

Brussels, 23 March 2026

Invitation to the 22nd Common Security and Defence Policy High-Level Course 2026-2027 'Giannos Kranidiotis'

The European Security and Defence College (ESDC) is proud to announce its 22nd Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) High-Level Course 2026-2027. The course consists of four residential modules, held in Brussels (5 to 9 October 2026), Madrid (23 to 27 November 2026), Tartu (5 to 9 April 2027) and Vienna and Budapest (21 to 25 June 2027).

This edition of the ESDC's CSDP High-Level Course is named after Giannos Kranidiotis, in recognition of his significant contributions to European integration and enlargement. He combined vision with politically assertive realism and technocratic and scientific training with political insight and a modern European perspective. Giannos Kranidiotis was a firm believer in the positive impact of enlargement as a European policy tool, with transformative potential for both new and existing EU Member States. He worked systematically and methodically to promote European integration, both in his academic work and in political service, holding important posts at the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as Secretary of European Affairs (1984-1989), Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs (8 July 1994-January 1995 and from 3 February 1997), and Alternate Minister for Foreign Affairs (19 February 1999 until his death), and as a Member of the European Parliament (1995-1997).

The course will address the main developments and trends in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy and will provide a forum for in-depth debate on current and emerging issues in the CSDP.

Participants should be senior civilian officials (including diplomats and police officers) or senior military officials from the EU Member States and candidate countries, relevant EU institutions, bodies and agencies, or from CSDP missions and operations.

The ESDC is committed to fostering an inclusive, diverse, gender-sensitive and anti-discriminatory environment. We therefore strongly encourage you to nominate candidates from groups that are likely to be underrepresented.

On behalf of the EU Member States and the national institutes contributing to the 22nd CSDP High-Level Course, you are invited to submit your nominations no later than **29 May 2026**. For further details, please refer to the attached annexes.

FERGAL O'REGAN
Head of the ESDC

Attachments:

Annex 1 – Administrative arrangements

Annex 2 – Curriculum of the 22nd CSDP High-Level Course 2026-2027 'Giannos Kranidiotis'

Annex 3 – Application form



Administrative arrangements

22nd CSDP High-Level Course 2026-2027 'Giannos Kranidiotis'

PART I. ORGANISATION

Structure of the course

The course is composed of four residential modules held in Brussels, Madrid, Tartu and Vienna + Budapest. Each module lasts one week (Monday morning to Friday noon) and focuses on different strategic aspects of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

To ensure that all participants share a common foundational knowledge of the CSDP, it is strongly recommended that they have previously attended a CSDP Orientation Course. Otherwise, selected applicants will be required to complete a mandatory e-Learning introductory module before the first residential session. Each residential module is preceded by a mandatory e-Learning phase, with sufficient time between modules to enable participants to complete the required e-Learning.

The course uses the European Security and Defence College's (ESDC) e-Learning system, ILIAS, which runs on a platform operated by the ESDC. All participants must register in the ILIAS system and complete the preparatory e-Learning phase preceding each residential module.

Participants who fail to complete the introductory e-Learning phase (if applicable), or the e-Learning assignments associated with each residential module by the time the module ends, will not be invited to participate in the next residential module.

The preparatory **e-Learning phase** for the first residential module of the **course will start on Monday 31 August 2026**. The course **will conclude with the last residential module on Friday 25 June 2027**.

To attend the course, all participants must hold a **security clearance at CONFIDENTIEL UE/EU CONFIDENTIAL level** by the nomination deadline and ensure that it remains **valid for the entire duration of the CSDP High-Level Course, up to and including June 2027**.



Module 1 – Brussels

The residential phase of the 22nd CSDP HLC 2026-2027 'Giannos Kranidiotis' will start with the module in Brussels, jointly organised by the Belgian Royal Higher Institute for Defence and the Egmont Royal Institute for International Relations. This module will take place from **5 to 9 October 2026**.

The **Royal Higher Institute for Defence (the RHID)** is the reference body of the Belgian Ministry of Defence in the field of security and defence.

The RHID plays two interlinked roles in supporting the Ministry of Defence and the nation. First, it acts as a 'think tank' on security and defence, pursuing the objectives of deepening and disseminating knowledge by organising conferences, colloquia and seminars and publishing papers of researchers. The first module of the CSDP HLC, 'High Studies for Security and Defence', takes the form of residential seminars and visits, providing training for high-level personnel in both the civil and defence sectors and promoting reflection, debate and networking among participants. Through national and international partnerships, the RHID has developed an extensive network for exchanging ideas and experiences.

Second, in its role as a 'smart hub' and 'honest broker' for scientific and technological research, the RHID is responsible for managing and facilitating the scientific and technological research programme of the Ministry of Defence, including the field of security and defence studies. Now, more than ever before, the RHID looks forward to promoting growth in Belgian scientific and technological research in the defence and security domain, restoring and reinforcing the links between government, academia and industry in this regard, and supporting Belgium's and Belgian Defence's participation in national and international research programmes.

Contact

Brigadier General (r) Bart LAURENT (Module leader)

Royal Higher Institute for Defence (RHID)

Email: IRSD-HIGH-LEVEL-COURSE-BRUSSELS@mil.be

Website: www.defence-institute.be

EGMONT – The Royal Institute for International Relations is an independent think tank based in Brussels. Its interdisciplinary research is conducted in a spirit of academic freedom. Drawing on the expertise of its own research fellows and external specialists, both Belgian and foreign, it provides analysis and policy options designed to be as practical as possible.

Benefiting from the role of Brussels in the global arena and from the prestigious setting of the Egmont Palace, the Institute offers an ideal forum for participants to exchange views with other specialists and with a well-informed public made up of representatives from the political, economic and academic spheres, the media, and civil society. Conferences, colloquia and seminars support and enrich the work of the research fellows. The Institute has also developed specialised training activities.

Contact

Prof Dr Sven BISCOP

Director, Europe in the World Programme, Egmont Institute

Email: s.biscop@egmontinstitute.be

Website: www.egmontinstitute.be



Module 2 – Madrid

The second module will take place in Madrid from **23 to 27 November 2026** and will be organised by the **National Defence Advanced Studies Centre (CESEDEN)**.

