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**RESEARCH OF POSSIBILITIES TO DEVELOP THE
EXCHANGES OF YOUNG OFFICERS IN THE EUROPEAN
MILITARY HIGHER EDUCATION AREA**

DOCTORAL THESIS SUMMARY

**WITH VIEW TO OBTAIN THE PHD DEGREE
IN SCIENTIFIC SPECIALTY**

“ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE ARMED FORCES”

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I. FUNDAMENTALS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISSERTATION

1. Actuality of the PhD Research

The actuality of this doctoral research lies in the assumption that the security and defence of the European Union Member States relies more and more on international cooperation and coordination beyond the confines of their national borders. Multilateralism is a need and a challenge for modern security. It is expressed through the coordination of the individual sovereignties in international organisations that are either fully dedicated to this objective, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), or that have primarily another purpose, more global, but which slowly integrate a security and defence component, such as the European Union with its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). However, it can also be insured through *ad hoc* cooperation or “coalitions”, such as in Libya in 2011. All these configurations can be used by European States for assuring their security beyond their borders as, in fact, no State on the international scene is able to launch and sustain a military peace-keeping or peace-enforcing operation on the long run and alone anymore. To this respect, the CSDP proves itself a reliable toolbox as the European Union – certainly more than NATO, which is a “pure” military organisation, originally – demonstrated its capacity to deploy both civilian and military types of capacities, possibly at the same time and for a unique objective, under a concept of “comprehensive approach” of international security and defence. The effectiveness of European security, indeed, depends on the ability of our future military elites to understand and address common challenges, enhance the interoperability of national responses to potential threats and coordinate military instruments with the civilian ones, in the capitals and on the ground.

The young officers who begin their career in a leading position can be sent on mission very soon after their commissioning, side-by-side with other soldiers, officers or civilians from other services or States. Their position at junior level may not necessarily require from them in-depth knowledge and command of the strategic level’s arcana in a first place, as they would play a role in the decision making of the international organisation only at senior level in their career, for instance. However, they also exercise their profession in an international context and, possibly, in a multinational environment. It is highly important, therefore, to make them familiar, as soon as the initial level of their education and training with these realities of their work. In the European Union Member States, this responsibility is – to different extents as it can be exclusive or shared – the responsibility of military education and training institutes. These institutes, which are sometimes service specific, are always national. In order to prepare their future military elites to the international realities of their duties, most of them made the choice of exchanging military students, and/or to a lesser extent staff.

In the 2003 study of Prs. Harry Kirkels, Wim Klinkert, René Moelker, entitled „*Officer Education: The road to Athens!*”, a distinction was made between different traditions of academic training in the context of military officers education. Two models were emphasized considering the nature of the officer and his role in the peace construction: the Sparta model and the Athens model.

The former outlines the need for a military officer to be firstly a soldier, with regard to its behaviour on the operation field. The latter favours the vision of the military officer being an intellectual elite, ready for dealing with the complexity of the social, economical and policyrelated tasks of his or her mission.

A very similar distinction had been operated by Pr. Giuseppe Caforio in 2000 in his study “*The European Officer: A Comparative view on Selection and Education*”. He outlined two models of socialisation in higher education military institutions: the divergent model and the convergent one.

Giuseppe Caforio thereby observed if a studied institution was following the civilian university model that we know in most of the European countries - convergent then with the civilian system- or not -divergent from the civilian system, then.

The alleviation of a direct military threat for the European countries after the fall of the Berlin Wall, as an indirect consequence, fostered the attention of the European civil society to excessive sizes of their national armed forces, and lack of “intellectual” legitimacy of their military leaders for presiding over the destinies of the defence of their countries. A switch was expected from a purely Spartan officer to a more Athenian one. Jeffrey D. McCausland and Gregg F. Martin summarized this evolution stating that “in addition to the well-trained officer we needed during the Cold War, our jurisdiction during the era of globalization requires a well-educated officer as well”.

Its actuality is also shaped by the characteristics of the exchanges themselves, which are assumed to benefit to all actors of the European security and defence. The future officer or the member of the scientific, academic or managerial member of staff, individually, is expected to open his or her mind to new cultures and to acquire new knowledge and know-hows that are not – or in a different way – available in the national curricula. The sending institution undoubtedly profits from these gains acquired by their individual “ambassadors”. The host institutions presumably profit from these exchanges for increasing their visibility as elite institutions and promoting the excellence of their education and training. Since the institutions are necessarily closely related to the armed forces themselves, their exchanges have also a diplomatic dimension, which benefit to the reputation of the States parties to the exchanges. And, at a more macro level, the international security and defence organisations – or coalitions –, such as the European Union through the CSDP, are assumed to

benefit from this apprenticeship of interoperability by the future leaders of their contingents and, with a more “senior” perspective, the future decision makers in capitals or in headquarters.

Though most of the European Union Member States and their officers’ basic education and training institutions engaged in the enhancement of exchanges between themselves or with civilian counterparts, it appeared that efforts for harmonising the systems with a view to make them “compatible” for exchanges and efforts for facilitating mobility were needed. The military higher education has been entitled to use the instruments originally created in the civilian area but that are intended for use by the entire higher education. However, it rapidly appeared necessary to create additional military-specific instruments with a view to allow these institutions benefiting from the progresses reached through the civilian instruments. Before 2008 already, some academies used to meet in individual service *fora* outside the CSDP context and started exchanging between them. In 2008, the European initiative for the exchange of young officers, inspired by Erasmus (hereafter the “Initiative”), was launched and proposed to all European Union Member States and their institutions from all services. It is specifically designed, in the framework of the European Union, for making young officers in their basic education and training familiar with the role they are expected to play in a future European common defence. This initiative is the first of its kind to be launched within an international organisation and builds upon the foundations of existing basic education and training systems, their institutions, and on their respective individual and collective achievements.

After six years running and achieving positive results in providing national systems with an adequate ground for the development of their exchanges, the initiative has proved to be the framework of reference for the European integration of the military higher education. Its participating States now seek to identify ways forward to the development of mobility. In addition, they propose to all European officers’ basic education and training institutes to create an online platform which could be used as a communication and information instrument on the different systems, their potential and the opportunities they offer in terms of mobility of their military students, as well as the staff of their institutions. This would allow systematising at the European level the exchange of data on the education and training systems, with a view to enhance the mobility of knowledge and know-how. It is thus needed, before they are crystallised as “data”, to identify the levers of the development of the exchanges of young officers in their basic education and training.

This effort of identification requires that **the field of investigation is clearly delineated**. The Initiative is rooted at the “initial” or “basic” level of the education and training path, as opposed to the “advanced” level corresponding to training over the course of an officer's career. According to the Ministerial Declaration that founds the initiative: “The officer's training/education starts

after recruitment and includes vocational training and academic training up to and including master's degrees (if included in the initial training)”¹. “Basic” and “initial” represent the same reality: the Initiative focuses on the first part of an officer's education after his, or her, secondary education. However, the combination of the terms “basic military training” is used only when referring to the learning of basic military skills by the cadets, at the beginning of their curriculum, which is only a part of the initial officers’ curriculum.

What is more important is the extent of this initial education and training. According to the definition provided by the Ministerial Declaration, it starts after ones’ recruitment as a member of the national armed forces. However, what is learned before recruitment can in some cases be also considered a part of military education. For example, during the recruitment process, tests are made in order to check the applicant's fitness according to military standards. What is taught during this period, such as appropriate military behaviour and discipline, needs not be taught again once the applicant completes the process. Another, more illustrative, example is the national military service that may be compulsory in some Member States in order to be recruited as a cadet. Both these cases might conceivably be included in the initial education and training concept, but as regards the objective of the initiative, *i.e.* enhancing cooperation between military institutes, it can logically be said that these possibilities will not be in the most appropriate timeframes for an exchange of students. The end of the initial education and training in the definition provided is “up to master’s degree level”, if this level is not comprised in the advanced education. For the purposes of this study only, it may be asked whether the commissioning or the first posting of an officer might not be a better conclusion. However, it can happen that a student-officer is commissioned and becomes an officer-student after having completed a first part of the initial curriculum (*e.g.* a bachelor degree) and before completing a second part (*e.g.* a master degree) that is also compulsory for being posted for the first time. Therefore, in attempting to define the scope of initial education and training, it may be said that the end is marked by the first posting of an officer after his or her completion of the commissioning curriculum, possibly including specialist branch training. The debate about the end of the initial education and training is important in that it separates the basic curriculum from the advanced one. Advanced education and training, like “Command and Staff” training, is completely outside the scope of the Initiative.

More symbolically, there could also be discussion of the title to be given to these “young officers”, because that term also is ambiguous. However, in the context of the initiative, it is always linked to “initial (education and/or) training”. Hence, when referring to them, the terms “students”, “trainees” or “cadets” may be used indifferently in the context of this study. In the most

¹ Council Conclusions on the ESDP, 2903rd External Relations Council meeting, Brussels 10 and 11 November 2008, Annex II, Council of the European Union, Document 5155/1/08.

accepted sense, the two terms reflect different aspects of the nature of a future officer: “trainees” or “cadets” are used to reflect a military predominance in the educational tradition although “students” reflects a predominance of the academic tradition. Sociologically also, the choice between these three terms reflects different conceptions of the educational process. In the course of this study, it will be made clear that neither of these terms can be exclusively used when describing the curriculum of an officer. In fact, a similar choice is made, for the purpose of this study, regarding the term “institution” or “institute”. In Europe, there exists a wide diversity in the names given to the institutions responsible for initial training: “academy”, “college”, “school”, “university”, “training centre”, etc. It would be an over-simplification to say that these names reflect the variable proportion of academic or vocational instruction in initial education and training. This is not generally confirmed by observations and the reasons should perhaps be looked for in the difficulty of translating the names of the institutions into English. The common characteristic of all officers’ basic education and training institutions, in the European Union, is that they provide qualifications at higher education level.

Higher education, in Europe, is education provided at the level above secondary level, within universities for example. The term applies not only to the academic but also to the practical aspect insofar as it is based on the *acquis* of at least secondary education and leads to a university-equivalent diploma. In the context of a study on the basic education and training of military officers, therefore, “military education” and “military higher education” are coterminous. Besides, most European military officers’ basic education and training institutes have implemented the instruments designed for the integration of the higher education in general. Hence, when it comes to the education of the European military officers, the term “basic” shall not be interpreted according to its first meaning. “Basic” or “initial” education and training is always “higher” education whereas “advanced” education is not always “higher” education in its form.

Military higher education is generally made up of two aspects: academic education and vocational training. As will be detailed in this study, the two are sometimes difficult to differentiate, because what is considered academic in one country can be vocational in another. “Academic education” should be defined as any curriculum leading to an undergraduate (bachelor level) or postgraduate (master level only since, in the European area, doctorate studies are available at the advanced level of the officers’ education) degree equivalent to a degree conferred by the civilian higher education system. This first part of the definition needs to be supplemented because the practical training may be an integrated part of the curriculum. In this respect, the academic content will be part of the definition. The academic topics are most commonly research subjects. Some, such as ethics or leadership areas, are more debatable where this criterion is concerned, but in most cases the scientific elements of the teaching

contribute to the definition of a part of the curriculum as academic. “Vocational training” is the practical aspect of the education process. It includes basic military training, usually at the beginning of an officer’s curriculum in order to teach him or her basic military skills, the physical training that is needed throughout a military career, and the professional training to become a military specialist. The academic and the vocational components of the officers’ education and training have an equal role to play: the academic learning process provides the theoretical tools for understanding a given environment; the vocational training provides the skills and competences required for more practical flexibility. However, not all Member States make the choice to deliver, within their military institutes, both aspects in the basic curriculum of the officer. For reasons of convenience, the term “education” will mainly be used when linked to “academic” although “training” will most often be used with “vocational”.

The exploration of these national and institutional characteristics and their factual observation in the reality of the military higher education are expected to issue data. They will help structuring and populating the communication and information IT platform currently being elaborated in the framework of the European initiative for the exchange of young officers, inspired by Erasmus. The realisation of this IT platform is meant to comfort or challenge this hypothesis, as these data must allow comparison between the different systems, for their actors, allow identifying mobility opportunities. Not only the description of the commonalities and differences between the European Union Member States’ systems and policies is key to this respect, but one can also expect from this review that it will provide food for thoughts on the improvement of the existing instruments for enhancing mobility, more generally.

2. Main research purpose and scientific tasks:

2.1 The main research **purpose** is the enhancement of the young officers’ exchanges in the European Union during their basic education and training.

2.2. For achieving the PhD main purpose, the following **scientific tasks** are to be fulfilled:

1. To analyse the current state of the European military higher education.
2. To systematise the European models for basic education and training.
3. To elaborate new and adapt existing instruments for improving the mobility of the young officers in their basic education and training.

2. Scientific research object:

The scientific research object of the present doctoral study is **the officers' basic education and training systems in the European Union Member States.**

3. Scientific research subject:

The subject of the scientific research is **the perspective of exchanges of European military students.**

5. The starting hypothesis is that:

The implementation of instruments to be created and adapted on the basis of a comprehensive analysis will enhance opportunities for exchanges of young officers in their basic education and training.

6. Research methodology

In the first chapter, the exploration of the integration and mobility instruments already available to the military higher education will be proceeded with through **descriptive and analytical approaches**. A number of instruments were created and are regularly used. It is necessary to the explorer to take stock of them, to analyse their nature, objectives and implementation with a view to make a synthesis of their respective effectiveness and efficiency in fulfilling their missions and of their combined effect vis-à-vis the pursuit of the global objective of the enhancement of military mobility.

