, the quality of the premises – suggesting however to improve the access to WLAN in the castle as to work faster with their own computers – and accommodation. Concerning the food for breakfasts and lunches, it logically remained a matter of taste... They stated also that the intensity of the modules in terms of time organisation – notably in respect to the umber of lectures – can be seen as a drawback.



The following graph has an important place in an external evaluation of CSDP modules because it describes the feeling of the participants related to the organisation of their learning process and more particularly with regard to the content's relevance and utility, the methodology and the learning material. The ratings of the relevance and utility of the content is slightly higher than in previous CSDP modules. The rating of the methodology is also a little higher than the previous investigations and so is rating of the learning material – although it was globally similar to the material provided for previous editions. It shall be kept in mind, when reading these ratings and results, that the 2013 group had its own cohesion. Therefore, the results of the present investigations cannot be strictly compared to previous experiences without taking into account the specific dynamic.





At their arrival in Wiener Neustadt, the participants received a package containing information about the Academy and the module, the city of Wiener Neustadt and the - highly supportive according to the words of the international cadets – castle of the Academy, such as maps. In addition, all the participants received a hardcopy of the CSDP Handbook (reedited in November 2012). They had the possibility, furthermore, to download further material from the webpage of the module<sup>22</sup> on the TMA's website:

- The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, which provides an insight of the EU values and, subsequently, the CSDP values;
- The Lisbon Treaty;
- The CSDP-related provisions of the Lisbon Treaty;
- EU acronyms and definitions, already provided on the IDL platform;
- Videos;
- And articles in German or in English about the CSDP (most of them written by lecturers or former lecturers of the CSDP modules).

At the end of the modules, the international participants received a USB key with all the presentations provided by the lecturers, as well as the pictures taken during the week at the TMA... And outside its walls. The majority of the comments demonstrated the high level of satisfaction of the participants with the material provided, especially with the CSDP Handbook.

On the method used for teaching CSDP, the participants' satisfaction can be seen as good. Their comments showed that they were highly satisfied with the work in syndicate groups, the connection that was always made with the content of the lectures, and the opportunity it gave them to exchange their respective knowledge. "(It is) good to learn how to work together (and confront) different points of view", reported a student. However, most of these comments called for systematising these group works, as it improves their competences, notably with regard to interpersonal and professional communication. "I really wish we could have done more work with our syndicates. I think it would have been good to do syndicate work each day, even if it was just for an hour or two", stated an other participant in reporting an opinion widely shared by his/her colleagues.

<sup>22</sup> See: <http://www.miles.ac.at/campus/iep/module.php>

Report by a participant on the work of his syndicate group:



From their comments, the participants appreciated the high quality of the lecturers, who were able to balance the more intellectual and theoretical aspects with illustration from actual operations in the field, which touch them more “directly” in their views. Other comments claimed for more extensive use of media supports and practical illustrations based on experience in the lectures, which is touching more on the methodology of the lectures than the methodology followed by the CSDP module itself. Interaction must indeed, according to the participants, be at the heart of the lectures. Once again, the role of the syndicate work must be stressed. The participants generally felt more responsible and more confident of their learning when they were asked to solve a case through in-depth researches than merely debating on questions to be asked to a lecturer, for example.

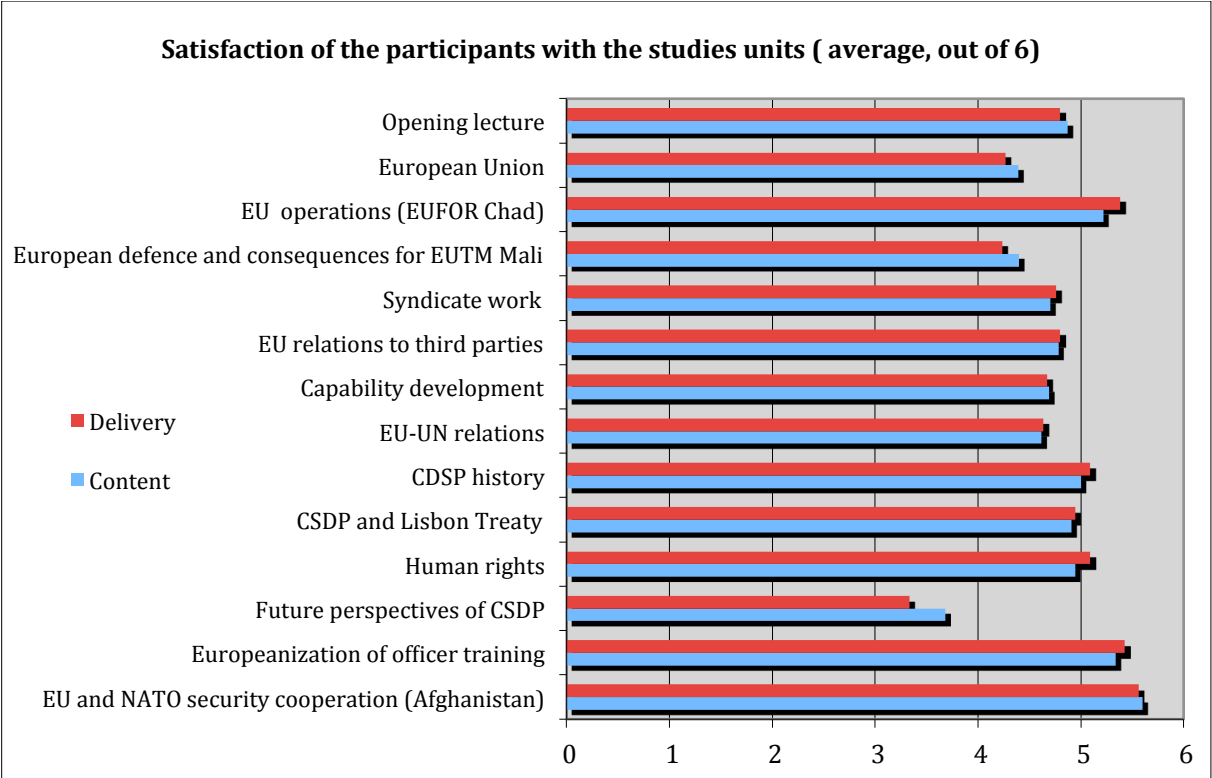
A lecture on CSDP history: one eye on the past, one on the future