The CESEDEN is the main joint military education centre of the Spanish Armed Forces and is responsible for providing higher education courses on national defence, conducting research on security- and defence-related issues and disseminating and promoting the culture of defence.

Among other courses, the CESEDEN delivers National Defence Courses to provide civilian leaders with a general overview of national defence matters, presenting the general lines of Spanish defence planning and the most important national and international factors that affect the Spanish geostrategic context.

Contact

Colonel Alfonso LORENZO TABOADA (Module leader)

Spanish Nacional Defence Advanced Studies Centre

Email: taboada75@ea.mde.es

Website: [CESEDEN – EMAD](#)



Module 3 – Tartu

The third module will be hosted by the **Baltic Defence College (BALTDEFCOL)** from **5 to 9 April 2027**. Established in 1999 by the three Baltic states – Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia – the BALTDEFCOL is a unique NATO-accredited education and training facility, providing courses (levels 3 and 4) to officers, non-commissioned officers and civil servants from the Baltic states and their allies and partners. The BALTDEFCOL is the only English-language professional military education institution in continental Europe.

The mission of the BALTDEFCOL is to educate military personnel and security-related civilian personnel from Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania, as well as their allies and partners, while promoting international cooperation and networking and contributing to research on security and defence policy in order to meet the needs of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. One of the flagship academic events of the BALTDEFCOL is the Annual Conference on Russia, which attracts delegates from the Baltic and allied military community, international institutions, governments, academia and the private sector to discuss the most pressing issues shaping Russia, its neighbourhood, and global challenges.

The BALTDEFCOL also conducts short international courses certified by NATO (the Operational Level Energy Security Course, the Intermediate Strategic Communications Course, and the NATO Comprehensive Operations Planning Course), as well as the Cyber Defence Policy Course, which is included in the course catalogue of the ESDC curricula.

This module will take place at the Tartu University Library, located near to the BALTDEFCOL and the city centre.

Contact

Kristine ATMANTE (Module leader)
Department of Political and Strategic Studies
12 Riia St, Tartu, 51010, Estonia
Email: kristine.atmante@baltdefcol.org
Website: www.baltdefcol.org



Module 4 – Vienna and Budapest

The final residential module of the 22nd High-Level Course will take place from **Monday, 21 June to Wednesday, 23 June 2027 at the Austrian National Defence Academy (ANDA) in Vienna**. After the transfer to Budapest, the second part of the module will be held from **Wednesday, 23 June to Friday, 25 June 2027 at the Ludovika University of Public Service (LUPS) in Budapest**. The module will be supported by the Cyprus Security and Defence Academy (CSDA).

The Austrian National Defence Academy (ANDA) is the highest military training and research institution of the Austrian Armed Forces. It serves as the 'brains trust' of the Austrian Armed Forces and supports the Ministry of Defence through research and training, including training for leaders and senior officers in the fields of security, defence and military politics. The ANDA is also responsible for research and development in the fields of military strategy, operations and tactics and security policy, integrating insights from the humanities and social sciences, as well as providing language training for the Austrian Armed Forces.

The Ludovika University of Public Service (LUPS) is unique in Europe in offering degree programmes in public service that take a holistic approach, addressing the needs of the entire public service sector. The institution prepares the next generation of experts and leaders in public management, international affairs, the military and law enforcement fields. To achieve this, it operates a collaborative model in partnership with national stakeholders and international entities. The integration of these specialised fields fosters a highly diverse student body, enabling students from various areas of public service to meet, interact and collaborate across numerous aspects of life. In addition to a shared introductory module woven into each degree programme, students also take part in joint public service exercises.

The Cyprus Security and Defence Academy (CSDA) is the national institution responsible for education and training in the fields of security and defence in the Republic of Cyprus. It was established on 10 January 2017 and became a member of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) on 3 November 2017. In 2022, the Academy's legal framework was adopted, and it became a member of the International Military Academic Forum (iMAF). In 2025, the Academy was recognised as an Academic Partner of the Intelligence College in Europe, further strengthening its participation in European security and defence education networks.

Its mission is to provide training at national, regional, European and international levels, enhancing the readiness of the Republic of Cyprus and EU Member States to address evolving security challenges.

Contacts

Ms Sandra KICK (Module leader AUT)

Austrian National Defence Academy

Email: sandra.kick@bmlv.gv.at

Website: www.bundesheer.at/en

Dr Anna MOLNÁR (Module leader HUN)

Ludovika University of Public Service

Email: molnar.anna@uni-nke.hu

Website: <https://en.uni-nke.hu>

Col Symeon ZAMBAS

Cyprus Security and Defence Academy

Email: szambas@mod.gov.cy

Website: www.gov.cy/mod/en/

CSDP High-Level Course Director

The Director of the 22nd CSDP High-Level Course (HLC) 2026–2027 ‘Giannos Kranidiotis’ is Mr Fernando Moreno. The CSDP HLC Course Director is responsible for the academic coordination of the residential modules and oversees the programme’s content, as prepared by the module leaders.

Course Director, CSDP High-Level Course

Fernando Moreno

Email: nanomoreno@hotmail.com

Telephone: +34 616 18 0137

ESDC Secretariat

Melinda BOA, ESDC Training Manager

Email: Melinda.BOA@eeas.europa.eu

Telephone: +32 460 84 5783

Website: www.esdc.europa.eu

Methodologies

Introductory e-Learning module

This module provides an introductory overview of the CFSP/CSDP for participants who have not previously attended a CSDP Orientation Course. It ensures that all course participants acquire a comparable level of knowledge and understanding of the EU and the key topics related to the CFSP/CSDP. The content is structured into five Autonomous Knowledge Units (AKUs), which are accessible through the ESDC's e-Learning system.

Preparatory e-Learning phase for each residential module

This phase offers a comprehensive introduction to the CFSP/CSDP and the relevant EU policies and concepts specific to each residential module. It ensures that all participants attain a common level of understanding of the EU, its institutional framework and the role of the various EU institutions, bodies and agencies within the CFSP/CSDP.