In the second chapter, both **quantitative and qualitative statistical approaches** will be used. The picture of the current situation of the military higher education systems, on the basis of which models and prospective propositions for improving the number and quality of the exchanges can be formulated, will be based on the **participation** of the responsible institutions of the 28 European Union Member States, using questionnaires.

In addition, in order to assess the efficiency of the actions undertaken at the European level, notably with the European initiative for the exchange of young officers, inspired by Erasmus, comparison of the data obtained will be regularly made with previous pictures contained in the existing literature, where and when relevant.

7. Limitations

For successfully fulfilling of the scientific tasks in the present doctoral research the following limitations are acknowledged:

1. The study will duly take into account the security and defence context that is proper to the European Union Member States and the construction of the **Common Security and Defence Policy**, that is the political ground in which these efforts take place.

2. The research focus will be on the **young officers** – formally “future” officers – **in their basic education and training** curriculum, as previously delineated.

3. The **European initiative for the exchange of young officers, inspired by Erasmus**, is, at the time being, the main common instrument for the development of mobility that focuses on military higher education.

8. The empirical basis of this thesis is the factual and empirical data collected in the course of the research in the period from 2008 to 2014.

9. The reliability and validity of the research results are provided by the application of a conceptual and theoretical-methodological basis, the factual and empirical data, the approbation of the results in front of different forums of the Initiative and the personal involvement of the author in the process of the implementation of the Initiative and his experience in this sphere.

10. Importance and relevance of the results

10.1. The scientific novelty of the research is in its systematization the models for acquisition of initial military training in the military education system of the European Union and in defining their quantitative and qualitative characteristics.

10.2. The theoretical significance of the research lies in solving the scientific task of determining the degree of compatibility between the different models for acquisition of initial military training in the military education systems in the European Union and in defining their characteristics. Possible approaches to improve the exchanges of young officers between military educational institutions in the European Union are formulated.

10.3. The practical significance of the research relates to the developed tools for collecting and processing of information and the created IT platform for supporting and improving the opportunities for the exchanges of young officers in the military education system of the European Union. Detailed measures for the development of this process are proposed.

11. Approbation and assessment of the research results

The research process, its basic principles and results are reported, discussed and adopted at meetings in the National Military University, during scientific forums in Austria, Belgium, Poland, Portugal and France from 2010 to 2014, at a scientific conference hosted by Vasil Levski National Military University in 2014 and in publications by the European Security and Defence College and other institutions.

The research results were approbated and approved through the activities related to the Initiative website (www.emilyo.eu) and meetings of the Initiative Implementation Group in Brussels in 2014 and in Athens in 2015.

II. STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS

1. The **structure** of this doctoral study consists in: a list of abbreviations, an introduction, two chapters with intermediate conclusions, general conclusions, proposals, bibliography with 83 references and two annexes, amounting 406 pages including 194 pages of main text and two annexes amounting together 212 pages and printed separately, 5 figures, 9 tables 15 graphs and 5 pictures

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III. SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE DISSERTATION

INTRODUCTION

There exist very few professions that are as international as the profession of military officer is. As a serviceman, the work of an officer and the situation of security on the international scene are intertwined. Since the fall of the Iron Curtain, and despite the fact that the defence of the national territory remains the first mission of their armed forces, the first line of defence of the States, especially the European ones, resides ever further behind the borders. As a military leader, the officer must know the realities of the “far behind”. He or she must be conscious of the needs of his or her subordinates, the expectations of his or her commanding structures and the challenges represented by his or her role *vis-à-vis* a foreign country and a foreign population with its proper geopolitical features and culture(s). As a young officer being given a leading position within the armed forces for the first time, he or she must be familiar with the realities of this professional environment before being sent on a mission.

In this introduction, the main concepts of the scientific research, the actuality, delineation and state of the art of the topic are presented. The main purpose, tasks, object and subject of the scientific research are defined and the starting hypothesis formulated. The methodology of the research is introduced and the limitations are foreseen.

The significance of the research is supported by scientific arguments and the context of the European initiative for the exchange of young officers, inspired by Erasmus.

CHAPTER ONE - THE CURRENT STATE OF A EUROPEAN MILITARY HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

In Chapter One, the first scientific task is processed: *to analyse the current state of the European military higher education.*

The exploration of the integration and mobility instruments already available to the military higher education is proceeded with through *descriptive and analytical approaches.*

A number of instruments were created and are regularly used. It is necessary to the explorer to take stock of them, to analyse their nature, objectives and implementation with a view to make a synthesis of their respective effectiveness and efficiency in fulfilling their missions and of their combined effect *vis-à-vis* the pursuit of the global objective of the enhancement of military mobility.

1. THE BASIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF THE MILITARY OFFICERS AS A SPECIFIC COMPONENT OF THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

In the first section of Chapter One, the current state of the European Higher Education is analysed, highlighting the measures that can be used by education and training institutions, including the military ones. These measures, which constitute instruments at the disposal of the higher education institutions for enhancing the mobility of their students are then confronted to the realities and challenges faced by the military institutions specifically in the perspective of their exchanges. It was observed that the existing instruments created at the European levels were not sufficient for enhancing the mobility of young officers.

1.1 THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION AS A SPECIFIC CHALLENGE FOR THE MILITARY

In this sub-section, the motivations of a European integration of the officers' basic education and training systems, as well as the trends these systems evolve in are presented and analysed.

1.1.1 THE IMPORTANCE FOR THE MILITARY EDUCATION TO INTEGRATE THE HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

The professional environment of the future military officers is commented. In a first place, it is analysed why and how the academic component of the basic education and training of the officers has progressively taken an important place in the European curricula, with respect to history, the evolution of the modern societies, the international security and defence policies and the characteristics of the profession of the officer themselves. The set of values that animate the officer – and which are eventually balanced by the basic education and training curricula – have notably been investigated through the distinction between “Spartan” and “Athenian” values that is proposed in the literature.

Table 1

Values attached to the Sparta/Athens distinction

“Spartan” values	“Athenian” values
Personal austerity and glory	Learning and high culture
Discipline and self-sacrifice	Creative and critical thinking
Science and technology	Philosophy and history
Patriotism and honour	Cross-cultural sympathies
Personal heroism	Politically post-heroic

The possible benefits from an exchange, at an individual, institutional, national and European levels were also analysed.

1.1.2 THE BOLOGNA PROCESS

The Bologna Process, which ended up with the creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), is the main instrument created by the European countries for integrating their higher education systems. It proposed measures for harmonising without standardising the functioning of the higher education across Europe, thus leaving the States with an organisational autonomy. The officers' basic education and training systems are, in most European Union countries, part of the (EHEA) and can benefit from these efforts of integration.

1.1.3 THE ACTION LINES OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS IN A MILITARY ENVIRONMENT

The officers' basic education and training systems can, in most cases, lawfully implement the acquis of the Bologna Process but their military specificity – i.e. the combination of academic education and vocational training types of activities – give to their education and training challenges that are proper to this area of the higher education. The measures which were edited and first intended for a civilian context can only be differently implemented in the military systems. The integration is made more challenging in this specific context.

1.2 MOBILITY FOR THE MILITARY HIGHER EDUCATION: INSTRUMENTS AND CHALLENGES

In this sub-section, the importance of mobility policies and experiences for the military higher education institutions are analysed.

1.2.1 THE EMERGENCE OF MOBILITY AS A CHALLENGE

The actors of the development of an exchange policy, for an institution or for a State, are presented and their respective roles analysed. Then, the most important experiences which give light on the present situation as regards the stage of development of the exchanges between European curricula are described and commented: actions at the European level and actions at the multinational level. These experiences are unsatisfactory as regards the level of proper exchange of knowledge and know-how of the future military elites.

1.2.2 THE INADEQUACY OF THE EXCHANGE INSTRUMENTS

The shortcomings in the substance of exchanges of knowledge and know-how is due to the inadequacy for the officers' basic education and training systems of the exchange programmes which are proposed to all higher education institutions. The main of these programmes is the "Erasmus" one, but it is allegedly not adapted to the military specificity – and notably to the constraints of the organisation of time and the activities – of the systems and institutions to be investigated. New measures for the integration, to be adjusted to the military needs, must then be sought.

2. THE EUROPEAN INITIATIVE FOR THE EXCHANGE OF YOUNG OFFICERS, INSPIRED BY ERASMUS AS A TOOL FOR THE INTEGRATION THROUGH EXCHANGES

In the second section of Chapter One, the European initiative for the exchange of young officers, inspired by Erasmus (“the Initiative”), is analysed. It is the main tool available to the military higher education for completing the efforts for European integration undertaken in the higher education in general. With the help of a set of harmonising measures, it aims at providing the officers’ basic education and training institutes with exchange solutions that are adapted to the military specificity of their mission.

2.1. DESIGNING THE INITIATIVE

In this sub-section, the process of creation of the Initiative is described and commented as it highlights the will for European integration which was expressed by the actors of the military higher education.

2.1.1 THE RATIONALE OF THE INITIATIVE

The motivations pursued with the creation and implementation of a complementary initiative to those undertaken in the European higher Education Area in general are analysed. The Initiative does not seek to duplicate the existing instruments which provide adequate conditions – such as the Bologna Process – or programmes – such as the Erasmus – to the enhancement of exchanges. It completes these instruments with a military-designed one aimed at benefiting all the levels of actors of the military higher education and stimulates the emergence of a European security and defence culture. This corresponds to priorities set at strategic level for the future of the European armed forces and their interoperability for the security and defence of the European Union.

2.1.2 THE BIRTH OF THE INITIATIVE

The process of maturation and launching of the Initiative is described and commented in the light of its rationale. The nature of the actors involved in its process of creation – *i.e.* the Presidency of the EU, Member States, European Security and Defence College– explains the nature of the Initiative itself, as it was a deliberate choice to establish it in the context of the Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union and not under its higher education competence. The Initiative was officially launched with the Ministerial Declaration of 10 and 11 November 2008.

2.1.3 THE OBJECTIVES CONTAINED IN THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

The Ministerial Declaration contains a series of objectives to be attained through the Initiative. They consist in measures to be taken at the European level, which are themselves touching on academic and/or vocational areas of the basic education and training of the officers, measures to be encouraged at national levels, including at the level of the institutions themselves.

2.2 IMPLEMENTING THE INITIATIVE

In this sub-section, the process of implementation of the Initiative is described and commented as it explains the current state of the measures taken at the European level for the integration of the officers' basic education and training systems.

2.2.1 THE ACTORS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION

The Initiative involves an important number of stakeholders which are sharing interests in the development of the European mobility. Its governance is formally assured by the collaboration of representatives designated by the Member States and their relevant education and training institutions, that are supported by the European Security and Defence College inside the Implementation Group, which started its work in February 2009.

2.2.2 THE FIRST IMPLEMENTATION PHASE: "QUICK WINS"

Before it proceeded with the analysis of a comprehensive stocktaking of the military higher education, the Implementation Group began its work in proposing to design "quick wins" for the quantitative and qualitative improvement of the exchanges between the relevant and willing education and training institutes. This included: the creation of a common module on ESDP/CSDP, the creation of communication instruments, the drafting of a framework agreements and the creation of other common modules in areas where the institutes may feel a need for complementary education or training offer.

2.2.3 THE SECOND IMPLEMENTATION PHASE: "LINES OF DEVELOPMENT"

After the comprehensive assessment of the European military higher education, the actors of the Initiative agreed on a series of axis to be worked on for pushing the integration forward on a voluntary basis. These "lines of development" deal with: the creation of a system of equivalence (inspired by the ECTS) in vocational training, the elaboration of a common qualifications framework, the development of internet-distance learning contents, the creation of the IT platform, the creation of the Framework Agreement, the communication on the Initiative itself and encouragement for implementing it and the use of the "Erasmus +" programme in the officers' basic education and training.

CHAPTER'S CONCLUSIONS

The analysis conducted in Chapter One allowed drawing the following conclusions:

1. The “military specificity” makes the military higher education a specific island in the European Higher Education Area, which is currently being realised. The Process is liberal enough to allow different systems in terms of study cycles, credits, quality assurance, etc., co-existing within the EHEA. Military higher education does not play against these rules and, for most of the officers’ basic education and training systems, even seeks to follow the recommendations issued for higher education in general.
2. The structural support measures – such as the Bologna Process – and the contextual support measures – such as the programmes designed by the European Union – to the enhancement of students and staff mobility must be seen as invaluable contributions to the European integration of the officers’ basic education and training systems. Nevertheless, these contributions are not sufficient to overcome what constitutes the military specificity and its consequences on mobility. They had to be completed with additional instruments.
3. The European initiative for the exchange of young officers, inspired by Erasmus is not about substituting a “military” tool to the tools created in the EHEA but about making the best use of these instruments for integration. New actions may be required and these shall undoubtedly be based on the realities and specificities of the military higher education.
4. In order to stimulate the exchanges, the means chosen by the civilian and military higher education is harmonisation without standardisation. The education and training systems, the techniques used for transmitting knowledge and know-how to the future leaders may vary radically from an institution to another in the same region, or the same country, or the same service. Though “families” may be encountered in the exploration, the picture of this island is not expected to be uniform.

CHAPTER TWO - REINFORCING THE INTEGRATION OF THE EUROPEAN MILITARY HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH MOBILITY

In Chapter Two, the second and third scientific tasks are processed: *to systematise the European models for basic education and training and to elaborate new and adapt existing instruments for improving the mobility of the young officers in their basic education and training.*

It makes use of both *quantitative and qualitative statistical approaches*. The picture of the current situation of the military higher education systems, on the basis of which models and prospective propositions for improving the number and quality of the exchanges can be formulated, is based on the *participation* of responsible institutions of the European Union Member States, using questionnaires.