Regarding the content of the module – encompassing both its relevance and utility – the comments provided by the participants stressed the interest of the topic and for a young officer. “I have an overview about CSDP and I can talk about it”, summarized one of them. The particularly stressed the “better knowledge of allied countries” and the improvement of their English through interaction in a multinational environment as most positive effects. Interestingly also, several comments stressed the fact that the lecturers adequately balanced the different viewpoint on the CSDP itself. Its current or structural weaknesses have been raised and opposed to the interest and importance of having a common European policy in this area. One of the participants even anticipated and recognized that the CSDP “will be daily bread in a European Army”.

However, voices raised and emphasised the intensity of the module as well as the too strategic importance of CSDP for their first duties as officers. “It will be a very long time in my career before I will work directly with any sort of EU military organization”, stated a participant.

Regarding the selection by the organisers of the topics to be dealt with in “learning units”, including the syndicate works which were integral part of them, the general level of satisfaction of the participants<sup>23</sup> reached equivalent or even higher levels to what was met during previous CSDP modules, which is most positive. The display of these individual ratings is shown within the graph below. Naturally, some of the topics are preferred to others, especially when it comes to the details of the preparation and running of an operation, or the education of the European cadets.



<sup>23</sup> As he has no expert view on these topics, it does not belong to the evaluator to assess the relevance and delivery of the content of these learning units.

The comments provided by the participants to the 2013 module organised by the TMA are consistent with those provided by their predecessors. A majority of participants expressed its appreciation for the syndicate work structure, which allowed them debating, confronting their understanding and opinions of the CSDP and gave them responsibilities for their own learning. They also stressed the didactic and interactive methods of most lecturers, their expertise, expression in English and the use of an adequate level of technical vocabulary are keys for the lecturers in order to transmit their expertise. Most comments however, suggested that the lectures be shorter in time, less condensed in information or that they are alternated, to the possible extent, with syndicate work. This was repeatedly expressed concerning the organisation of the fourth day, which was composed exclusively of lectures, in which interaction is limited with the lecturers and between the participants themselves is somewhat limited. From the opinions of the observers, the organisers, the evaluator and the cadets themselves, the truly international composition of the syndicates stimulated debates and confrontation of viewpoints and pushed the members of the group to exercise their creativity in making researches as well as their leadership in the construction of a collective answer to the questions it was asked. In this regard and if the possibility of syndicate preparatory work is limited for organisational reasons, the evaluator would even suggest that the lectures include also the possibility of “roundtables” in which the participants would be asked to bring their own knowledge and views in order to feed the discussion launched and controlled by the lecturer, in the class. Roundtables would require less preparation prior to the session but more orientations in order to spread the relevant and necessary knowledge on a given topic.

Beside, the participants expressed their highest appreciation for the lectures in which they can have a taste of the field or which touch them directly in their cadet’s life, like the “Europeanization of the officers education”, as it showed them literally a “window of opportunity”. Some even stated that this latter lecture was “helpful considering (that) many of us would very much like to return some day” at the TMA. Finally, most of the comments positively stressed the opportunity they were offered to visit the UN Headquarter in Vienna and to experience a place where decisions are concretely taken.

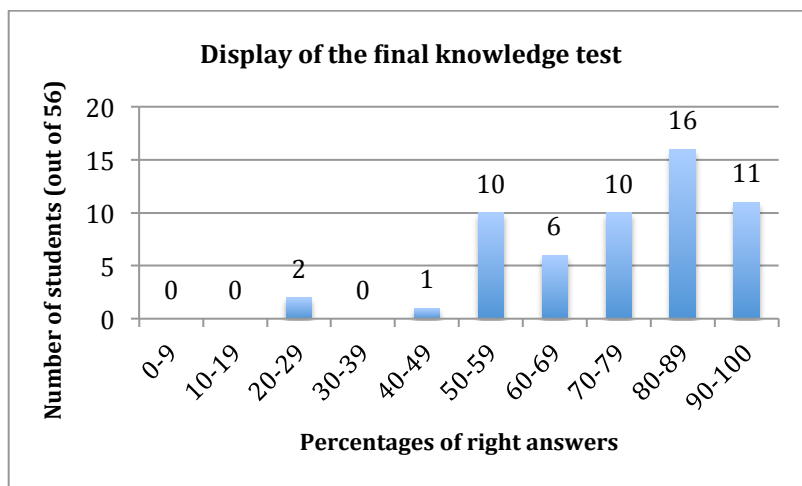
Visit at the United-Nations headquarter in Vienna:

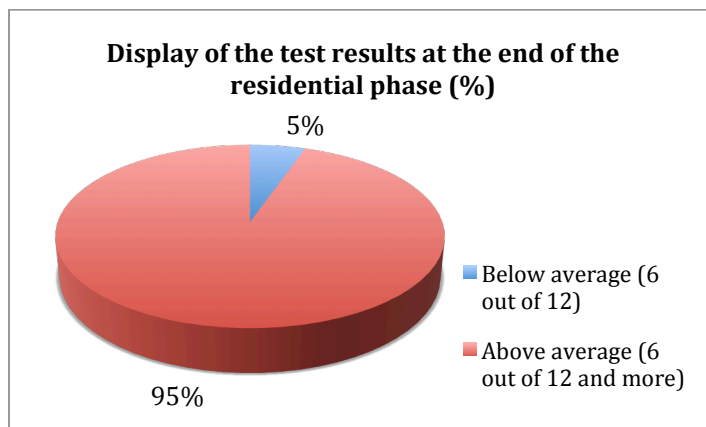


## The technical outcomes of this learning process

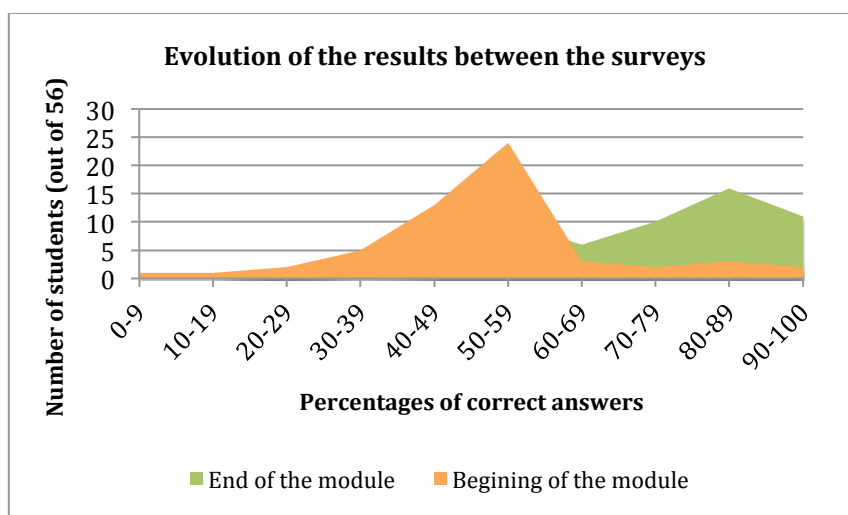
### Knowledge

In order to measure the progresses of knowledge of the participants in relation with the CSDP, a second round of level 2 evaluation was conducted at the end of the residential phase in Wiener Neustadt. This test was crucial for the participants due to the fact that the evaluation was also used as an examination and that the results decided on whether they obtained or not the 2 ECTS. This “extra motivation” can be effectively read in the results obtained, as seen from the following graphs. Only 3 participants did not reach the median of 50 per cent. The grades obtained have been objectively very good, the average one amounting 74 per cent of correct answers.

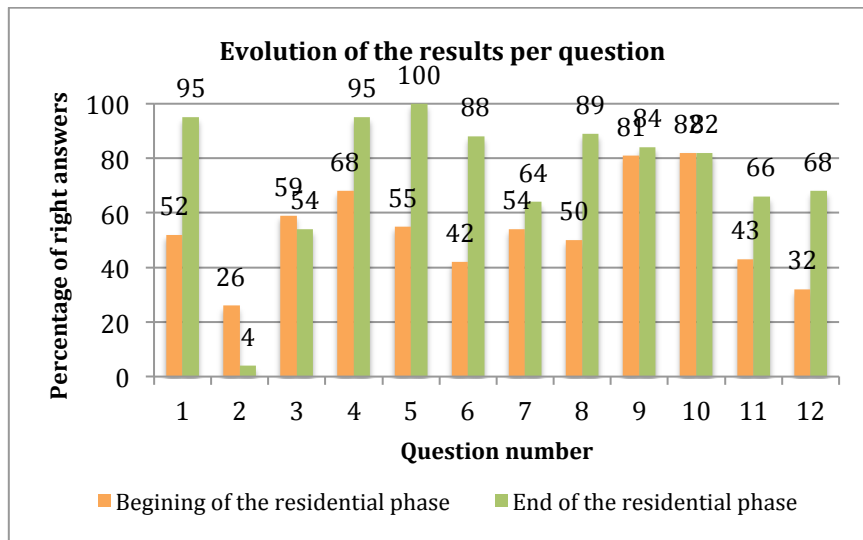




As shown by the graph below, which presents the evolution of the results obtained along the two knowledge surveys, the improvements are actual, important and general.



When looking at the display of these results per question, it seems that most of the areas of knowledge on CSDP have been adequately covered during the module. It has thus fulfilled its mission regarding the objective of “learning CSDP”, undoubtedly. However, as shown in the graph below, the students felt more difficulties with 2 questions. Question number 3 touched on the civilian aspects of the European Union’s crisis management, though the emphasis was put on the study of military operations in a first place, even if the topic was discussed in other lectures. Question number 2 touched on the EU-NATO cooperation in capabilities but it may have not been specifically covered during the lectures. It must be noted that, during the first round of test, this question already received a statistical – *i.e.* 1 chance out of 4 choices – percentage of correct answers.

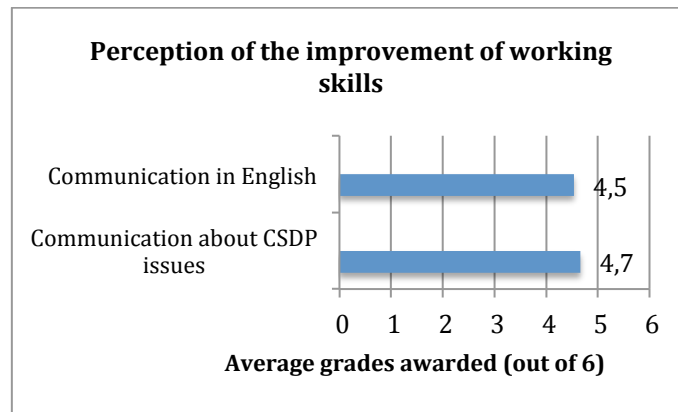


The system of monitoring of the knowledge improvements must thus be amended in order to make sure that the tests, which condition the completion of the module by the participants, cover only areas and questions purposely dealt with in the IDL and residential phases of the module. This test must thus be the product of exchanges between the organisers and the lecturing team. The level 2 questionnaire can be maintained, nonetheless, as a reliable and “dispassionate” instrument for assessing exclusively the “global level” of knowledge – and not the knowledge itself - of the participants along the main stages of the module. From a practical point of view and for reasons of organisation, it must be noted that a first half of the class passed the test before the last lecture. This shall perhaps be avoided if a future test is based on a series of questions proposed by the lecturers themselves.