The preparatory phase comprises four AKUs, accessible through the ESDC's e-Learning system. Each unit requires approximately two to three working hours of study, depending on the participant's prior knowledge and engagement with CFSP/CSDP topics. This structured approach ensures regular and effective learning, providing a solid foundation for the subsequent residential modules.

For instance, by the end of the e-Learning phase for the first residential module in Brussels, participants should be able to:

- identify the key historical milestones that have shaped the development of the CSDP;
- explain the main features of the EU Global Strategy;
- assess the overall functioning of the EU, with a specific focus on the role of EU institutions and CFSP/CSDP-related structures.

This framework improves participants' preparedness, enabling them to engage more effectively in residential discussions and exercises.

To adequately prepare for the residential modules, participants can tailor their study approach based on their professional background, their prior knowledge, and the time available. The e-Learning platform provides the necessary flexibility to accommodate diverse learning needs.

Completion of the online course and the associated tests is mandatory for all participants as part of the preparation phase.

Residential modules (Brussels, Madrid, Tartu and Vienna + Budapest)

The residential modules combine active, passive and reflective learning, while providing opportunities for networking and the exchange of best practices. Throughout these modules, interactive learning methods are employed, including group sessions, plenary discussions and direct engagement with key stakeholders working on CFSP/CSDP-related issues within the EU. The primary focus is on deepening participants' knowledge of the various topics, while fostering discussions in a broader strategic context.

The topics and learning methods in each module are carefully aligned with the intended learning outcomes and are further refined by the module leader in close coordination with the dedicated training manager in the ESDC Secretariat.

Whenever appropriate, study trips and site visits are organised to places of strategic interest, aligned with the course's learning objectives. Additionally, case studies and practical exercises enable participants to bridge theory and practice by examining real-world applications of CSDP-related activities.

Group work in the CSDP High-Level Course

The ESDC employs a blended learning approach that integrates e-Learning, lecture-based discussions, panel debates, exercises and group work to enhance participants' understanding of CFSP/CSDP topics.

Group work plays a key role in fostering collaborative learning and knowledge exchange. It gives participants the opportunity to engage in in-depth discussions, explore different viewpoints and, where possible, interact with subject-matter experts. Each group is carefully composed to ensure a diverse mix of professional backgrounds and perspectives, enriching the debate and facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand.

Evaluation

The course is evaluated using the Kirkpatrick model, specifically through Level-1 evaluation, which measures participants' satisfaction with the course via feedback on the residential modules.

At the end of each module, the module leaders submit an evaluation report to the ESDC Secretariat, following approval by the CSDP HLC Director. The Course Director is also responsible for drafting the final evaluation report, consolidating input from all residential modules. This report, prepared using the standard ESDC evaluation template, is submitted – with the support of the ESDC Secretariat – to the ESDC Executive Academic Board and the Steering Committee. It identifies lessons learned and provides recommendations for improving and further developing the course.

To successfully complete the course, participants must meet all learning objectives, assessed through:

- active participation in the residential modules, including group discussions and practical activities;
- completion of the e-Learning phases, including all Autonomous Knowledge Units (AKUs) and mandatory online tests.

However, no formal verification of learning outcomes is conducted. The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System score is based solely on participants' workload, rather than a formal assessment of acquired competencies.

The ESDC Executive Academic Board considers these factors when awarding course certificates.

PART II. PARTICIPANTS

Selection

The CSDP HLC 2026-2027 is open to participants from all EU Member States, relevant EU institutions, bodies and agencies, CSDP missions and operations and selected candidate countries.

The selection of participants is the responsibility of the sending parties. Candidates should be senior officials engaged in strategic aspects of the CSDP, with demonstrated leadership potential, particularly in CFSP/CSDP-related fields. The course aims to maintain a well-balanced mix of civilian and military participants, including professionals from diplomatic and law enforcement backgrounds. Additionally, Member States may nominate academics, representatives of non-governmental organisations and members of the business community with relevant expertise.

The ESDC promotes an inclusive and diverse learning environment, ensuring equal opportunities for all participants. Upholding the highest standards of non-discrimination, it fosters a professional atmosphere where respect and fairness prevail across all activities.

Security clearance

All participants must hold a security clearance at CONFIDENTIEL UE/EU CONFIDENTIAL level. At the time of nomination (29 May 2026), they must either possess the required clearance or have their clearance process sufficiently advanced to ensure that it will be issued in time. The clearance must remain valid for the entire duration of the CSDP HLC, up to and including June 2027.

Representatives from candidate countries may participate only if a security agreement with the EU is in place at the start of the course and if they hold a valid security clearance.

Nomination

EU Member States and EU institutions, bodies and agencies are invited to nominate up to two participants each. Nominators must use personal email accounts rather than functional or generic mailboxes when submitting nominations via ENLIST. Member States are encouraged to ensure representation from all three major CSDP pillars at the national level: diplomacy, defence and internal affairs. Additionally, senior personnel from CSDP missions and operations are strongly encouraged to apply.

If additional nominations are submitted beyond the initial allocation, participant selection will be based on remaining capacity and will follow a predefined order of priority established by the ENLIST nominators.

Applications must be submitted by designated nominators through the ESDC's secure registration system (ENLIST) no later than 29 May 2026. Nominees are also asked to submit their application forms (Annex 3) to their nominators. Registration will only be considered final once confirmed by the ESDC Secretariat. Selected participants will receive confirmation by 12 June 2026 at the latest.

Registration

Upon confirmation, course participants must complete the following steps:

Personal Data Submission: Participants must enter their personal information in the ENLIST system as soon as possible, using the login credentials automatically provided upon confirmation.

Security Clearance Submission: Participants must submit proof of an EU security clearance at CONFIDENTIEL UE/EU CONFIDENTIAL level or higher. A copy of the valid clearance or a corresponding certificate should be sent by the participant or the relevant security officer to the European External Action Service (EEAS) Security Accreditation Office at EEAS-SECURITY-CLEARANCE@eeas.europa.eu, with the ESDC's dedicated mailbox (esdc-hlc@eeas.europa.eu) in copy, **no later than 17 July 2026**. The email should clearly state that the document pertains to the participant's enrolment in the 22nd CSDP HLC 2026-2027.