1. MODELLING THE EUROPEAN OFFICERS BASIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEMS

In the first section of Chapter Two, similarities in the models of education and training of the European Union Member States are looked for and allow for proposing different classifications of the systems and institutions in relation to the objective of mobility development. The commonalities in the mechanisms and processes experienced and implemented in the education and training systems and institutions are also studied, in order to support the identification of exchange opportunities.

1.1 EFFORTS FOR RATIONALISING THE EUROPEAN MILITARY HIGHER EDUCATION

In this sub-section, the methods used for establishing a picture of the current state of the European military higher education, based on questionnaires distributed to the relevant actors are described. The axis of these inquiries, *i.e.* the contents of the questionnaires, are also explicated.

1.1.1 DEFINITION OF THE METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

The process of collection of data on the different systems that compose the European military higher education is intertwined with the objective of creation and population of the IT platform to which the present doctoral research is related. The investigations, therefore, are aimed at providing comparable data that the actors of the mobility, *i.e.* the institutions in a first place, may use for identifying the levers of exchanges they consider the most important. They were conducted using questionnaires elaborated with the support of the European Security and Defence College and distributed in similar conditions to all the European Union Member States or directly to their institutes represented at the Implementation Group of the Initiative. These questionnaires, once edited, are annexed to the present doctoral dissertation in the form of fiches and their content is uploaded on the IT platform constructed in parallel to this scientific study.

1.1.2 DELINEATION OF THE FACTORS OF MOBILITY

The factors that stimulate the exchanges, or in the contrary constrain it, for a military higher education, are the markers of mobility that are investigated through the questionnaires. Formal factors relate to the identity of the subjects of the survey. The survey focuses on the systems – and not the institutions - of basic education and training of the officers of four “main” services that are the land forces, the navies, the air forces and the gendarmeries.

1.2 ESTABLISHING FAMILIES OF MOBILITY-ORIENTED SYSTEMS

In this sub-section, the efforts for modelling the existing officers’ basic education and training systems are presented and completed with propositions of additional classifications focusing on the capacities for developing the mobility. The scope of the investigations, owing to the very practical objective associated to creating and populating an IT platform, is limited to elements that are considered “essential” for the development of the mobility. They concentrate primarily on technical aspects, which limits the efforts of theorisation about families and cultures of education and training in general only to the information collected through the present study.

1.2.1 HYPOTHESES CONCERNING THE EXISTENCE OF “FAMILIES” IN THE MILITARY HIGHER EDUCATION

Efforts of classifications have been undertaken by authors and can be found in the literature, though this one is limited as it relates to the initial phase of the education and training of the officers. With these investigations through fiches, the markers can be expected to comfort or not these hypotheses of identity between education and training cultures.

The classification that is proposed by professors Kirkels, Klinkert and Moelker is a first one to be considered. It is mainly based on the respective weights of the academic education and the vocational training, similar to the Spartan/Athenian dichotomy, and the idea that, even if they necessarily complement each other as both are needed to train the military elite, these aspects “fight” for being the biggest piece of the cake. In fact, these aspects do coexist in every European Union officers’ basic education and training system but they do not always coexist in an institution. It gives interesting indications on the cultural identity of a system but is less relevant with regard to mobility enhancement.

Giuseppe Caforio proposes a second classification which sensibly implements the Spartan-Athenian dichotomy as well, but at the level of the basic education and training institutions this time. He establishes a distinction between the institutions of which the education and training policy and functioning converge with those of civilian higher education institutions, and the institutions that diverge with them, *i.e.* organised on the model of “military academies” understood in a classical way. It concentrates its efforts on the

institutions, which are the first actors of the mobility but it does not take into account the possibility that cadets move very regularly from an institution to another within a period which could be envisaged for inward or outward exchanges. This classification is highly interesting because it also designed “markers” which are relevant for the observation of the military higher education with a “mobility-oriented” viewpoint as well.

The author of the present research proposed a classification that was based on the nature of the organisation of these two components within the basic education and training systems. Using the calendars of the curricula, which reflect their contents, 3 categories could be defined and classified as follows:

1) Systems where the training and education are strictly and organically separated. In this specific area, delegation should be also taken into account, but only when military education does not itself provide the same kind of training.

2) Systems where training and education are separated in the curriculum. In practice, this means that the period of basic officers’ education and training alternates the two aspects within the process.

3) Systems where training and education are conducted in parallel. It should be taken into account that, due to the specificity of the professional training, which requires the full mobilisation of the cadets for a certain period of time for some of the exercises, “parallel” education/training is also mixed with alternation of events.

Following this classification, the current European Union systems had been “distributed” in 2010 according to the following table.

Table 2

Classification of the systems according to the organisation of the academic and vocational components in 2010

	Organic separation	Intermediate	Alternation	Parallel (and alternation)	Intermediate separation (and parallel)
Army	MT, SL, DE	HU, SE, CZ	AT, BE, FR, GR, IT, NL, RO, SK, RO (engin.), ES	EE, FI, HR, LT, BG, PT, PL, PL (engin.)	IE, UK
Navy	MT, DE, SL	SE	NL, PT, BE, SK, BG	ES, FI, FR, HR, IT, RO, EE, GR, PL	IE, UK
Air Force	DE, MT, SL,	CZ, HU, SE	AT, FR, GR, BE, IT, NL, RO, SK, LT, RO (engin.)	BG, EE, ES, FI, HR, PL, PL (engin.), PT	UK, IE
Gendarmerie			IT, RO	ES, PT, FR	

It is also possible to classify the systems according to other markers, such as the level of academic studies that is required from a newly commissioned officer posted for the first time as a leader. It can also be proposed to classify the institutions, this time, according to the level of implementation of the European Higher Education Area standards and guidelines. It is also studied whether both the institutions and the systems can be classified according to the qualifications they deliver to the future military officer, although the markers remain to be formally agreed on at European level.

1.2.2. ASSESSING FUNCTIONAL MODELS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEMS

Although it is assumed that the systems are in better position for exchanging if they share fundamental characteristics that make them of a same “family”, it is also assumed that the systems and institutions can exchange between themselves in good conditions as well if they share similarities in the functioning of their education and training, *i.e.* if they share similarities in the mechanisms and procedures they use. The markers of the development of mobility policies and practices were submitted to the self-assessment of the actors of the European military higher education in the form of two questionnaires, which were edited and annexed to the doctoral dissertation as Annex 1.

The first questionnaire is a scheme aimed at investigating in general terms how a candidate may become a commissioned officer of the national armed forces, posted for the first time as the leader of an active unit, with the basic education and training curricula. These schemes are generic and synthetic in the meaning that they include information on the education and training processes of all their military officers. A distinction might have been made by the Member States themselves in the schemes between the different services, through specific mentions or arrows of different colours, but only one scheme is provided by Member State. In the reality of the basic education and training, fundamental differences may exist between the different services – especially where basic education and training is not joint –, which would make the schemes more complex and difficult to read with regard to the objective of merely introducing the national education and training path. Therefore, the information contained in these documents is intentionally limited to generic descriptions applied to an abstract “military officer”, at the level of a State. The key of these schemes is as follows:

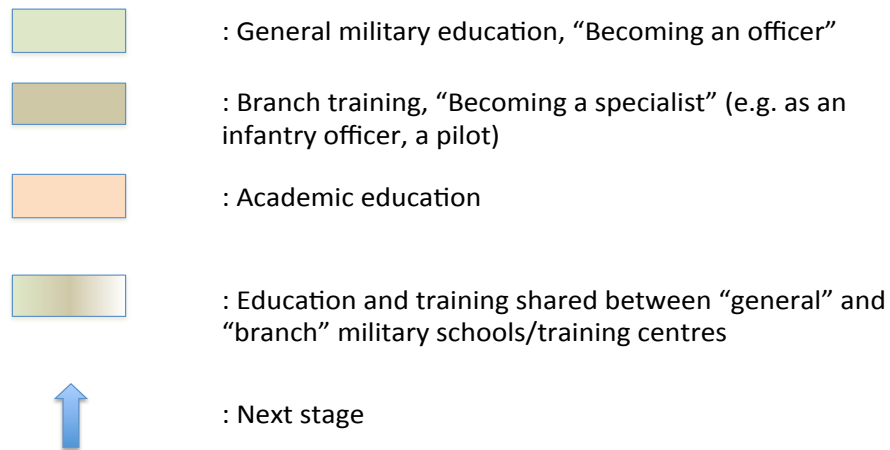


Figure 1. Keys for the schemes “How to become an officer of the (...) armed forces”

The second questionnaire is a fiche that presents the main information which can be needed when an institution intends to develop a mobility policy and plan exchanges of students and staff. The information contained in these fiches is an overview of the markers which are in position to ease the identification of potential partners in exchange and concretely plan such exchanges. It is divided in nine “categories”:

- Formal information on the central institutions of the basic officers’ curricula;
- Information on the curricula and specialisations that are proposed in the national system;
- Factual information on the numbers of future officers in their basic curriculum;
- Information on the organisation of the academic and vocational pillars of the curriculum, presented in the form of a calendar, the key and a fictitious example of which are presented hereunder;

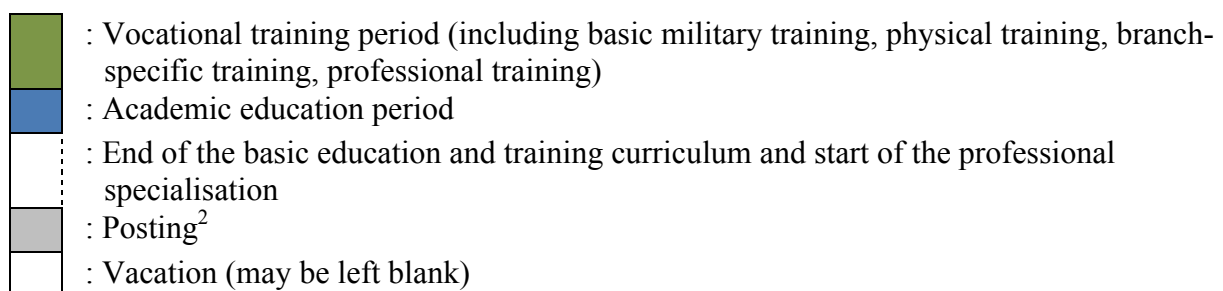


Figure 2. Keys for reading the calendars of the basic education and training

² In some Member States, depending on the domestic organisation of their system, branch/specialist training is not seen as part of the initial education and training. Additional colour for “posting” in the calendar thus marks the end of all education and training processes that take place before the start of the career as a commissioned officer.

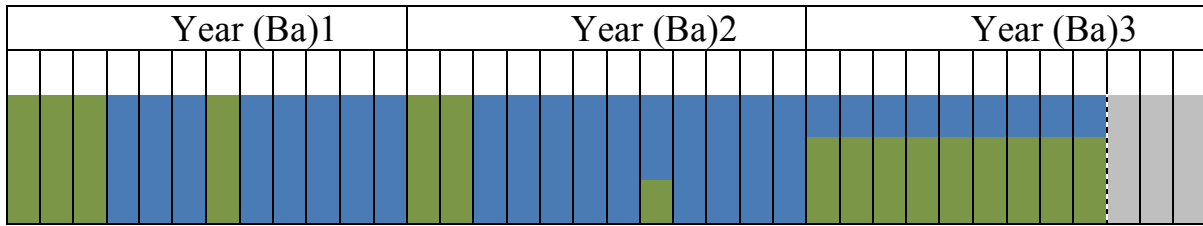


Figure 3. A fictitious calendar

- Information about the implementation of the guidelines and principles set for the European Higher Education Area in both academic education and vocational training;
 - Information related to the organisation of research activities and the possible implementation of doctorate degrees;
 - Information about the experience and cultures of the Member State and its institutions of the mobility;
 - Information on the policy of the institutions of the system in terms of languages;
 - Synthetic introduction of the recruitment procedures of cadets and the main stages of the advanced education of the commissioned officers.
- One fiche is filled by service existing in the national armed forces.

2. CREATING AND REINFORCING INSTRUMENTS FOR DEVELOPING THE MOBILITY

In the second section of Chapter Two, the data collected through the questionnaires distributed to the European Union Member States’ basic officer education and training institutions were analysed. The information they provided in terms of sources for improvements were then used to formulate propositions for completing the actions toward a more effective and efficient mobility of the students, their knowledge and know-how.

2.1 OBSERVATION OF THE FACTORS OF MOBILITY

In this sub-section, the results of the investigations are displayed and commented with regard to the objective of quantitative or qualitative improvement of the mobility between the European officers’ basic education and training systems. This analysis provides the researcher with the photograph expected and will help one assess whether improvements are effectively needed and where.