### **Skills, competences and attitudes**

The CSDP modules do not only intend to spread knowledge, which may soon or later fade away, but also to raise skills and competences which support the education of a future military elite on the long-term and, practically, enter into the allocation of ECTS to a learning process. Inspired from the Kirkpatrick’s model of evaluation<sup>24</sup>, the level 3 questionnaire has attempted to monitor the outcomes of the modules with regard to progresses in terms of qualifications other than knowledge. However, it is not the role of this evaluation to define what qualifications an “ideal European officer” shall have. Therefore, the few qualifications approached by the level 3 questionnaire shall only be taken as a sample of (the most logical) qualifications any officer should have, ideally, when sent to a European mission. Furthermore, it would take too long to the participants to take part to an objective survey, like the level 2, on the progress regarding these outcomes. It was thus chosen to ask the participants to self-evaluate their perception of their progresses. The average grades are illustrated by the graph below.

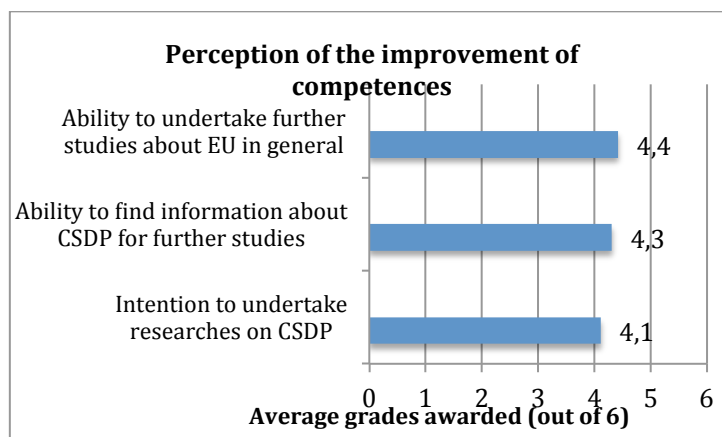
<sup>24</sup> In the Kirkpatrick’s model, level 3 measures the progresses “on the job” of the trainee. In the case of CSDP modules, the participants do not go back to a job, but to an other and more global educational process.



The comments made for the self-assessment of the progresses in communicating in English stressed that taking part to this module has been a very interesting challenge for these students. They reported, despite a (always too) short time, they improved their communicative skills not only through the lecturing time but also through social events and free times. “It was a great opportunity to practice language skills both in professional and informal dimensions”, reported a participant.

Regarding their ability to communicate about CSDP issues, the participants perceived actual progresses. They felt able to communicate more easily on the basics of CSDP but also on their own opinions – positive or negative - on CSDP. They reported that this module provided them with technical knowledge on this policy and, in a more general way a broader picture and interest for the EU action.

Similar investigations were conducted on the self-assessment of progresses on a sample of competences. The display for the module was as follows.



The comments provided by the participants on the abilities to undertake further researches on CSDP and EU comfort the idea that the CSDP module is an adequate introduction to a specialised knowledge. They stated that they received a good basis of knowledge, a basic understanding of the whole EU organisation and CSDP which would make the researches easier, and some material to start from, the CSDP Handbook notably.

The concrete intentions to undertake such further studies depend on the nature of the curricula followed by the respondents. Some participants affirmed an interest for studying further this topic: “It definitely sparked my interest in further research”, one

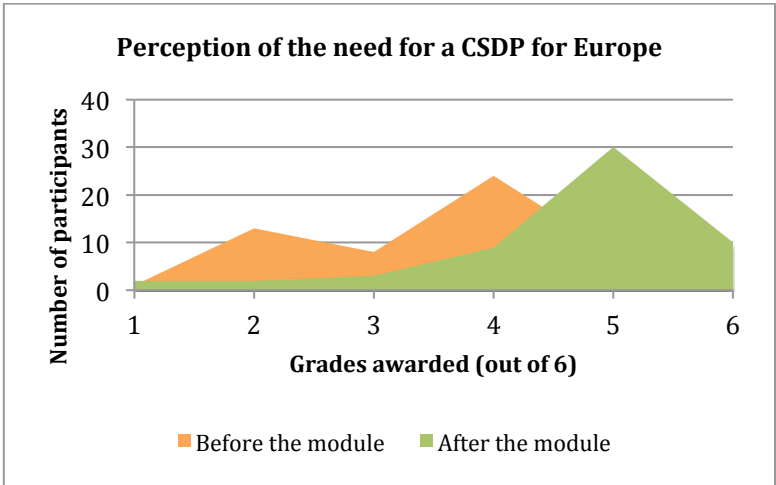


stated. A student even reported we felt better prepared... With view to his or her participation to the next CSDP Olympiad, to be organised in Greece in May 2014.