Access to E-Learning Platform: The ESDC Secretariat will provide confirmed participants with login credentials for the ESDC e-Learning platform (ILIAS) in due course.

Withdrawals: Once the registration period has closed and participants have been confirmed, any withdrawal from the course must be officially communicated by the appointing authority to the ESDC Secretariat and, for information, to the national delegate on the ESDC Steering Committee.

Attendance

Full participation in the course is mandatory, including the e-Learning phases and the four residential modules. Participants are expected to be available for the entire duration of the course.

During the residential modules, participants may be invited to contribute to panels and discussions alongside experts supporting the course. These sessions provide an opportunity to engage in knowledge-sharing and professional exchanges.

Contributions based on personal or institutional experience on relevant topics are highly valued and encouraged, enriching discussions and fostering a deeper understanding of key CSDP-related issues.

Language

All components of the HLC will be delivered in English. No interpreting will be provided.

Participants are not required to provide proof of language proficiency or submit a language certificate as a prerequisite for acceptance onto the course.

Additional info

For any information or support, course participants should contact the ESDC Secretariat's Training Manager, Ms Melinda Boa, via email at Melinda.BOA@eeas.europa.eu and esdc-hlc@eeas.europa.eu.

The ESDC Secretariat does not cover costs related to international travel, local transport, accommodation or meals. These expenses must be covered by the sending authorities, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the programme or the module's administrative instructions.

To enhance networking and community building, participants may be encouraged, where feasible and in coordination with the relevant module leader, to book accommodation in a designated hotel during residential modules. Participants are also invited to fully engage in networking opportunities, including group work and social events, to strengthen professional connections throughout the course.

Certificate of attendance

Full availability for the course is an explicit selection criterion. Each participant must be able to attend all four residential modules and complete all e-Learning phases in their entirety.

Upon successful completion of all the e-Learning phases and residential modules, participants will be awarded a certificate signed by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

Annex 2

Curriculum

To be reviewed by <i>February 2027</i>	Activity number <i>1</i>	22nd CSDP High-Level Course 2026-2027 – Giannos KRANIDIOTIS	ECTS 8
CORRELATION WITH CTG/MTG TRAs			EQUIVALENCES
Civilian Training Area: Leadership & Management (2), EU Integrated Approach (29) Military training Discipline: Operations Planning for CSDP (1), Leadership & Management (8)			SQF-MILOF Level 2 Focus: POL CIV-MIL
<u>Target audience</u> Participants should be senior experts from EU Member States, candidate countries and EU institutions, bodies and agencies (both military and civilians, including diplomats, police, and border guard officers) who are either working in key positions or have a clear potential to achieve leadership posts, in particular in the field of the CFSP/CSDP. ESDC Doctoral School fellows, Members of academia, NGOs and the business community may apply to participate. The course aims to maintain a well-balanced mix of civilians and military personnel. Course participants must be available for the whole course, which includes both e-Learning phases and residential modules. For participation in the High-Level Course, a personal security clearance of at least EU CONFIDENTIAL level is mandatory. They are also expected to actively contribute by sharing their expertise and experience. It is recommended that course participants have already attended the ESDC CSDP Orientation Course, otherwise they will have to complete a mandatory online introductory module before first residential module. Upon completing the course, participants become members of the ESDC Alumni Network and are regularly invited to seminars providing updates on CFSP/CSDP developments.		<u>Aim</u> The CSDP High-Level Course (HLC) aims to equip senior experts from EU Member States, candidate countries, and EU institutions with the necessary skills to assume leadership roles in the implementation and advancement of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). This involves mastering policy implementation, crisis management and capability development, all within the wider context of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The course fosters collaboration among participants, enabling them to work efficiently with diverse stakeholders in this field. Furthermore, the course enhances participants' knowledge of the EU security and defence architecture, emphasizing the integrated approach to CSDP as a key instrument of the CFSP. It provides insights into current and anticipated policies, missions, and operations while raising awareness about emerging security challenges and threats, challenges and trends and building a common European Security and Defence Culture. The training is delivered through a combination of e-Learning and residential modules ensuring an interactive and comprehensive learning experience. This blended approach fosters a common European security culture while cultivating a network of future leaders actively engaged in the strategic dimensions of the CFSP/CSDP.	
<u>Open to:</u> ▪ EU Member States / institutions ▪ Candidate countries that have a security agreement with the EU ▪ NGOs of Member States		Additionally, the course is designed to promote the development of a network of experts in the field of CFSP/CSDP, strengthening professional connections and collaboration across sectors.	

Learning outcomes	
Knowledge	LOK1. Enumerate the long-term objectives and the strategic priorities of CFSP/CSDP identified in the <i>EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy</i> (EUGS) and its <i>Implementation plan on security and defence</i> and further developed in the <i>Strategic Compass</i>. LOK2. Outline the responsibilities/roles of the EU institutions, agencies, and internal structures in the CFSP/CSDP. LOK3. Enumerate the main EU CSDP partnerships objectives and lines of action (NATO, UN, AU and third states) LOK4. Understand the interlinkages between CSDP and the Commission's related activities outside the EU's borders. LOK5. Understand the military and civilian capability development process within the CSDP. LOK6 Summarise the roles of major players in the provision of military and civilian capabilities. LOK7. Understand the role of the Commission in Defence aspects. LOK8. Identify the relevance and challenges of human resources in civilian and military capability development processes. LOK9. Identify the added value of the EU integrated approach to crisis and conflicts as well as the specificities of different EU crisis management instruments including CFSP/CSDP tools. LOK10. Understand the decision-making process for CSDP missions and operations, including strategic planning, financial and force generation aspects. LOK11. Outline how general issues, in particular human rights, gender issues, protection of civilians or environmental degradation, are considered during the planning and conduct of CSDP missions and operations. LOK12. Understand the particularities and relevance of the European Peace Facility in current security context. LOK13. Outline the command-and-control options for CSDP missions and operations. LOK14. Understand the ongoing CSDP missions and operations (mandates, challenges, risks and the way forward). LOK15. List the main strategic CSDP issues currently on the table of the Political and Security Committee (PSC). LOK16. Outline the contribution of CSDP to face evolving security challenges, including strategic communication, hybrid threats, cybersecurity, energy security, environmental and climate security, artificial intelligence, irregular migration, terrorism, and disaster relief, with a specific focus on the operational engagement in the EU's neighbouring regions.
Skills	LOS1. Develop options to protect, promote and implement the various EU interests, principles and priorities mentioned in the EUGS. LOS2. Express views on the relevance of key horizontal issues for the implementation of the CSDP. LOS3. Promote initiatives to improve the implementation of CFSP/CSDP objectives.