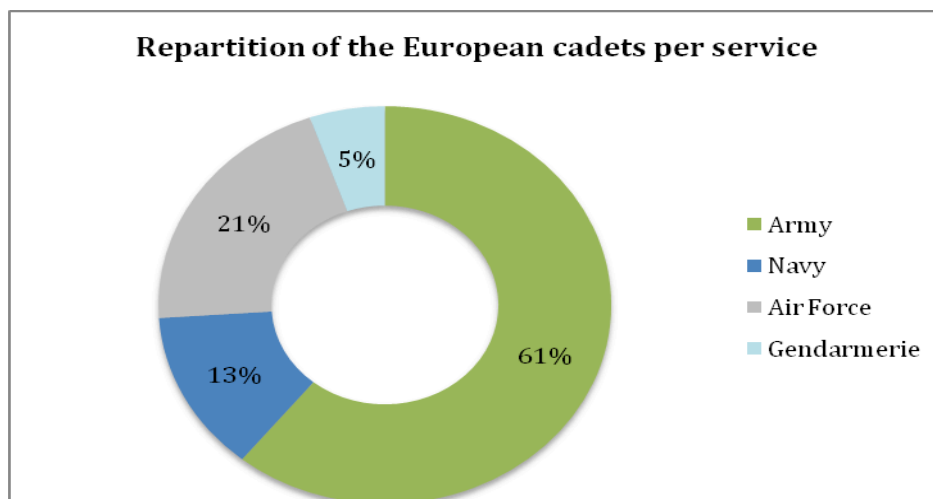
2.1.1 THE OPENNESS TO EXTERNAL AUDIENCES

A first category of factors of the development of mobility consists in the capacity for an institution to “attract” external audiences. This attractiveness does not necessarily need to be oriented toward exchanges in a first place, *i.e.* to be oriented to actors or customers of the military higher education *stricto sensu*.

It can also be the capacity of the institution to appear as a quality institution providing education and/or training and promoting the level of excellence of its offer in general, which encompasses the openness for providing information on its own offer and functioning and dialoguing with other audiences, such as civilian ones.

The number of students is also a subjective element of the power of attractiveness of an institution one might consider, although it does not objectively give information on the quality that can be expected from an education or training process. Overall, it is estimated from the investigations conducted in the framework of the present study and completed with previous estimates that the young officers in their basic education and training in the European Union amount 16.500 cadets. The repartition between the different services is as shown by the following graph.

Graph 1



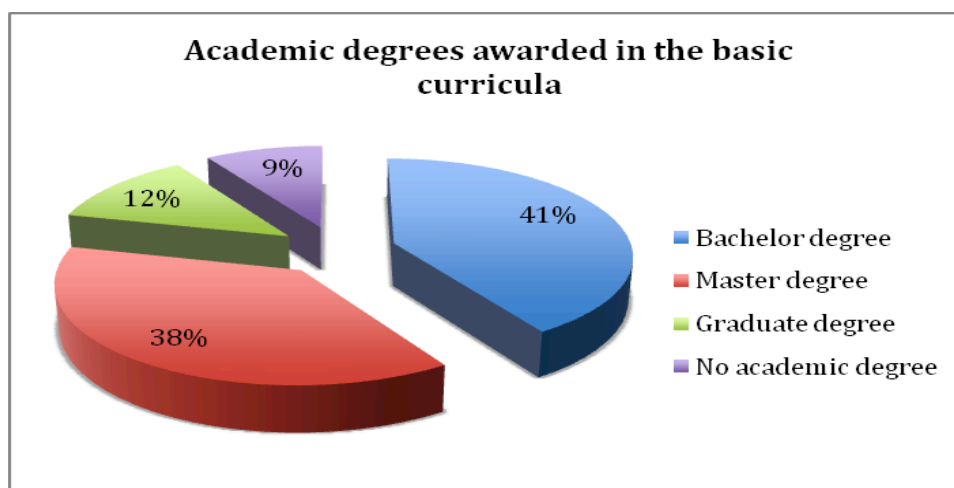
The openness is also demonstrated in the choice made by the central institution(s) of the system on the organisation of research activities and proposition of “advanced” degrees such as doctorate level and policies in terms of teaching of and teaching in foreign languages.

2.1.2 THE ORGANISATION OF THE ACADEMIC AND VOCATIONAL COMPONENTS

The “menu” of the curricula is what defines the scope of an exchange. It is what attracts the partner in an inward mobility and what motivates an institution in its projects of outward mobility. It is crucial to study how these curricula are organised and proposed in the form of a “menu”, if the researcher wishes to find a way through the obstacles to freed mobility.

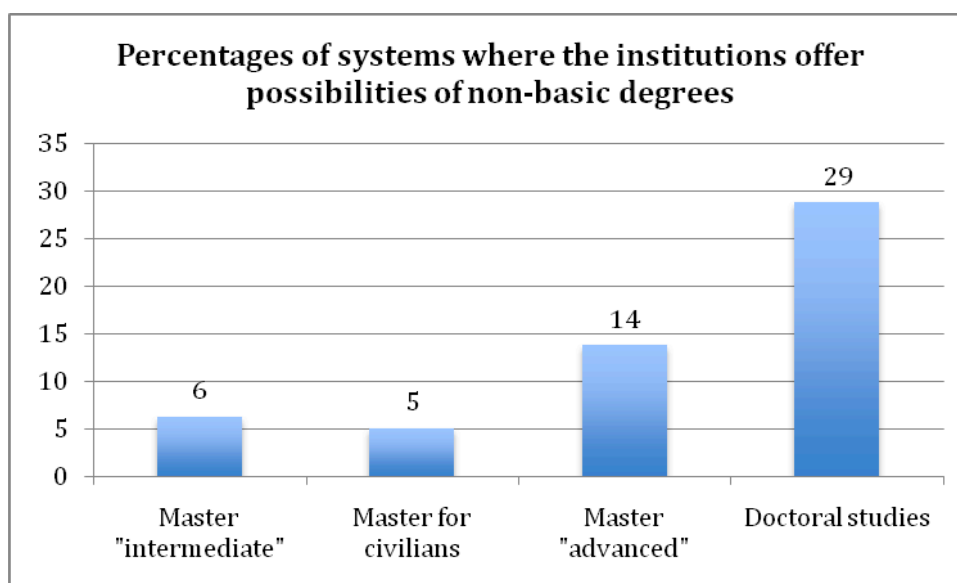
As observable from the graph below, most of the basic education and training systems of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Gendarmerie officers indistinctively go up to the bachelor degree as defined by the European Higher Education Area. Though less, an important number, nonetheless, go up to the master degree.

Graph 2



The basic education and training institutions may also offer degrees that are not part of the basic curriculum of a military officer as defined in the previous chapter. These possibilities are reflected in the graph below.

Graph 3

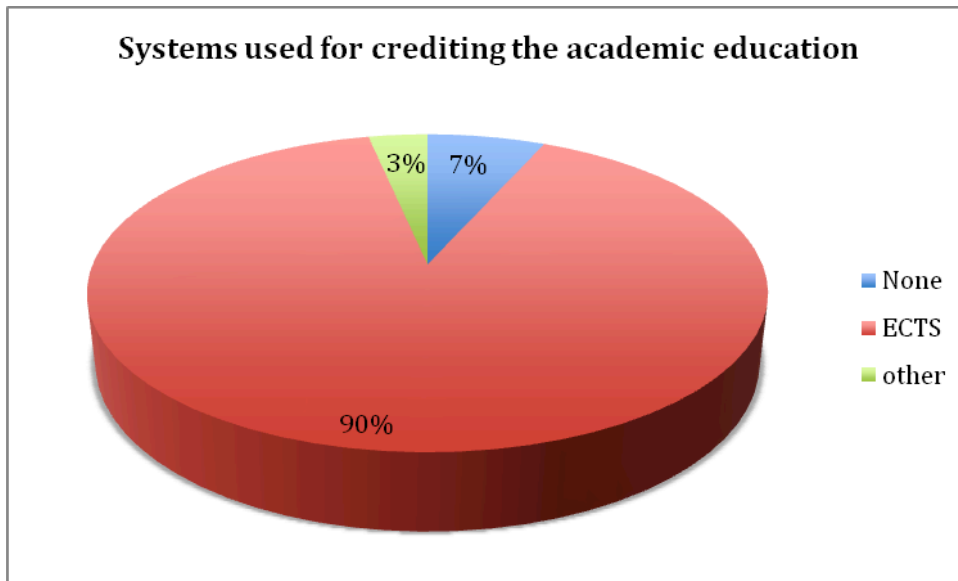


In terms of military specialisations to the different branches within a given service that are proposed to the future military officers, the investigations demonstrate that the different national systems share a European identity. From one country to another, similar specialties are found.

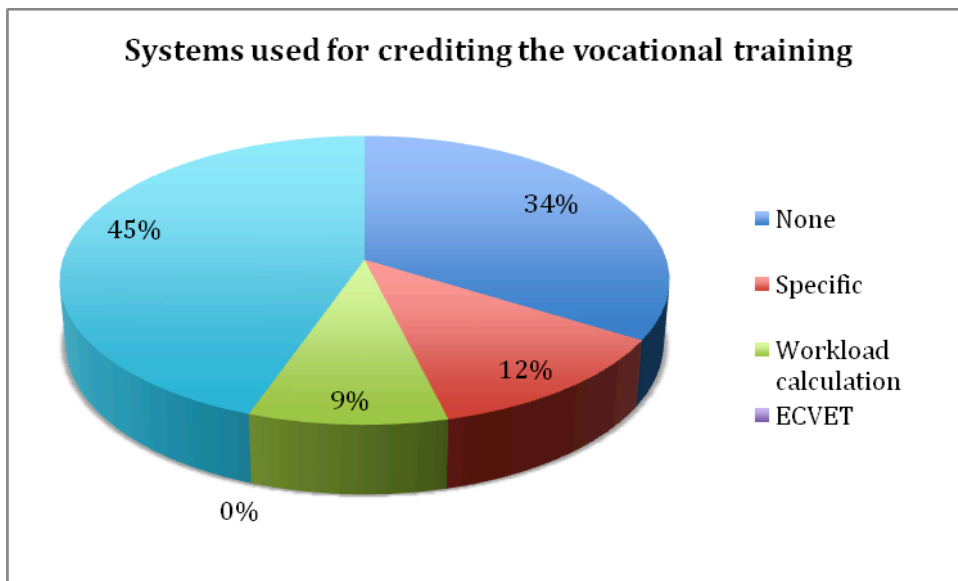
As regards the practical organisation of these basic curricula and the ways the academic and vocational pillars are articulated, several indicators have been investigated. One of them is the use of the credits for giving value – and exchanging – to the education and training contents. The European Credit and Transfer System (ECTS credit), the implementation of which is also a measure contained in the Bologna prescriptions, is effectively implemented in the

European military higher education, in a better way in the academic education than the vocational training, as shown by the following two graphs.

Graph 4



Graph 5



The fact that the ECTS is widely shared as an instrument for crediting both the academic education and the vocational training is a sign that a military science is effectively growing and, in the perspective of developing mobility, that combining both these dimensions in one exchange period is possible. With a view to “trade” vocational training, improvements have to be made regarding the development of a single currency.

The calendars contained in the fiches, finally, describe the articulation of the academic and vocational components of the curricula in the limited timeframe of the commissioning curriculum. They reveal the diversity of the systems that exist in the European Union.

The calendars contained in the fiches, finally, describe the articulation of the academic and vocational components of the curricula in the limited timeframe of the commissioning curriculum. They reveal the diversity of the systems that exist in the European Union. Between 2010 and 2014, some of the systems have operated internal transformation and the new repartition looks like the following.

Table 3

Classification of the systems according to the organisation of the academic and vocational components in 2014

	Organic separation of the academic / vocational	Intermediate	Alternation academic / vocational	Parallel organisation academic - vocational (and alternation)	Intermediate separation (and parallel)
Army	DK, SL, DE	CZ, SE	AT, BE (+LU), FI, FR (+LU), GR (+CY), HU, NL, RO, SK, RO (engin.), ES	EE, HR, IT (+MT), LT, LV, BG, PT, PL, PL (engin.)	IE (+MT), UK (+MT)
Navy	DK, DE, SL	SE	NL, PT, BE, BG, FR	ES, FI, HR, IT (+MT), LV, RO, EE, GR (+CY), PL	IE (+MT), UK (+MT)
Air Force	DK, DE, SL	CZ, SE	AT, FR (+LU), BE (+LU), HU, IT (+MT), NL, RO, SK, LT, LU, RO (engin.)	BG, EE, ES, FI, GR (+CY), HR, LV, PL, PL (engin.), PT	IE (+MT), UK (+MT)
Gendarmerie			IT, IT (GdF)	ES, PT, FR, RO	

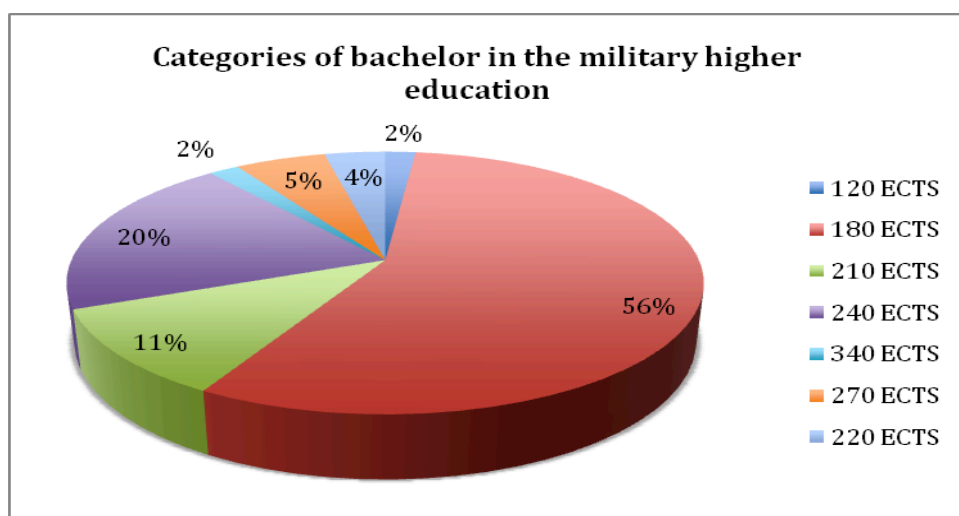
2.1.3 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EHEA ACQUISITIONS