Graduation ceremony:



Finally, the participants were asked to self-evaluate their attitudes with regard to the need for a CSDP for the European Union before and after their participation to the module. The breakdown of answers is as follows and demonstrates that their position, which is expected to be a long-term gain, has obviously and positively evolved thanks to their experience. One may argue that such modules most certainly have a “propaganda effect” on the participants since the whole week is articulated around this only theme. All along the week and the different lectures, however, it could be observed that the phenomenon of “European fatigue” which the EU cruises through at the moment due to the lack of political impetus and the economic crisis had been stressed in every lecture and reported by most of the syndicate presentations. The different speakers always provided both positive and negative arguments *vis-à-vis* the perspectives of development of the CSDP and the comments provided by the participants in the satisfaction questionnaires demonstrated that they were aware of the current weaknesses but also the strengths of the policy. These positive changes in the attitudes can thus be seen as genuine.



## The social outcomes of this learning process

The CSDP modules are not only aimed at learning CSDP but also at living CSDP. The modules, as it was again the case in Austria, are open therefore to international participation. The purpose is to provide the participants with an insight of the interoperable environment they will live in when sent to an international or European operation in sharing their cultures, their visions on the conduct of operations, the traditions of their educational systems and, more concretely, sharing time and a common living environment.

Lining up of the foreign participants in the court of the castle:



This immersion into the European diversity was again successfully proposed by the Theresian Military Academy. Parts of the programmes of a vocational or purely social nature were formally dedicated to the fostering of a European *esprit-de-corps*:

- A guided visit through the castle of the Academy;
- An afternoon sport session which was organised like an “icebreaking” competition between the syndicate groups;
- A party was formally organised by the Austrian students at the cadets’ mess after the sport session;
- An evening was left free for activities to be organised by the hosting cadets<sup>25</sup>;
- And sightseeing activities (Military Museum and city centre) in Vienna were proposed, the day after the end of the residential phase.

All these activities were planned and organised by the Austrian cadets. The cadets were also free to leave the Academy in the evening and they effectively took these opportunities for more and informal social events...

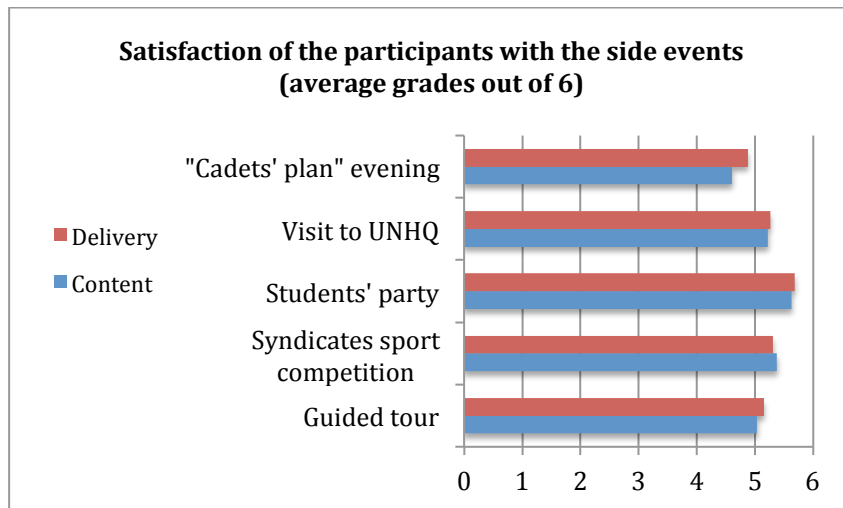
Guided tour of the Academy by resident cadets:

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<sup>25</sup> They could visit the city centre of Wiener Neustadt and its Christmas market, notably.



The satisfaction of the participants with these events, as well as the visit to the United-Nations headquarter in Vienna<sup>26</sup>, was rated, as shown in the graph below.



As expected, the participants expressed a high level of satisfaction with all these activities, which are mostly the realisations of their Austrian comrades, and appreciated the “good choice of activities” that was proposed. The comments provided in addition to these ratings, indeed, were similar. The guided tour of the Academy, animated by the American cadets on the first day, was appreciated by the international participants and the Austrian cadets suggested that it could be extended as to include also a more in-depth presentation of the Austrian cadets’ life at the Academy, their traditions... And secret places.

Most positive feelings also for the sport session, which was, according to the participants and the observations, a perfect teambuilding event which allowed creating comradeship among the participants. The party at the cadets’ mess, which followed the sport competition “was critical to getting to know the other students and to understand their backgrounds and views”, according to the comments.

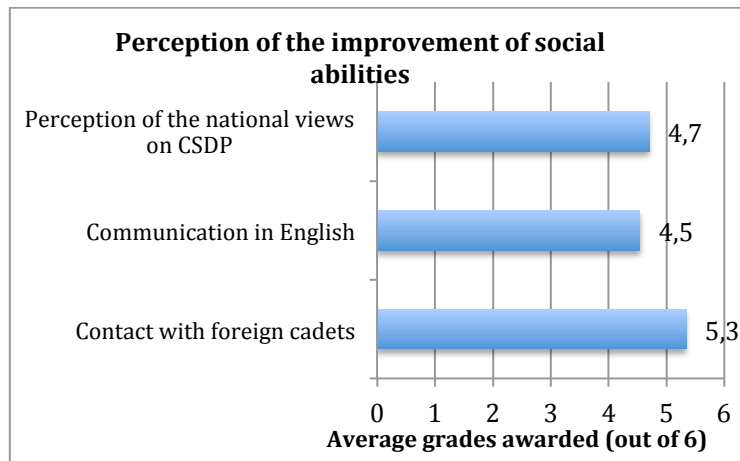
<sup>26</sup> Which is formally not a social event but which, like the social event, had been logistically organised by the Austrian cadets. Being a part of the achievements of the cadets, the choice was made to present the satisfaction with this event in this same figure.