	LOS4. Design options for further engagement and coordination of EU institutions, services, and agencies, as well as partners in EU capability development. LOS5. Address the challenges related to the European approach to capability development including civilian-military synergies. LOS6. Operationalise inter-institutional coordination and international cooperation with state and non-state actors in the context of crisis management. LOS7. Identify challenges and opportunities for the EU integrated approach in different regional contexts. LOS8. Assess the outcome and effectiveness of CSDP missions and operations and the implementation of the lessons learnt and best practices. LOS9. Demonstrate the ability to apply the EU political and strategic decision-making process. LOS10. Critically assess horizontal aspects affecting the implementation of the CSDP, proposing strategies to enhance policy effectiveness. LOS11. Identify and assess emerging trends to determine their potential impact on the future of the CSDP, formulating recommendations for policy adaptation. LOS12. Evaluate the extent to which the EU's operational engagements support its foreign security, and defence policy objectives, assessing the relevance and effectiveness of current missions and operations. LOS13. Apply strategic foresight methodologies to assess future security and defence challenges, identifying potential risks and opportunities for the evolution of the CSDP. Develop scenario-based recommendations to enhance EU crisis preparedness and resilience in alignment with EU strategic objectives.
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Evaluation of learning outcomes

The course is evaluated according to the Kirkpatrick model, using *level 1 evaluation (based on participants' satisfaction with the course)*. *Evaluation feedback* is given in the level 1 evaluation on the residential modules. To complete the course, participants must accomplish all learning objectives, which are evaluated based on their active contribution to the residential modules, including their group working sessions and practical activities, as well as on their completion of the e-Learning phases: course participants must finish the autonomous knowledge units (AKUs) and pass the tests (*mandatory*).

However, no formal verification of the learning outcomes is planned; the proposed European credit transfer system (ECTS) is based on participants' workload only.

The Executive Academic Board takes these factors into account when considering the award of *certificates* to participants. Module Leaders provide an evaluation report for their respective module. The Course Director drafts the *final evaluation report* which is presented to the Executive Academic Board.

Main topics and content

The course consists of four residential modules, each lasting 1 week and focusing on specific strategic aspects of the CFSP/CSDP. To ensure participants are well-prepared, each residential module is preceded by a mandatory e-Learning phase, which provides the necessary theoretical background for active engagement during the residential phase. The intervals between the residential modules are designed to facilitate an effective learning process, allowing participants to reinforce their knowledge through the ILIAS e-Learning platform. Completion of the relevant **e-learning module** is required before each residential session to ensure that all participants are adequately prepared.

	Suggested working hours.	Suggested content
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Main topic	(required for individual learning)	
MODULE 1 CFSP/CSDP governance and functioning of the EU	35 + (15)	1.1. Foundation of the CFSP/CSDP [preparatory e-Learning] 1.2. Geopolitical context. Overview of the CFSP/CSDP and related EU policies and concepts, including strategic partnerships 1.3. Institutional framework. Role of institutions in CSDP and CSDP structures 1.4. Political and Strategic framework. The EUGS and the strategic compass, the White Paper for Defence, the Preparedness Union Strategy
MODULE 2 EU's crisis management capabilities	35 + (15)	2.1. Civilian and military capabilities and capability development 2.2. European Defence Action Plan (EDAP) 2.3. Civilian CSDP Compact 2.4. Armament cooperation 2.5 The role of the Commission and the industry in Defence
MODULE 3 CSDP in action	35 + (15)	3.1. EU integrated approach to crisis and conflicts 3.2. CSDP in action: CSDP missions and operations 3.3. Financing CSDP Missions and Operations - European Peace Facility 3.4. Force Generation & Staffing 3.5. Regional approaches 3.6 Table-top - crisis management - exercise.
MODULE 4 Future of the CSDP	35 + (15)	4.1. Strategic foresight and the future of the CSDP 4.2. New challenges for European Security 4.3. Beyond CSDP. European security architecture 4.4. Strategic foresight exercise.
TOTAL	140 + (60)	

<u>Materials</u>	<u>Additional information</u>
ESDC handbooks: CSDP; cybersecurity. Relevant AKUs available on ILIAS. Publications on CFSP/CSDP-related issues – supplemental material aimed at enhancing knowledge of a specific topic. Course exercise scenarios and documents. <u>AKUs for the Online Introductory Module, mandatory for those who have not completed the CSDP OC:</u> • AKU 01 - History of ESDP/CSDP • AKU 2 - The EUGS • AKU 5 - EU CM & CD • AKU 07 - Impact of the Lisbon Treaty • AKU 45 - PESCO	The Chatham House Rule applies during all residential modules of the HLC: 'participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.'
<u>Recommendation for Module leaders</u>	
- The ESDC recommends that Module Leaders attend at least the preceding module and the previous iteration of the module they are organising. - Additionally, they are encouraged to participate in the handover of certificates during the 4th module.	