The data collected through the investigations provided essential information on the readiness of the European systems for exchanging knowledge and know-how between themselves or with the civilian higher education institutions. The indicators retained for providing a photograph of the state of progress toward this implementation do not condition the mobility, as it is possible for institutions to exchange without them in principle, but they

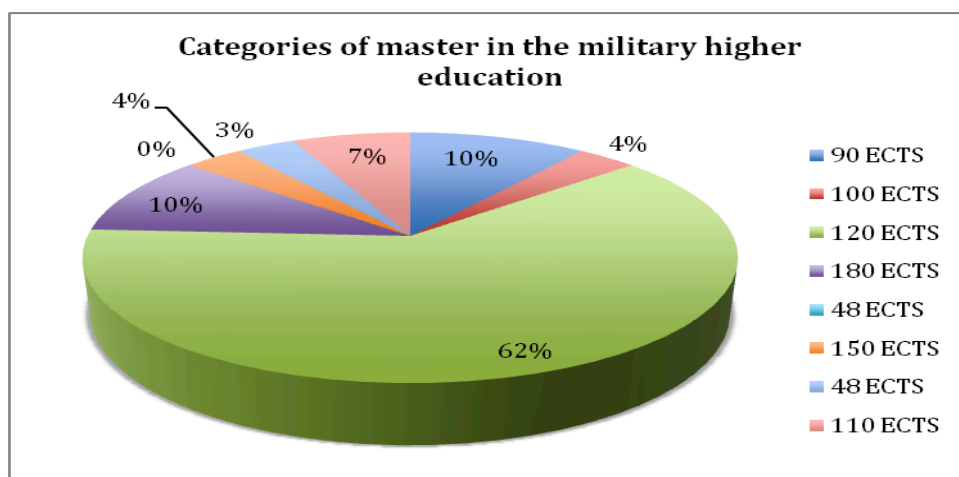
describe the most adequate ground on which a meaningful mobility can develop and be sustained.

Regarding the organisation of the study cycles, it is interesting to note, as shown by the following graphs that, despite the diversity of existing models – that are all allowed for in the European Higher Education Area – most of the basic curricula follow a somewhat “classical” model of 180-120 ECTS for the bachelor-master degrees, as shown by the following two graphs.

Graph 6

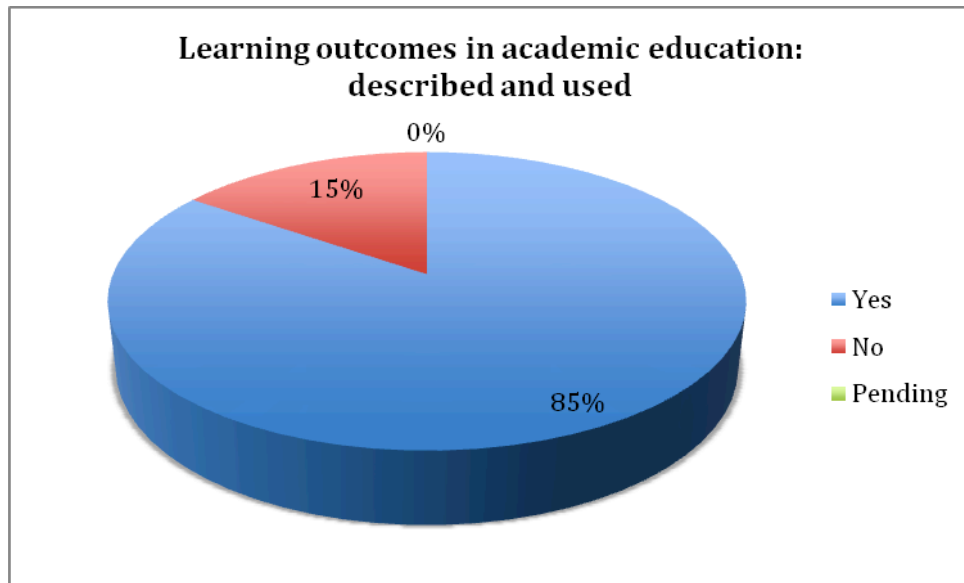


Graph 7

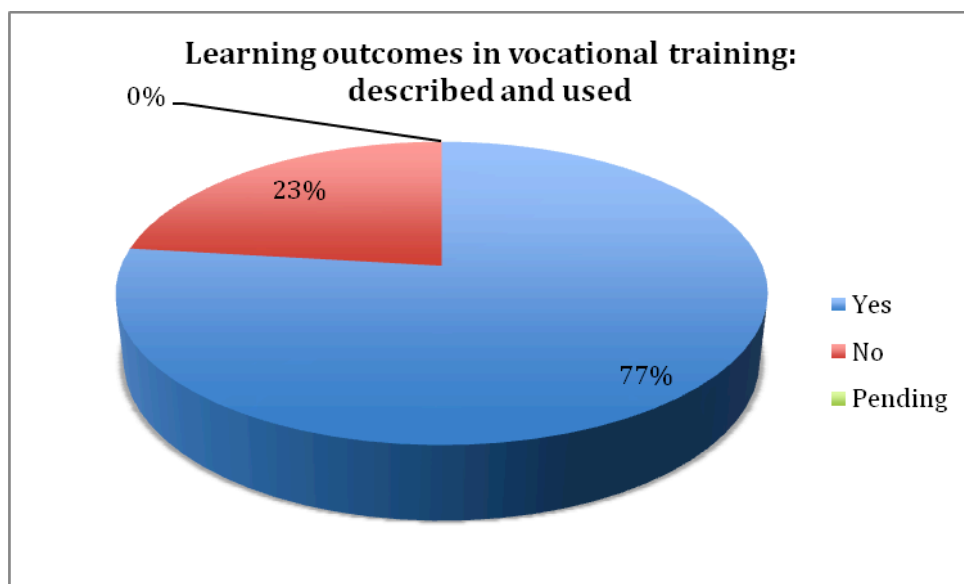


The learning outcomes are rarely used outside the scope of the mere description, notably for the estimate of the number of ECTS to be given to one or the other course. This is even more visible in the vocational training area where the use of credit systems is even more limited, as shown by the following two graphs.

Graph 8

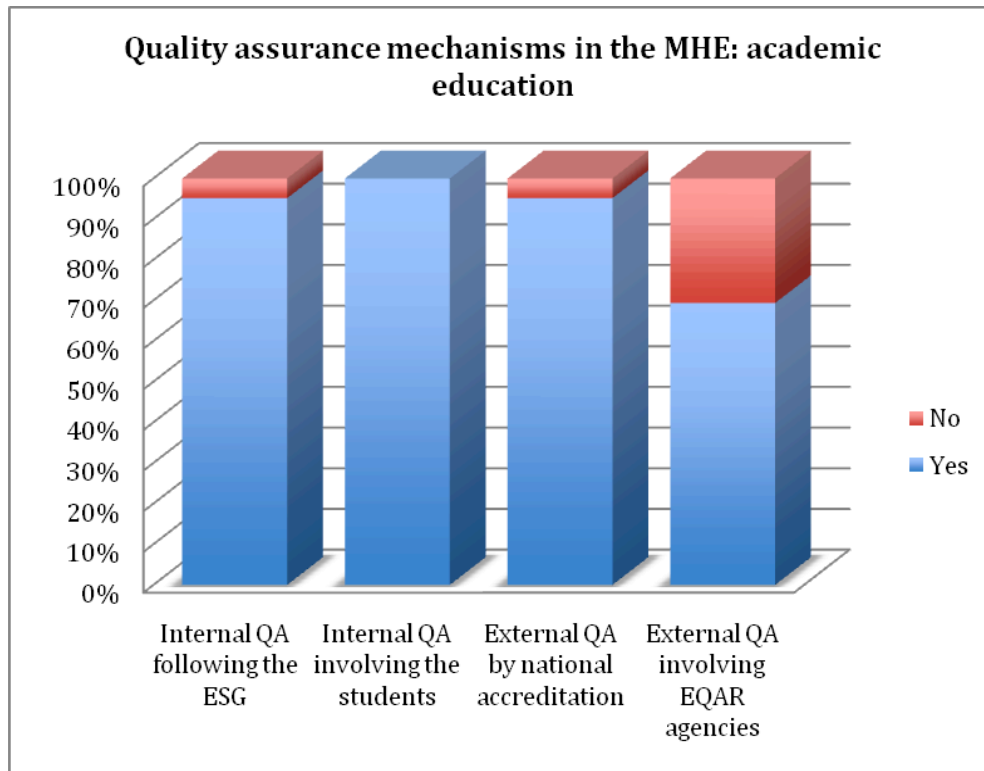


Graph 9

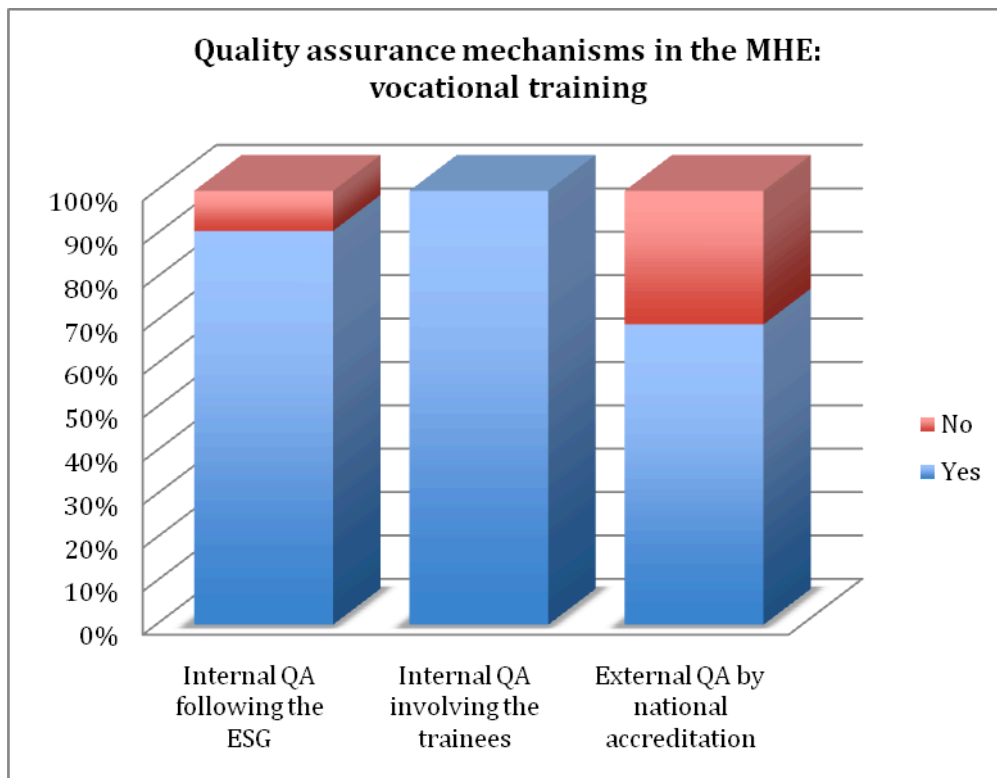


In terms of quality assurance processes, the investigations demonstrated that the culture and practices of the military institutes were actual and effective, as shown by the graphs below, and as reliable as their civilian counterparts.

Graph 10

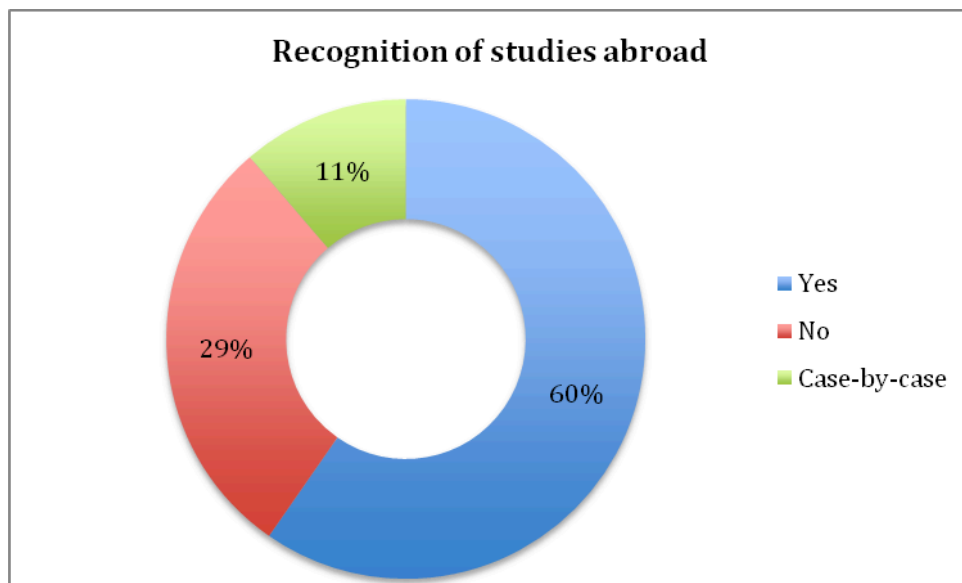


Graph 11

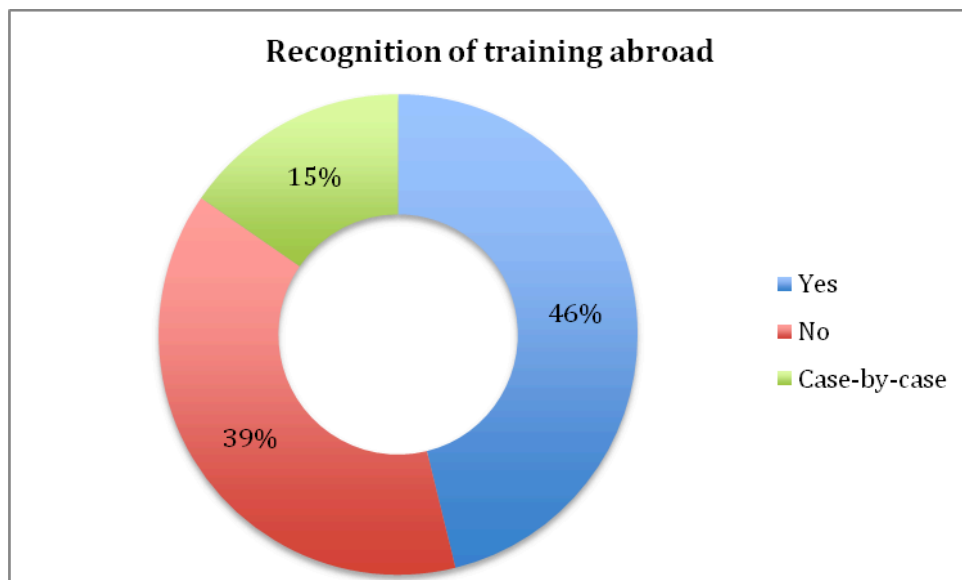


As regards recognition of a study or training experience abroad through the transfer of the credits obtained or insertion into the diploma supplement, finally, the collection of answers from the actors of the basic education and training systems show an optimistic picture which, it is assumed, does not exactly correspond to the reality. The display of the answers is summarised in the following two graphs.