A sport session after the class, building a European *esprit-de-corps*:



In a general way in the comments, (all) the participants expressed their highest level of (self-) satisfaction with the effective and efficient role played by the hosting cadets in the organisation of these events, which contributed to the success of this module and to their individual improvements, for example in constructing an adequate environment for expressing themselves in English.

Considering that social abilities are as much important for a future actor of the CSDP than the technical ones, the same investigation on the self-assessment of progresses on key abilities was made through the level 3 questionnaire. The display of answers is reproduced in the graph below.



The comments added by the participants in the evaluation form stressed the fact that the module gave them the opportunity to open their minds to other perceptions, confront experiences of their cadet's life and traditions not only during social timeframes but also during learning times. "It was an incredible experience to be able to meet and work with the foreign cadets", a participant reported. The individual improvements of the English are also one of the remarkable *acquis* of this module even though in a limited timeframe.

International participation, therefore, remains key for the success of the CSDP module, and presumably for all common modules designed in the context of the European initiative for the exchange of young officers, inspired by Erasmus. As the organisers reported, despite the regular organisation of the module, the widespread knowledge that Austria organises it every year, the efforts of the team of organisers for communicating multilaterally and bilaterally about the event and the award of ECTS for the learning path, it remains difficult to meet international participation. Many reasons can be found, which are mostly related to the internal policy and capacities of the education and training institutions. Some may nonetheless be addressed at the European level, in the context of the Initiative, as to improve and enhance cadets' mobility. Some are related to the administrative constraints that exist in the schools: paperwork load, lack of a point of contact for the international relations or the decision to send or not students, for example. Some are financial. All of them can and should be addressed by the Implementation Group of the Initiative, notably under the line of development 5, either in favouring synergies (e.g. creating unique documents or maintaining up-to-date a base of contact points) or in addressing recommendations at the national levels. As regards this latter aspect, a concrete action could be to recommend to suppress the additional "mission costs" that are often born by the schools for cadets which are sent on an exchange limited to educating and training, in a European Union Member State. These mission incidentals, which most often have a legal or regulatory origin, can be seen as having no *raison d'être* whatsoever considering the status of students, considering the European Union "homeland" territory and cohesion, considering the fact that students may in some cases already benefit from grants under European Union exchange programmes. As costs actually condition the future of the exchanges between European military education and training institution, international participation to events like the common modules conditions the European awareness of the future military elites.

The final word would thus be from a participant who reported that “the courses like the CSDP module show that it is possible to (link) the education with the pleasure, yet improving personal knowledge”.

The medals’ ceremony after sport, kick off of the party:



### **Participants’ satisfaction and sources for improvements**

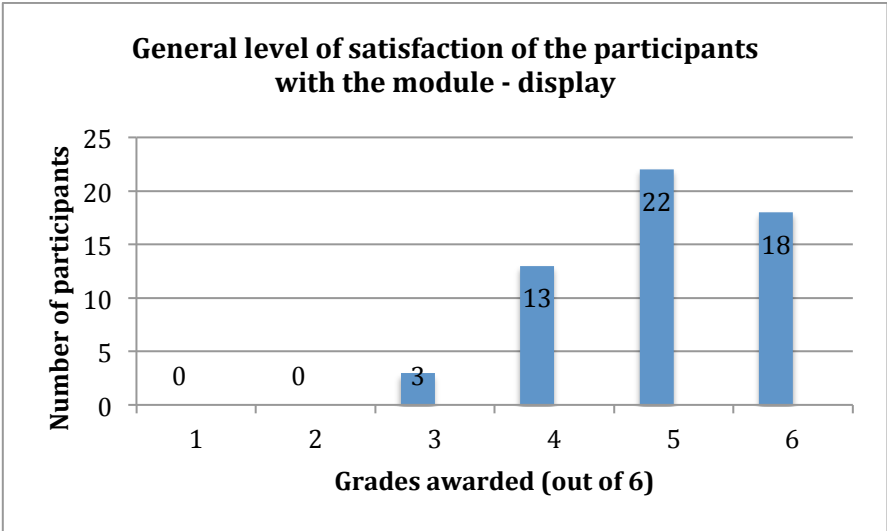
Finally, the participants were invited, in the frame of the level 1 investigations, to share their view on the aspects they considered negative or positive in the CSDP module and provide their suggestions for further and future improvements. Naturally, these comments were never unanimously shared but they reflect the internal diversity of the audience.

As of aspects they disliked, the participants mentioned that they felt the number of lectures and the density of information in a lecture were too high. Some thought also that the lecturing team lacked representatives from the EU institutions themselves. The presence of “competence observers”, even though limited to syndicate meetings, has also been disregarded by some of them. Only very few comments provided mentioned the idea that the module was too high-level for cadets, at this stage, most certainly because of the efforts made by the organisers to dedicate more time to the experience from the actual operations.

As of the aspects they liked, it is interesting to note that comments generally stressed the organisational aspects, such as the diversity and expertise of the lecturers, the hosting of their Austrian comrades... And the knowledge they acquired on the CSDP. However, meeting and networking with cadets from many different Member States and the United States, communicating in English, cooperating for common tasks within the small syndicate groups and more simply “living together” were reflected in most of these comments. Some also emphasised the better view they got on the potential and possibilities of the students’ mobility.

As it could be expected from the observations summarized along this report, the suggestions for improvements provided by the participants mostly focused on organisational aspects. They suggest to allow more time to this module, in order to decrease its intensity, and to extend and deepen – e.g. with more tasks assigned - the experience of the syndicate works in preparation of the lectures. It could be added to that the suggestion for inserting more interactive learning in the lectures through the organisation of roundtables, for example. It was also suggested by the participants to insert a lecturing unit on the relationship between the EU and other non-organisational global players, such as the BRICS countries.