To be reviewed by <i>February 2027</i>	Activity number <i>1/1</i>	22nd CSDP High-Level Course 2026-2027 - Giannos KRANIDIOTIS (Module 1) Brussels, 05-09 October 2026	ECTS 2
			SQF-MILOF Level 2 Focus: POL CIV-MIL

Aim

The aim of the first module of the CSDP High-Level Course (HLC) is to provide a general overview of the CFSP/CSDP and related EU policies and concepts. It offers an opportunity to all course participants to attain a similar level of knowledge and understanding of the EU and the main subjects of the CFSP/CSDP, and of how the EU institutions work and the role they play in the CFSP/CSDP.

It covers, among other topics, the relevant articles in the Treaty on European Union, the EU Global Strategy, the Strategic Compass and subsequent Council conclusions on its implementation, and EU policymaking, decision-making and inter-institutional cooperation in general. The module is designed to deepen understanding of how the EU institutions work and interact and what role they play in the CFSP/CSDP, to provide an insight into recent EU strategic-level documents and policies and to broaden understanding of both EU decision-making processes at the political/strategic level and external action. It familiarises participants with the EU institutions, the EEAS and relevant EU agencies as well as other organisations/structures located in Brussels.

Learning outcomes

Knowledge	LOK1. Enumerate the long-term objectives and the strategic priorities of CFSP/CSDP identified in the <i>EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy (EUGS)</i> and its <i>Implementation plan on security and defence</i> and further developed in the <i>Strategic Compass</i> .
	LOK2. Outline the responsibilities/roles of the EU institutions, agencies, and internal structures in the CFSP/CSDP.
	LOK3. Enumerate the main EU CSDP partnerships objectives and lines of action (NATO, UN, AU and third states)
	LOK4. Understand the interlinkages between CSDP and the Commission's related activities outside the EU's borders.
Skills	LOS1. Develop options to protect, promote and implement the various EU interests, principles and priorities mentioned in the EUGS.
	LOS2. Express views on the relevance of key horizontal issues for the implementation of the CSDP.
	LOS3. Promote initiatives to improve the implementation of CFSP/CSDP objectives.

Evaluation of learning

The module employs the Kirkpatrick model for evaluation, focusing on participants' satisfaction and learning progress. A mandatory eLearning phase precedes the residential module, providing theoretical background essential for active participation. Participants must achieve at least 80% in the preparatory phase assessments. No formal verification of learning outcomes is foreseen; the proposed ECTS is based on participants' workload.

Course structure

This module consists of two mandatory phases: an e-Learning phase and a residential phase of five days. It provides an overview of CFSP/CSDP and related EU policies and concepts. In addition, it discusses CFSP/CSDP foundations, CSDP structures, strategic decision-making, and EUGS implementation.

Main topic	Suggested working hours. (required for individual learning)	Suggested content
1. Geopolitical context. Policy framework. Overview of the CFSP/CSDP and related EU policies and concepts	8 + (4)	1.1. Current geopolitical context 1.2. Overview of the current situation in CSDP 1.3. The role of the EU as an international security actor 1.4. European security architecture
2. Political and Strategic framework. The EUGS, the strategic compass, the White Paper for Defence and the EU Preparedness Union Strategy	8 + (4)	2.1. The generalities of the EUGS and its implementation 2.2. Overview of the actions of the Strategic Compass 2.3 Introduction on the White Paper for Defence and the EU Preparedness Union Strategy
3. Institutional framework. Role of institutions in CSDP and CSDP structures	8 + (4)	3.1. The roles and structures of the different EU institutions and relevant agencies in relation to CFSP/CSDP 3.2. Critical discussion of respective roles and responsibilities
4. CSDP Partnerships	7 + (3)	5.1. EU-NATO 5.2. Cooperation with intergovernmental organisations (UN, African Union, etc.) 5.3. Non-EU countries

5. Co-operative Learning	4	World Café type or working group discussions
TOTAL	35 + (15)	

<u>Materials</u>	<u>Additional information</u>
Required: AKU 2: The EU Global Strategy AKU 3: Role of EU institutions in the field of CFSP/ CSDP AKU 4: EU crisis management structures and chain of command AKU 55: The Strategic Compass Recommended: AKU 1: History and context of CSDP AKU 25: The EU mutual assistance clause Publications on CFSP/CSDP and EU Global Strategy, Strategic Compass, and supplementary material aimed at deepening knowledge of the topic.	To facilitate open discussion between course participants and senior EU personnel, the Chatham House Rule applies during all residential modules: <i>'participants in the CSDP HLC are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed'</i>.

To be reviewed by <i>February 2027</i>	Activity number <i>1/2</i>	22nd CSDP High-Level Course 2026-2027 - Giannos KRANIDIOTIS (Module 2) Madrid, 23-27 November 2026	ECTS 2
			SQF-MILOF Level 2 Focus: POL CIV-MIL

Aim

The second module of the CSDP High-Level Course focuses on the rationale and challenges of the development of military and civilian crisis management capabilities. The module is designed to provide an insight into EU crisis management concepts, processes, and tools, and to update and broaden understanding of crisis management capabilities. In addition, it provides an insight into efforts to create synergies between civilian and military capabilities, the implementation of the Civilian CSDP Compact and into issues relating to European armament cooperation and procurement. It offers an opportunity to enhance understanding of major programmes conducted in an EU (European Commission and EDA) or multilateral framework. The module also provides an insight into a number of EU regional policies.

Learning outcomes

Knowledge	LOK5. Understand the military and civilian capability development process within the CSDP. LOK6. Summarise the roles of major players in the provision of military and civilian capabilities. LOK7. Understand the role of the Commission in Defence aspects. LOK8. Identify the relevance and challenges of human resources in civilian and military capability development processes.
Skills	LOS4. Design options for further engagement and coordination of EU institutions, services, and agencies, as well as partners in EU capability development. LOS5. Address the challenges related to the European approach to capability development including civilian-military synergies.

Evaluation of learning

The module employs the Kirkpatrick model for evaluation, focusing on participants' satisfaction and learning progress. A mandatory eLearning phase precedes the residential module, providing theoretical background essential for active participation. Participants must achieve at least 80% in the preparatory phase assessments. No formal verification of learning outcomes is foreseen; the proposed ECTS is based on participants' workload.