Graph 12



Graph 13



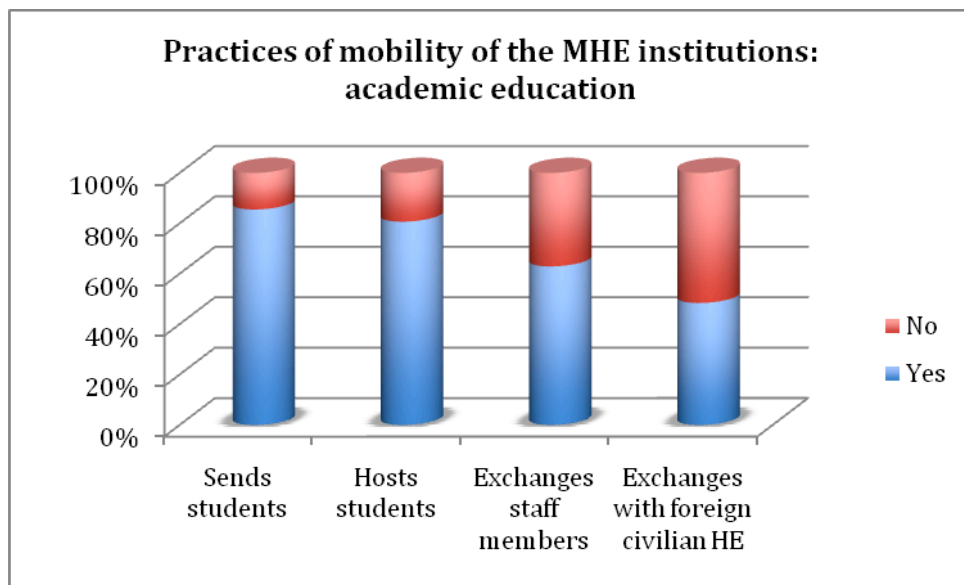
2.1.4 THE USE OF EXISTING MOBILITY INSTRUMENTS

For the academic year 2013-2014, the systems for which updated data were provided reported that 8 per cent of the total number of European military

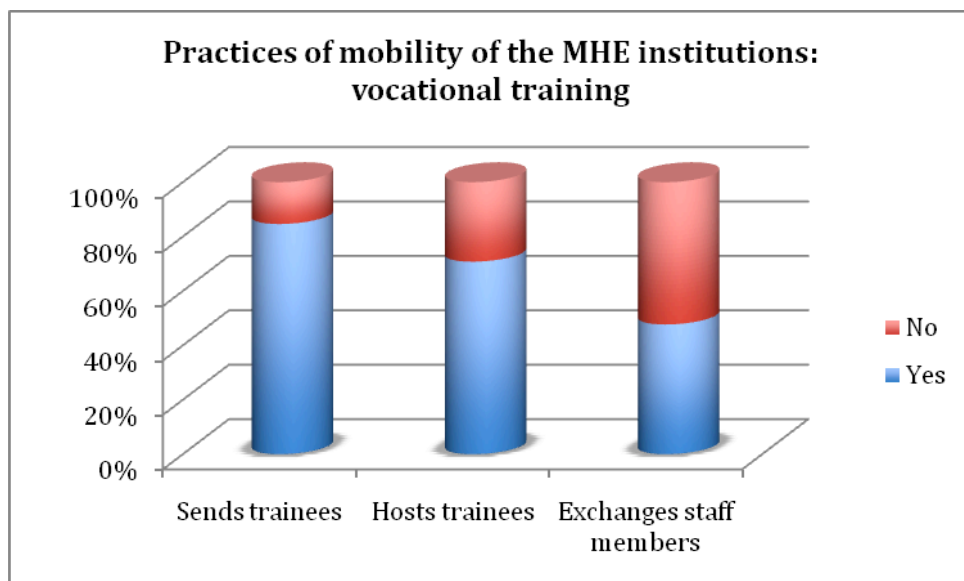
students in their basic education and training had been exchanged for a period amounting or exceeding one working week. For the Army cadets, this percentage goes up to 10 per cent, 4 for the Navy and the Air Force, 1 for the Gendarmerie. As for comparison, in the academic year 2011-2012, the Erasmus programme allowed mobility for only 0,95 per cent of the total number of European higher education students.

Almost all the basic education and training systems have already experimented exchanges in either academic education of vocational training or both, as shown by the following two graphs.

Graph 14



Graph 15



2.2 LESSONS AS REGARDS THE INSTRUMENTS OF MOBILITY IMPROVEMENT

In this sub-section, the practical lessons of the observations made are drawn. The European initiative for the exchange of young officers, inspired by Erasmus, is for the time being the most adequate instrument that exists for addressing the development of the mobility in the military higher education in general. Some of its actions, as demonstrated along the analysis of the data obtained, must be reinforced by new measures or re-adapted to the realities of the military higher education. From a technical point of view, the generalisation of the “vocational ECTS” the researchers proposes would be fully effective only when the link between the learning outcomes and the qualifications designed in the framework of the line of development 2 will be made.

2.2.1 MEASURES RELATED TO A SYSTEM OF EQUIVALENCE IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Owing to the observations of the picture made through the present investigations, a next phase of this line of development should be the conversion to the ECTS, which would then be called to become the single currency of the military higher education for both its pillars. The ECVET, indeed, is not used although the ECTS already represents an important share.

2.2.2 MEASURES RELATED TO THE ELABORATION OF A COMMON QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

The observations do not oblige bringing changes to the content of the qualifications adopted in the “tree of qualifications” which must be transformed into a military sectorial qualifications framework. The Member States and their institutions are already entitled to implement them in their education and training policies. The line of development 2, therefore, should be used as a forum for exchanging on the best ways to proceed to the transformations inside the national systems and institutions’ policies.

2.2.3 MEASURES RELATED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF IDL-SPECIFIC CONTENTS

In the absence of specific interest expressed for this line of development 3 in the Implementation Group and the absence of project of development of modules limited to internet-distance learning methods, it should be proposed to formally merge it into the line of development 8 on the creation of common modules, in which it could finally make sense.

2.2.4 MEASURES RELATED TO THE CREATION OF AN IT PLATFORM

The concept of this IT platform is at the origin of this study and the method used for the scientific investigations. It is a contribution to the future development of the mobility of knowledge and know-how in the sense that it seeks to provide the European officers' basic education and training institutes with the most adequate conditions and tools for developing their exchanges. The IT platform was not the object of this scientific study but one of its main expected impact. The scientific investigations, after the analysis and synthesis of their results, effectively gave birth to practical proposals for shaping this toolbox.

This doctoral study and the shortages it highlighted regarding the expected "meaningful mobility" allowed for re-configuring these functionalities in the perspective of a user-friendly toolbox at the service of all the interested stakeholders of the development of the future military elites' mobility: cadets, teachers, trainers, administrative personnel of the institutions, national authorities, European institutions, the public, etc. The propositions, which are being "tested" and implemented in parallel to the present study are presented in the Scientific Practical Proposals and the functionalities made accessible to the different categories of users according to the following scheme.

On the homepage³, the platform's user will be able to find:

- The main menu of the functionalities of the platform;
- A policy statement explaining the objectives and use of the IT platform;
- Information related to exchange opportunities:
 - o Announcements of specific events or of demands for mobility events;
 - o Reports on exchange experiences drafted by institutions or exchange students;
 - o Scientific publications on the topic of the mobility in the European basic education and training.
- Useful links to other structures (e.g. the ESDC and the European External Action Service) or *fora* (e.g. the EMACS, the Conference of Superintendents and the EUAFA);
- An insert with the highlights of the latest contributions published on the website;

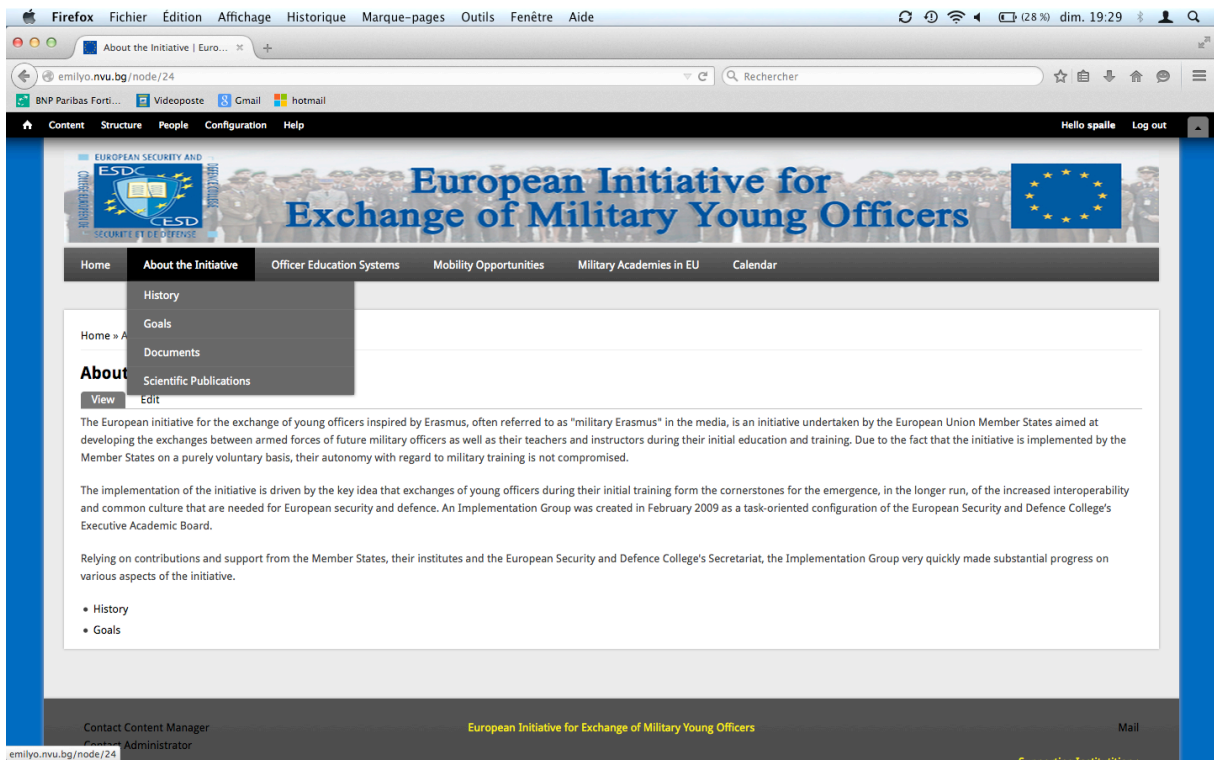
³ See Annex 2.

- A list of upcoming mobility-related events (e.g. courses or meetings).