All in all, these comments showed that the 2013 edition of the CSDP module in Austria fulfilled the objectives it was assigned and that the participants self-appropriated the module. As shown by the graph below, the module met a very high level of satisfaction. The average grades awarded for the module amounted 5 out of 6, which is somehow above average for the CSDP modules. The feeling of general satisfaction, furthermore, is objectively comforted by the fact that more than 71 per cent of the participants rated this module with a 5 or a 6 out of 6.



## Conclusions:

The CSDP module conducted at the Theresan Military Academy in December 2013 had been a success not only from the satisfaction aspect but also in terms of outcomes. 56 participants from 8 Member States and the United States of America were introduced, for almost all of them for the first time, to this important theme for the future of the European armed forces and gained precious understanding, skills, competences and – constructively critical – attitudes that are expected from a future actor of the European defence. The external evaluation provided through this report attempted to measure these outcomes but does not pretend to have made an exhaustive list of them.

The CSDP module, itself, is a living support of this acquisition of qualifications by the future military elites and is in constant evolution, as the Austrian experiences demonstrated. It became “hard” education in the meaning that the learning process is sanctioned by an examination, which decides upon the award of ECTS credits or not. It became comprehensive in the meaning that learning outcomes had a real importance in the learning process of a student and have an impact on his/her curriculum. The CSDP module has now become a traditional pedagogical offer of the Theresan Military Academy since all the future Austrian cadets have already or are about to experience this module.

The CSDP module is still growing, but the keys for success remain those who contributed to its success at its birth: international participation and interactive learning. These keys are forged by the organisers, the lecturers, the participants and the stakeholder institutions acting together. It has been seen, from the investigations conducted during this module, that interaction between the participants and the lecturers but mostly between the participants themselves leads to increasing self-confidence of the participants in their individual abilities and ownership for their learning process. In the same way, international participation remains a key for broadmindedness, solid networking and self-development of the individuals and the group. The intercultural aspect of the module means for the participants that “living CSDP” is an essential complement to “knowing CSDP” and a profound characteristic of the CSDP itself: the superposition of defence cultures, traditions and objectives. It is highly important, therefore, that the administrative and financial obstacles be addressed at the appropriate levels. These can be European and/or national, but the Initiative is anyway an incentive and a forum for addressing these challenges.

In Wiener Neustadt, the organisers found solutions for promoting interactive learning in the process and successfully put them into practice. Furthermore, they developed innovative dimensions for the implementation and development of these modules in making the hosting cadets responsible for parts of the module before their European comrades and, above all, responsible for their own learning. Their achievements and their major contribution to the success of this 2013 Austrian edition suggest not only that their role deserves to be developed further with regard to these modules but potentially also at the scale of the Initiative for the exchange of young officers itself.