Course structure

This module consists of two mandatory phases: an e-Learning phase and a residential phase of five days. The module focuses on civilian and military capabilities, capability development and armament cooperation, and the regional approach to capability development.

Main topic	Suggested working hours. (required for individual learning)	Suggested content
1. Civilian and military capabilities and capability development process	8 + (5)	1.1. Civilian capability development process; Civilian CSDP Compact 1.2. Overview of Military capabilities development process 1.3. Strategic priorities 1.4. Armaments cooperation and procurement: key issues, lessons learnt, best practices. 1.5. Military concepts on military capabilities
2. Role of the EU institutions and agencies and EU Member States in capability development	8 + (5)	2.1. Role of the EUMC and the EUMS in military capability development. 2.2. Role of EU Member States in capability development. 2.3. Role of the European Defence Agency (EDA) and multilateral cooperation 2.4. Role of the Commission in capability development 2.5. Role of industry in capabilities development. 2.6. The challenge of coherence across the European Defence Fund (EDF), Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), and Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) 2.7. Synergies between EU and NATO on capabilities development.
3. Specific civilian and military capabilities	8 + (5)	3.1. EU battlegroups. EU Rapid Response Capacity 3.2. Civilian CSDP rapid response tools 3.3. EEAS Crisis Response Centre 3.4. The EU Satellite Centre 3.5. Space assets

4. Regional aspects of crisis management	4	Regional area(s) of relevance to the countries hosting the Course
5. Field visit	3	Visit to a relevant institution or facility
6. Co-operative Learning	4	World Café type or working group discussions
TOTAL	35 + (15)	

<u>Materials</u>	<u>Additional information</u>
Required: AKU 5: EU Crisis Management and Capability Development AKU 36: Civilians CSDP Compact AKU 38: Space, Defence and Security AKU 39: Armaments cooperation AKU 44: The European Defence Fund Recommended: AKU 45: Permanent Structure Cooperation (PESCO) Other publications on civilian and military capability development and on armament cooperation and supplementary material aimed at deepening knowledge of this specific topic. Handbook on CSDP.	To facilitate open discussion between course participants and senior EU personnel, the Chatham House Rule applies during all residential modules: <i>'participants in the CSDP HLC are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed'</i>.

To be reviewed by <i>February 2027</i>	Activity number 1/3	22nd CSDP High-Level Course 2026-2027 - Giannos KRANIDIOTIS (Module 3) Tartu, 5-9 April 2027	ECTS 2
			SQF-MILOF Level 2 Focus: POL CIV-MIL

Aim

The aim of the third module of the CSDP High-Level Course is to provide a comprehensive overview of the EU's engagement in support of the CFSP, including the planning and force generation processes for CSDP missions and operations, from both a conceptual and a practical perspective. The module also provides an insight into relevant EU regional policies and aims to increase awareness of EU and Member State strategic relevance in the current security environment (e.g. *maritime dimension of the CSDP, migration security nexus, strategic communication, energy security and protection of critical infrastructure*). It also provides an insight into the Civilian CSDP Compact from an operational perspective.

Learning outcomes

Knowledge	LOK9. Identify the added value of the EU integrated approach to crisis and conflicts as well as the specificities of different EU crisis management instruments including CFSP/CSDP tools. LOK10. Understand the decision-making process for CSDP missions and operations, including strategic planning, financial and force generation aspects. LOK11. Outline how general issues, in particular human rights, gender issues, protection of civilians or environmental degradation, are considered during the planning and conduct of CSDP missions and operations. LOK12. Understand the particularities and relevance of the European Peace Facility in current security context. LOK13. Outline the command-and-control options for CSDP missions and operations. LOK14. Understand the ongoing CSDP missions and operations (mandates, challenges, risks and the way forward).
Skills	LOS6. Operationalise inter-institutional coordination and international cooperation with state and non-state actors in the context of crisis management. LOS7. Analyse challenges and opportunities for the EU integrated approach in different regional contexts. LOS8. Assess the outcome and effectiveness of CSDP missions and operations and the implementation of the lessons learnt and best practices.

	LOS9. Demonstrate the ability to apply the EU political and strategic decision-making process.
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Evaluation of learning

The module employs the Kirkpatrick model for evaluation, focusing on participants' satisfaction and learning progress. A mandatory eLearning phase precedes the residential module, providing theoretical background essential for active participation. Participants must achieve at least 80% in the preparatory phase assessments. No formal verification of learning outcomes is foreseen; the proposed ECTS is based on participants' workload.

Course structure

This module consists of two mandatory phases: an e-Learning phase and a residential phase of five days. The module focuses on the planning processes for the CSDP missions and operations, and on the regional approach to security in the EU and beyond.

Main topic	Suggested working hours. (required for individual learning)	Suggested content
1. The planning process for CSDP missions and operations – an integrated approach	10 + (6)	1.1. The EU integrated approach to crisis and conflicts. 1.2. Strategic decision making and planning process for CSDP missions and operations. 1.3. Strategic review process of missions and operations. 1.4. Integration of cross-cutting issues like Human rights, gender sensitivity, protection of civilians, climate change and environmental degradation in the planning and conduct of CSDP missions and operations. 1.5. Command and control of CSDP missions and operations. 1.6. Force generation for civilian and military CSDP missions and operations.
2. EU missions and operations – from past to present	10 + (4)	2.1. Overview of current civilian and military CSDP missions and operations 2.2. Financing mechanisms of CSDP Missions and Operations - European Peace Facility 2.4. CSDP missions and operations: Impact from past to present – lessons learnt. 2.5. EU-NATO cooperation in CSDP missions and operations 2.6. CSDP – freedom, security, and justice nexus;
3. Security challenges in the regions	3 + (2)	3.1 Security situation in selected regions of interest and CSDP engagement

		3.2. New Developments within the CFSP/CSDP missions and operations
4. Field visit	4	Visit to a relevant institution or facility
5. Course Exercise	8 + (3)	Exercise on crisis management procedures (at political and strategic level); simulation/table-top exercise
TOTAL	35 (15)	

<u>Materials</u>	<u>Additional information</u>
Required: AKU 6: <u>Decision making and planning for CSDP Missions and Ops</u> AKU 11A: Gender and the UNSCR 1325 AKU 202: EU Integrated Approach to Conflict and Crisis Recommended: AKU 16: Protection of civilians AKU 17: Fragility and crisis management AKU 205a: CSDP Crisis Management at the Political Strategic Level Other publications on CSDP and the EU Global Strategy, and supplementary material to deepen knowledge of the topic.	To facilitate open discussion between course participants and senior EU personnel, the Chatham House Rule applies during all residential modules: <i>'participants in the CSDP HLC are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed'</i>.