More precisely, the platform menu will contain:

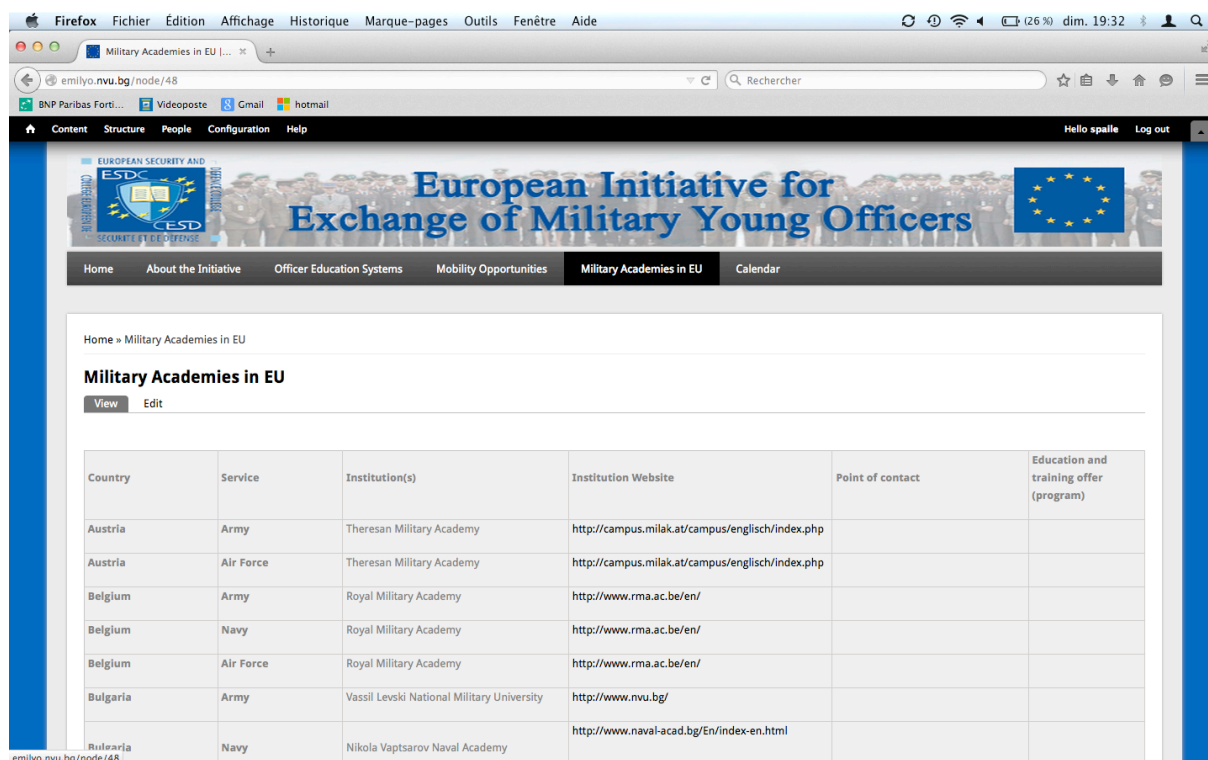
- A section of information (illustrated below) about the Initiative containing:
 - o An overview of the history of the Initiative;
 - o An overview of the objectives of the Initiative
 - o The documents' repository containing files dedicated to the general documents related to the Initiative (e.g. the Ministerial Declaration), the documents adopted by the Implementation Group, the working documents of the Implementation Group (the access of which will be restricted to registered users), documents related to the topics dealt with in the lines of development.

Picture 1



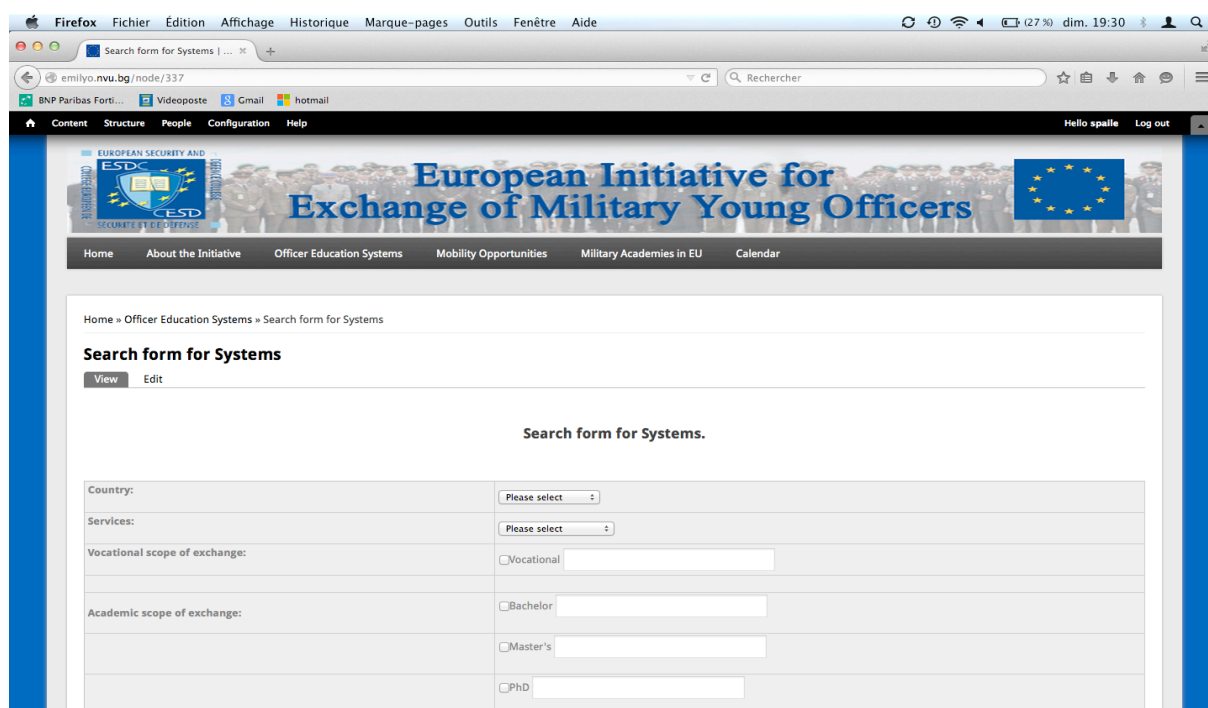
- A list (illustrated below) of the European Union officers' basic education and training institutes with links to their websites, contacts, fiche, national scheme and, in the future, the education and training programmes in English;

Picture 2



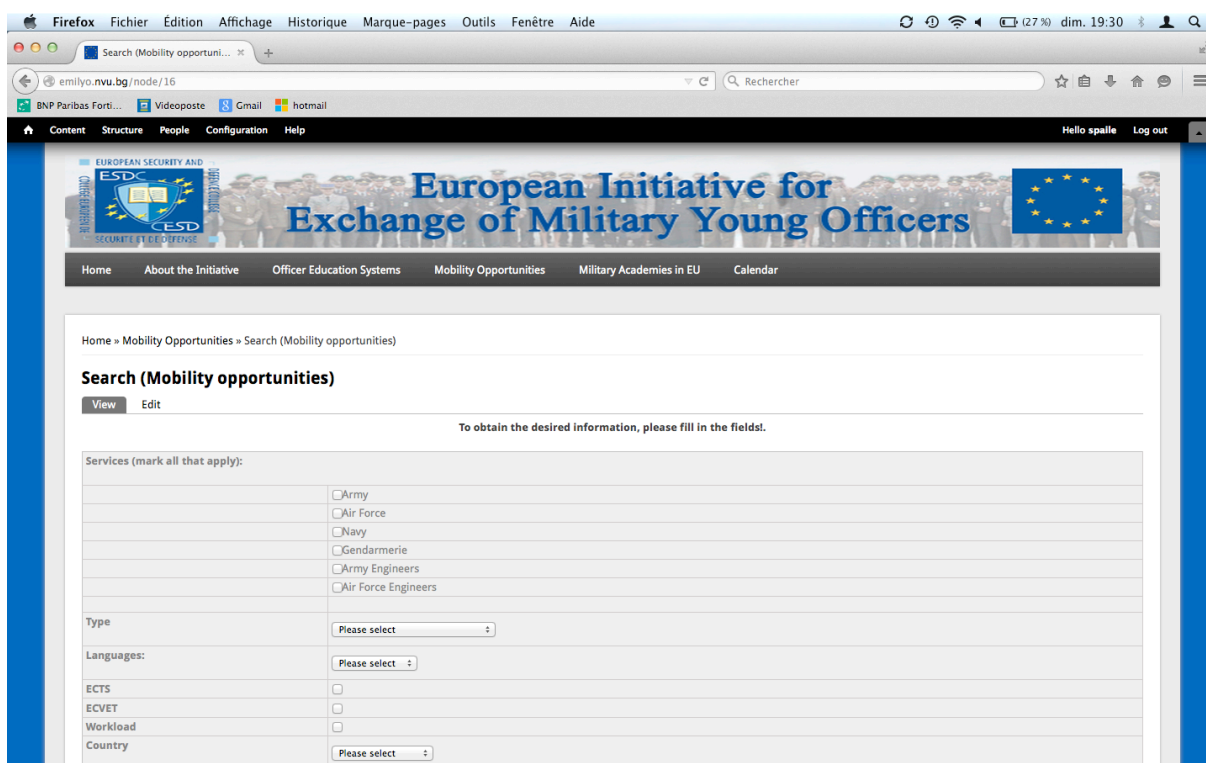
- A search engine (illustrated below) for identifying possible partners in exchanges, on the basis of criteria selected by the user on the implementation of the different levers of mobility. The search results will provide access to the content of the fiches reproduced in annex 1 and contacts of the matching system(s);

Picture 3



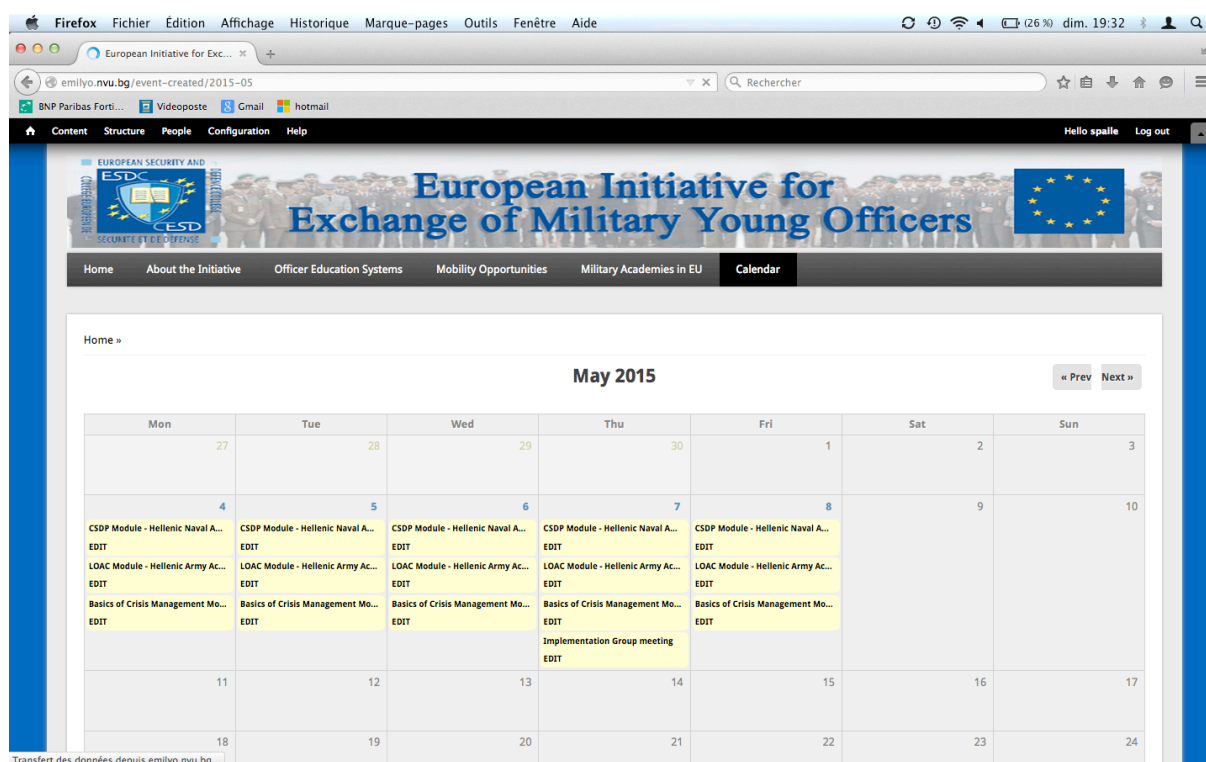
- A section dedicated to the mobility opportunities and substituting to the Mobility Newsletter edited until then in the framework of the line of development 6. This section will provide access to:
 - o A search engine (illustrated below) for identifying mobility opportunities among offers shared by the European institutes and addressed to cadets and/or members of staff. The search results will provide access to the fiches and contacts of the matching system(s);
 - o The input form allowing willing institutions to share information on forthcoming mobility events;
 - o A page containing the list of all the events that are planned and proposed for the future.

Picture 4



- A calendar (illustrated below) of the upcoming mobility-related events (e.g. courses, timelines for registrations, meetings).

Picture 5



The scientific approach chosen for exploring the military higher education and highlighting sources for improving the mobility of knowledge and know-how in the European Union thus allowed for formulating detailed and practical suggestions for shaping, structuring and making available a practical tool. In the technical process of construction, this suggested organisation may evolve, and the practice by a wide diversity of users will most certainly raise new questions. Nonetheless, these functionalities will undoubtedly pave the way for new practices and individual approaches to the challenge of training the future military elites for the future of the European security and defence. They will enable the interested and relevant stakeholders to operate an analysis of the perspectives of mobility development at a “micro” level, *i.e.* between education and training systems or institutions, where the present studies operate at a “macro” one, *i.e.* the European Union.

The investigations allowed for confirming the assumption of the explorer that mechanisms of the education and training policies could be used as levers for developing mobility not only at the global European level but also, if the practices are compatible, between two systems or institutions. These levers shall consequently be handed in to the stakeholders of the mobility policies in the form of the IT platform: students, teachers, trainers, scientists, exchange managers, institutions’ managers, policy managers, etc. The functionalities of the IT platform will be accessible to the different categories of users through the main menu, according to the following structure.