## Annex 1: Programme of the residential phase



Sunday, 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec., 2013	Monday, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec., 2013		Tuesday, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Dec., 2013		Wednesday, 4 <sup>th</sup> Dec., 2013		Thursday, 5 <sup>th</sup> Dec., 2013		Friday, 6 <sup>th</sup> Dec., 2013		Saturday, 7 <sup>th</sup> Dec., 2013		
	Group A	Group B	Group A	Group B	Group A	Group B	Group A	Group B	Group A	Group B			
<b>According to reported arrival time</b>	0730-0800 Fall in at inner court of TMA CG/TMA		0800-0930 (2) <b>EU Missions &amp; Operations:</b> EUFOR Tchad		0800-0930 (2) <b>European defence and consequences for (EUTM) Mali</b>		0800-0845 (1) <b>Syndicate briefings</b> Deputy Leaders Group A: <b>EU Relations to Third Parties</b> LR ASPERN HAUSER		0800-0930 (2) <b>CSDP &amp; Lisbon Treaty</b> LR ASPERN BIELEWICZ		0800-0930 (2) <b>Key-briefing Europeanization of Basic Officer Education</b> LR ASPERN GELL		0800-0830 Breakfast On own responsibility
<b>In-processing</b>	0815-0900 <b>Administration</b> GELL <b>Opening Ceremony</b> WIEDNER Hall of Theresan Knights		LR ASPERN PRUCHA		LR BELGRAD FLICHY		0800-0845 (1) <b>Syndicate briefings</b> Deputy Leaders Group B: <b>Capability Development</b> LR BELGRAD SCHLECHTER		0800-0930 (2) <b>CSDP &amp; Lisbon Treaty</b> LR BELGRAD KAMMEL		1000-1200 (2) (breaks included) <b>EU and NATO security cooperation. Lessons learnt from Afghanistan for the future common military and political operations</b> LR ASPERN PIETRAKOWSKI		0830-1200 <b>On request: Sightseeing Vienna</b> GELL + OCdts PRZYSTAL, LEPAN, KILIKEVICIUS
Vienna International Airport & ÖBB Postbus, Südtiroler Platz & Bus Station Praterstern & Theresan Military Academy	0900-1030 (2) <b>Key-note Speech</b> "Harmonizing EU-Basic Officer Education – from EU-Security point of view" Hall of Theresan Knights KAMMEL		1000-1130 (2) <b>European defence and consequences for (EUTM) Mali</b> LR ASPERN FLICHY		1000-1130 (2) <b>EU Missions &amp; Operations:</b> EUFOR Tchad LR BELGRAD PRUCHA		0845-0930 (1) <b>EU Relations to Third Parties</b> LR ASPERN HAUSER		1000-1130 (2) <b>CSDP &amp; Lisbon Treaty</b> LR ASPERN KAMMEL		1000-1100 (1) <b>o Exit Test</b> <b>o Evaluation</b> B1+2 Computer room NUSSBAUMER WEISZ  <b>Alternating with:</b> 1100-1200 <b>Individual preparation for Final Ceremony</b> B3+4		According to reported departure time <b>Out-processing</b> Vienna International Airport & ÖBB Postbus, Südtiroler Platz & Bus Station Praterstern & TMA OCdts FLICKER, JENNEWAIN, KOGLER
GELL (BERGER or HADEK) & OCdts KÖBERL, PEZIGAST, GODINA, PEIRL, PRIMSCH	1045-1215 (2) <b>The European Union</b> o History o Bodies & institutional framework o Achievements CSFP LR ASPERN PFARR		1045-1130 <b>Entrance Test</b> B1+2 Computer room NUSSBAUMER WEISZ OCdt MÜLLER OCdt WESTERVELT  <b>Alternating with:</b> 1130-1215 <b>Guided tour TMA</b> B3+4 TMA OCdt REYHAN		1000-1130 (2) <b>EU Missions &amp; Operations:</b> EUFOR Tchad LR BELGRAD PRUCHA		1000-1045 (1) <b>Syndicate briefings</b> Leaders Group B: <b>Capability Development</b> LR ASPERN SCHLECHTER		1000-1045 (1) <b>Syndicate briefings</b> Leaders Group A: <b>EU Relations to Third Parties</b> LR BELGRAD HAUSER		1000-1130 (2) <b>CSDP History</b> LR BELGRAD BIELEWICZ		
	1215-1315 Lunch at TMA Buddy-Cadets		1130-1200 Maria Theresia Memorial <b>Course Photo</b> GELL		1145-1200 LR ASPERN <b>Tasks for Syndicate work</b> GELL		1045-1130 (1) <b>Capability Development</b> LR ASPERN SCHLECHTER		1000-1130 (2) <b>CSDP &amp; Lisbon Treaty</b> LR ASPERN KAMMEL		Lunch at TMA Buddy-Cadets		
	1315-1400 <b>Entrance Test</b> A1+2 Computer room NUSSBAUMER WEISZ OCdt WIGOUTSCHNIG  <b>Alternating with:</b> 1400-1445 <b>Guided tour TMA</b> A3+4 TMA OCdt KING		1315-1445 (2) <b>The European Union</b> o History o Bodies & institutional framework o Achievements CSFP LR BELGRAD PFARR		1300-1330 LR ASPERN <b>Tasks for Syndicate work</b> GELL		1300-1400 (1) <b>Syndicate Work: Questions for EU-UN briefing</b> Syndicate rooms  1415-1530 <b>Transport to UNHQ Vienna</b> + OCdts LAUBENSTEIN, PRONHAGL  1545-1700 <b>Guided tour UNHQ</b> UNHQ VIENNA TISOVSZKY		1300-1430 (2) <b>Human Rights</b> LR ASPERN STADLMEIER		1300-1430 (2) <b>Future Perspectives of CSDP</b> LR BELGRAD FICHTINGER-GROHE		
	1515-1700 <b>Syndicate Sports Competition</b> Sports field or gym OCdts BERGER, SCHWARZ, GEIGER		1330-1630 (3) (breaks included) <b>Syndicate work: EU Relations to Third Parties</b> o UN, NATO, AU, ASEAN o Regional aspects and neighbourhood policy Syndicate rooms OBSERVERS		1330-1630 (3) (breaks included) <b>Syndicate work: Capability Development</b> Syndicate rooms OBSERVERS		1415-1530 <b>Transport to UNHQ Vienna</b> + OCdts LAUBENSTEIN, PRONHAGL  1545-1700 <b>Guided tour UNHQ</b> UNHQ VIENNA TISOVSZKY		1500-1630 (2) <b>Future Perspectives of CSDP</b> LR ASPERN FICHTINGER-GROHE		1500-1630 (2) <b>Human Rights</b> LR BELGRAD STADLMEIER		
	1700-1800 Dinner at TMA Buddy-Cadets		1630-1715 Dinner at TMA Buddy-Cadets		1715-1800 (1) <b>EU-UN relations</b> UNHQ VIENNA TISOVSZKY		1715-1800 (1) <b>EU-UN relations</b> UNHQ VIENNA TISOVSZKY		1630-1715 Dinner at TMA Buddy-Cadets		1400-1500 <b>Individual preparation for Final Ceremony</b> A3+4 LR BELGRAD PIETRAKOWSKI		
	1800-2100! <b>Students' Party in Cadets' Club</b> OCdts KIRCHKNOPF, SCHROLL, ROBERTS						1715-1800 (1) <b>EU-UN relations</b> UNHQ VIENNA TISOVSZKY		1715-2100! <b>Activity according to Officer Cadets' plans</b> OCdts KAUFMANN, ZOTTER, STANAITIS		1530-1615 <b>Closing Ceremony</b> Hall of Theresan Knights WIEDNER, GELL + OCdts NIEDERMOSER, BINDER, LINHARTOVA		

## Annex 2: Austrian matrix of learning outcomes

<b>Syndicate</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	Name of Evaluator/Observer/Instructor	Start- time	End- time
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<b>Austrian grades</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
	<b>very good,</b> outstanding, with high distinction, best of Syndicate	<b>good,</b> above average, with distinction, among the bests	<b>average,</b> indicates average performance	<b>below average,</b> is the lowest passing grade	<b>not satisfied (failed),</b> did not participate in anything of the Syndicate

↓	<b>Special Knowledge</b>	<b>Decision Making &amp; Responsibility</b>	<b>Social Competence</b>	<b>Personal Competence</b>																				
	has a special knowledge  (knowledge in given topic)	gives impulses to solve the problem(s)  (acts actively)	works together with the group  (accept other solutions)	has interconnected thinking  (brings various problems together)																				
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<b>Student's name</b>	additional comments:																							

Additional general comments (if needed):