To be reviewed by <i>February 2027</i>	Activity number 1/4	22nd CSDP High-Level Course 2026-2027 - Giannos KRANIDIOTIS (Module 4) Vienna/Budapest, 21-25 June 2027	ECTS 2
			SQF-MILOF Level 2 Focus: POL CIV-MIL

Aim

The fourth module of the CSDP High-Level Course provides a comprehensive review of the current state of play, progress made, and further evolution of the CSDP within the context of EU external action. It emphasizes the analysis of future prospects in EU foreign, security, and defence policy, considering the impact of horizontal aspects on CSDP implementation. Participants will engage in a practical exercise on EU crisis management planning and decision-making at the political and strategic levels

Learning outcomes

Knowledge	LOK15. List the main strategic CSDP issues currently on the table of the Political and Security Committee (PSC). LOK16. Outline the contribution of CSDP to face evolving security challenges, including strategic communication, hybrid threats, cybersecurity, energy security, environmental and climate security, artificial intelligence, irregular migration, terrorism, and disaster relief, with a specific focus on the operational engagement in the EU's neighbouring regions.
Skills	LOS10. Critically assess horizontal aspects affecting the implementation of the CSDP, proposing strategies to enhance policy effectiveness. LOS11. Identify and assess emerging trends to determine their potential impact on the future of the CSDP, formulating recommendations for policy adaptation. LOS12: Evaluate the extent to which the EU's operational engagements support its foreign, security, and defence policy objectives, assessing the relevance and effectiveness of current missions and operations. LOS13. Apply strategic foresight methodologies to assess future security and defence challenges, identifying potential risks and opportunities for the evolution of the CSDP. Develop scenario-based recommendations to enhance EU crisis preparedness and resilience in alignment with EU strategic objectives.

Evaluation of learning

The module employs the Kirkpatrick model for evaluation, focusing on participants' satisfaction and learning progress. A mandatory eLearning phase precedes the residential module, providing theoretical background essential for active participation. Participants must achieve at least 80% in the preparatory phase assessments. No formal verification of learning outcomes is foreseen; the proposed ECTS is based on participants' workload.

Course structure

This module consists of two mandatory phases: an e-Learning phase and a residential phase of five days. It focuses on the future of the CSDP and on the key horizontal issues. An HLC exercise at political and strategic level is organised during this module. All course participants have to prepare for the residential module by completing the HLC exercise scenario and the supporting materials.

Main topic	Suggested working hours. (required for individual learning)	Suggested Content
1. Strategic foresight and the future of the CSDP	6 + (4)	1.1. Challenges for the EU as a global player: EU priorities in security and defence in a world of geopolitical instability. 1.2. Beyond CSDP: European Security Architecture (e.g. NATO and OSCE) 1.3. Role of Strategic Foresight in shaping the future of the CSDP
2. CSDP in the neighbouring countries and regions	6 + (4)	2.1. Security situation in a relevant EU neighbouring region. 2.2. Global challenges and common responses.
3. Key horizontal issues - critical discussion of role and responsibilities in the CFSP/CSDP	6 + (4)	3.1. CFSP/CSDP and emerging threats: an overview 3.2. The role of CSDP in evolving security challenges and building resilience including strategic communication, hybrid threats, climate security, energy security, terrorism and the security dimension of irregular migration. 3.3. Impact of natural, man-made and climate-driven disasters/crises on EU security. 3.4. The impact of AI in CFSP/CSDP 3.5. EU-relevant strategies impacting the Union's role in addressing overarching issues and policies.
4. Other policies	6	Emerging EU policy challenges and initiatives (e.g. Maritime security, space, Strategic Communication)
5. Exercise	8 + (3)	Strategic foresight exercise
6. Field visit	3	Visit to a relevant security and defence entity
TOTAL	35 + (15)	

<u>Materials</u>	<u>Additional information</u>
Required: AKU 9: The Security Implications of Climate Change and Environmental Degradation <u>AKU 106b H-CoE The Landscape of Hybrid Threats</u> <u>AKU 106c H-CoE The changing security environment (HS2)</u> AKU 106d H-CoE Introduction to Hybrid Deterrence <u>AKU 106e H-CoE Hybrid Warfare</u> Recommended: AKU 41 - Key principles of the legal framework of defence related EU policy making AKU 106f Hybrid Threats & Maritime Security Additional publications on CSDP-related issues to deepen knowledge of the topic.	To facilitate open discussion between course participants and senior EU personnel, the Chatham House Rule applies during all residential modules: "Participants in the CSDP HLC are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor <i>that of any other participant, may be revealed</i>".

Application Form**CSDP High-Level Course****TO BE COMPLETED ELECTRONICALLY BY THE APPLICANT****Personal Details**

Family name		
First name(s)		
Civilian	Yes / No	
Police If yes, please state your rank	Yes / No	Rank:
Military If yes, please state your rank	Yes / No	Rank:
Current job title		
Gender		
Nationality		
Telephone number (optional)		
Email address (mandatory)		

CDSP Orientation Course and EU PSC

CSDP Orientation Course Completed	Yes / No
If yes, please state the year of completion	
Selected participants will be asked to submit their CSDP Orientation Course (OC) Certificates to the ESDC Training Manager once the selection process is complete. Participants who have not yet completed the CSDP OC will be required to complete the mandatory Advanced Knowledge Units (AKUs) before attending the residential phase of the first module.	
Valid EU security clearance	Yes / No