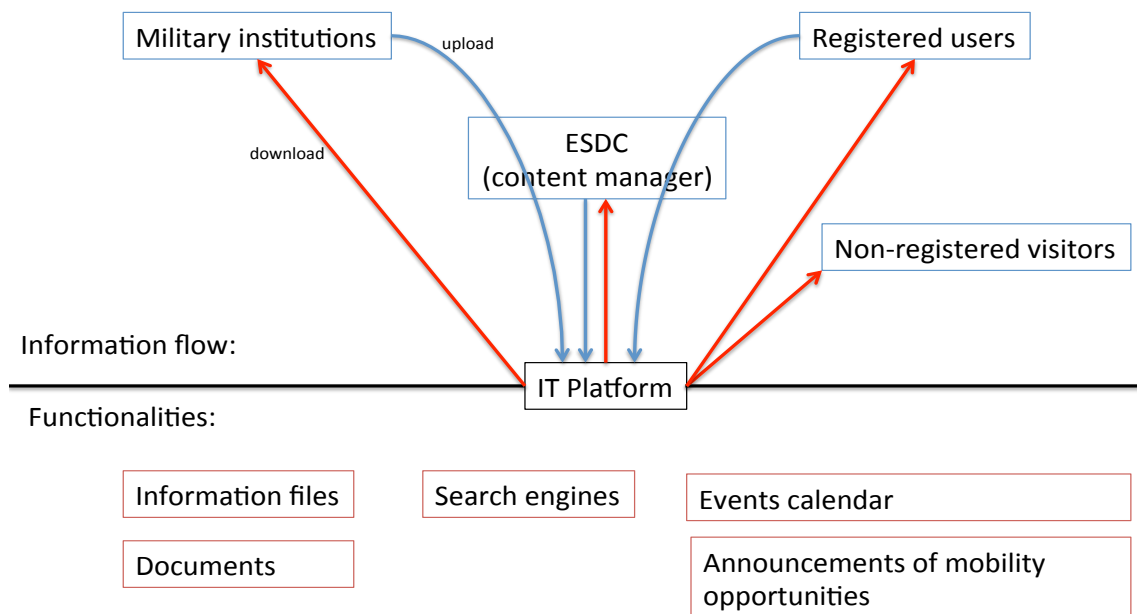


Figure 4. Accesses and uses of the IT platform

2.2.5 MEASURES RELATED TO THE CREATION OF A FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

It can be proposed to reactivate the line of development 5 in elaborating a “Recognition Charter” or completing the Framework with provisions on the necessity to recognise the foreign experiences of the military students and recognise in general the content of experiences that are not strictly contained in the national curriculum.

2.2.6 MEASURES RELATED TO THE COMMUNICATION ON THE INITIATIVE AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTING IT

The Implementation Group, through the line of development 6, should develop strategies of lobbying for making the Initiative visible, notably in the works and projects engaged by the EUMS, the European Commission and the other services’ fora.

2.2.7 MEASURES RELATED TO THE USE OF THE “ERASMUS +” PROGRAMME IN BASIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Identifying sources for funding the exchanges or saving on expenses related to the exchange of knowledge and know-how in officers’ basic education and training, therefore, should be the priority of the line of development 7. Since the opportunities offered by the higher education mobility programmes are visibly limited, it shall enlarge its action to all possibilities, even those that could occur outside the frame of the “Erasmus +”. Its action, for instance, should include the definition of institutional, national or European strategies for saving costs associated to mobility, such as dealing with the possible obligation in some Member States to pay “mission allowances” to military students remaining on the EU territory at the occasion of a study period or training. It

could also focus its action on the possible creation of an Athena-kind common budget for funding mobility events of European interest.

2.2.8 MEASURES RELATED TO THE CREATION OF NEW COMMON MODULES

The creation of new common modules, therefore, must be seen as a key to the development of the mobility. The increase of their number will grow the offer of mobility opportunities, according to the topical needs. It could be further suggested to test the elaboration and implementation of integrated curricula in the officers basic education and/or training.

CHAPTER'S CONCLUSIONS

The analysis conducted in Chapter Two allowed drawing the following conclusions:

1. The instruments shaped for fostering integration through mobility in the European Higher Education Area are relevant to the European Union military officers' basic education and training systems but not sufficient for fulfilling the same purpose with the similar success observed in the civilian higher education.

2. Commonalities in the mechanisms and instruments used by the institutions for organising their offer of academic education and/or vocational training to the future military elites were identified and can be used for improvement of the planning and organisation of mobility events.

3. All classifications of the basic education and training models do not present the same level of interest with regard to the objective of developing the mobility, but they may be supportive with regard to the identification, by one or the other system, of possible partners to exchange with. The most satisfactory one being the classification based on the organisation of the education and training pillars in the systems.

4. The proposed IT platform will allow the stakeholders of the mobility of the future military elites proceeding to micro-analysis of the potential of partnerships between two or more institutions or systems regarding the possible ways to develop quantitatively and qualitatively the integration through exchanges.

5. The Initiative is the most relevant level-playing field for designing the future actions in favour of the mobility of military knowledge and know-how in the basic officers' curricula in coordination with all other relevant actors inside and outside the military higher education.

In the **GENERAL CONCLUSIONS**, the link was established between the objectives of the study and the scientific tasks.

1. The structural support measures and the contextual support measures to the enhancement of students and staff mobility must be seen as invaluable contributions to the European integration of the officers' basic education and training systems. Military higher education does not play against these rules and, for most of the officers' basic education and training systems, even seeks to follow the recommendations issued for higher education in general. Nevertheless, these contributions are not sufficient to overcome what constitutes the military specificity and its consequences on mobility. They had to be completed with additional instruments.

2. The Initiative for the exchange of young officers, inspired by Erasmus, is meant to be the main of these instruments of adjustment for compatibility between the EHEA and the military higher education, and access to its mobility-facilitation measures. It has developed along the years a set of actions for lifting the obstacles to mobility of students and improving both quantitatively and qualitatively the exchanges of the European officers.

3. All classifications of the basic education and training models do not present the same level of interest with regard to the objective of developing the mobility, but they may be supportive with regard to the identification of possible partners to exchange with. The most satisfactory one being the classification based on the organisation of the education and training pillars in the systems and highlighting three main and two intermediate types of models.

4. Commonalities in the mechanisms and instruments used by the institutions for structuring and organising their offers of academic education and/or vocational training to the future military elites were identified. These commonalities can be used for planning and organising mobility events as they revealed that most of the systems implemented the Bologna actions and participate to exchange programmes.

5. The structuration and population of the IT platform was designed on the basis of the data obtained through the comparative analysis with view to develop new tools and adapt the current ones and allowing the Initiative to be perceived as the most relevant level-playing field for designing future actions in favour of the mobility of military knowledge and know-how in the basic officers' curricula.

6. The quantitative and qualitative development of integration through exchanges must be continued. Consecutive actions shall aim at bringing the systems and institutions to commit to work together to this purpose and that they make the link with other initiatives in the military education and training in general, in order to feed a lifelong approach to European military officers' learning and training paths.

The following **RECOMMENDATIONS and PROPOSALS** could be formulated from the research:

1. Measures related to a system of equivalence in vocational training:

a. Encourage the exchange of experiences between the military institutes on the use of learning outcomes in methods for estimating the number of ECTS to be awarded to a learning or training module;

b. Promote and encourage where appropriate and when the sectorial qualifications framework is being implemented the appropriation of the ECTS as the credit system for the vocational training in the basic curriculum of the officers. The institutions that already used the “vocational” ECTS should be encouraged to exchange on best practices on this transformation with the systems in transition.

2. Measures related to the elaboration of a common qualifications framework:

a. Describe the qualifications contained in the “tree” according to the levels of mastering that can be encountered in the military higher education in order to formalise one “joint” sectorial qualifications framework or service-specific sectorial qualifications framework;

b. Submit the qualifications described in the tree or the final sectorial qualifications framework(s) to the European Commission’s or other higher education instances’ formal approval;

c. Promote the participation of Implementation Group members to the drafting process of the “CSDP Reference Curriculum” conducted by the EUMS with view to promote the description of the qualifications operated at the level of the officers’ basic curricula;

d. Encourage the implementation and exchange of best practices in implementing the qualifications described in the basic curricula of the European officers;

e. Encourage the exchange of information on the practices in terms of quality assurance mechanisms and recognition of learning or training experiences in foreign education and training systems;

f. Promote the participation of Implementation Group members to the elaboration of quality assurance mechanisms in military training that is currently being conducted by the EUMS.

3. Measures related to the development of IDL-specific contents:

a. Close the line of development 3 and transfer its competence to the line of development 8.

4. Measures related to the structuration and population of an IT platform:

- a. Make the data collected through this study publicly available;
- b. The IT platform shall contain *inter alia* (the description of the functionalities being provided as scientific-practical proposals of the present study):
 - A database of information on the European officers' basic education and training systems and the instruments that can be used for improving the mobility;
 - Information on the mobility opportunities that are made available by military higher education institutes;
 - Search engines helping interested stakeholders identifying relevant mobility opportunities and/or adequate partners for exchanges.

5. Measures related to the implementation of a framework agreement:

- a. Promote the subscription to the Framework Agreement and the principles it contains to the Member States that have not yet done so;
- b. Promote the binding implementation of the Framework Agreement in the countries and institutions that have subscribed in principle to its content;
- c. Discuss and prepare the elaboration of:
 - A separate chapter in the Framework Agreement dedicated to an obligation of recognition of the experience acquired thanks to an exchange, or
 - A "Recognition Charter" to be formally signed by representatives of the Member States and institutions willing to secure the principle of the recognition of foreign experiences.

6. Measures related to the communication on the Initiative and encouragement for implementing it:

- a. Adopt a "Recognition Charter" in order to make the commitment of the military higher education institutions visible and the principle of recognition a key of the development of the mobility;
- b. Develop collaboration with the EUMS in the projects related to the military education and training in general;
- c. Formalise and sustain the individual dialogue with the three main services' *fora* with mutual representations in the important meetings;
- d. Promote the use of the IT platform that is currently under construction.

7. Measures related to the use of the “Erasmus +” programme in basic education and training:

a. Promoting the existing mobility programmes and the processes for taking part to these;

b. Investigating all possible forms of additional or alternative funding and costs saving practices for the European exchanges of the basic education and training institutes;

c. Establish dialogue with the European Commission about the possible creation of funding opportunities that would be adapted to the mobility challenges faced by the military institutions;

d. Promote the achievements of the military higher education and the generalisation of the mechanisms of its European integration at the other – junior and senior – levels of military education and training.

8. Measures related to the creation of new common modules:

a. Continue the development of new common modules, especially in the vocational training;

b. Implement the qualifications contained in the tree in the learning outcomes of the existing common modules’ curricula;

c. Encourage the Member States and their institutions to regularly provide data on the common modules they organised and stress the importance of the common modules for the development of mobility European wide;

d. Create common curricula organised by several partner institutions for groups of European cadets;

e. Create as a first experiment a European curriculum for a doctoral degree specialised on Common Security and Defence Policy.

SCIENTIFIC-PRACTICAL PROPOSALS formulated from the research, allowed “re-configuring” the functionalities of the IT platform sketched by the Implementation Group in its IT platform Business Case in May 2014, with view to be used a user-friendly toolbox at the service of all the interested stakeholders of the development of the future military elites’ mobility: cadets, teachers, trainers, administrative personnel of the institutions, national authorities, European institutions, the public, etc.

IV. AFTERWORDS

The Initiative has developed along the years a set of actions for lifting the obstacles to mobility of students and personnel and improving both quantitatively and qualitatively the exchanges of the European officers' basic education and training institutions. They notably include the creation of an IT platform containing data on the different education and training systems and allowing interested stakeholders of the mobility of the future officers to explore the military higher education for mobility opportunities and/or mobility partners. However, with regard to the importance of the challenge, *i.e.* developing the meaningful mobility, and the objective, *i.e.* providing "European officers" to the European Union and its armed forces, one might assume that these actions could still be pushed forward. The present doctoral study ambitioned to identify how.

After six years running of the Initiative, this study contributes to the coordinated effort toward European integration in proposing, through its scientific proposals, to re-orientate on-going actions and define new ones. The Initiative, indeed, must become – more than ever – the cement of the internal coherence and of the cohesion *vis-à-vis* third parties of the European military higher education and the cement of its mobility ambitions. This implies that the systems and institutions commit to work together to this purpose and, from the latest projects visibly, that they make the link with other initiatives in the military education and training in general, in order to feed a lifelong approach to European military officers' learning and training paths.

The comparison of the different identities and mechanisms at play in the different European Union basic education and training systems revealed gaps with the level of mobility one can expect from a sector that educate and trains the future military elites of an ever-more globalised world. It also allowed formulating concrete proposals with view to the further development of the exchanges of students and staff between their responsible institutions.

V. CONTRIBUTIONS

The achieved research results in this scientific work can form the following **scientific and applied contributions**.

Scientific contributions:

1. The thesis provides classification of the models for basic military education in the European military education system.
2. The research outlines the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the models of military education in the European higher education area.

Applied contributions

1. This doctoral work provides tools for gathering and processing data about the possibilities of exchanges of young officers between military educational institutions in the European Union
2. It develops and implements architecture for an IT platform to support the educational exchanges of young officers within the framework of the European military education system.
3. The thesis formulates measures for the development of the process of educational exchanges of young officers between military educational institutions in the European Union.

The scientific results of the thesis can be used in future studies on the military education systems of the European Union and the possibilities for their harmonization.

The applied research results can be improved and developed in the process of improving the opportunities for educational exchanges throughout the whole career of the military personnel in the European Union.

The results of the research allow us to consider that the purpose of the thesis on achieved, the research tasks are solved and the hypothesis is confirmed.

This thesis summary does not contain classified information.

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