



Invitation to the *CRITICAL ENTITIES RESILIENCE ADVANCED COURSE*

(ESDC Activity Number 25-26/208b/1)

Lisbon, Portugal, 6–10 October 2025

Under the auspices of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC), the Portuguese *Guarda Nacional Republicana* (GNR) will organise the Critical Entities Resilience Course (Advanced Level), from Monday 6 to Friday 10 October 2025, in Lisbon.

Critical entities, as providers of essential services, play an indispensable role in the maintenance of vital societal functions or economic activities in the internal market in an increasingly interdependent Union economy. The damage to a critical infrastructure or entity, its destruction or disruption by natural disasters, terrorism, criminal activity or malicious behaviour, may have a significant negative impact for the security of the EU and the well-being of its citizens. Critical infrastructure include power grids, the transport network and information and communication systems. Reducing the vulnerabilities of critical infrastructure and enhancing their resilience is one of the major objectives of the EU and its Member States.

Improving resilience of critical infrastructures has become a priority for the authorities around the globe. Emerging threats, as well as unconventional attacks on critical infrastructure have exposed the limits of traditional risk assessment and risk mitigation efforts. Consequently, an adequate level of protection must be ensured and the detrimental effects of disruptions on society and citizens must be limited as far as possible.

In this regard, the European Programme for Critical Infrastructure Protection (EPCIP) sets the overall framework for activities aimed at improving the protection of critical infrastructure in Europe – across all EU Member States and in all relevant sectors of economic activity. These measures include the establishment of the European Reference Network for Critical Infrastructure Protection (ERNICIP), coordinated by the Joint Research Centre, which provides technical support and carries out different research activities that support EU efforts to protect critical infrastructures, leading to better protection of critical infrastructures against all types of threats and hazards. The recent Directive (EU) 2022/2557 on the resilience of critical entities (CER)



repealed Directive 2008/114/EC. Accordingly, by 17 October 2024 EU Member States transposed the requirements of the Critical Entities Resilience Directive (CER) into national law.

The **course aims** to provide participants a significant grounding in the framework of Critical Entities Resilience (CER), including critical infrastructure protection, which will contribute to a systemic view of the world and the underlying risks, vulnerabilities and threats that national governments and the European Commission are trying to address through new regulations, requirements, new mechanisms and better cooperation.

This course is aimed at mid- to high-level representatives of public authorities, Critical Entities or CI owners/operators (private and state) with responsibilities for the development, formulation and implementation of security strategies, policies and mechanisms for Critical Entities Resilience and CI protection. EU Member States, governmental and private companies involved in CER or CI operations are invited to participate.

On behalf of the Portuguese *Guarda Nacional Republicana*, we are pleased to invite you to nominate suitable participants for this ESDC course, which is an excellent opportunity to gain an insight into Critical Entities Resilience (CER), and to share expertise and information on new technologies, initiatives, trends, networks and projects on Critical Entities protection, governance and resilience.

Yours faithfully,

Hugo BARJONA GOMES (Course Director)
Colonel (OF-05) | Chief of Staff, GNR State
Security and Honours Unit (USHE)

Fergal O'REGAN
Acting Head,
European Security and Defence College (ESDC)

Annexes:

- A – Course Administrative Instructions
- B – Tentative Course Agenda



CRITICAL ENTITIES RESILIENCE ADVANCED COURSE

(ESDC Activity Number 25-26/208b/1)

Lisbon, Portugal, 6–10 October 2025

Annex A

Course administrative instructions

- **Target audience:** This course is open to mid- or high-level representatives and experts of public authorities, Critical Entities or Critical Infrastructure (CI) owners/operators (private and state) with responsibilities for the development, formulation and implementation of security strategies and mechanisms for Critical Entities Resilience/Critical Infrastructure Protection. EU Member States governmental and private companies involved in CER or CI operations, as well as members of EU institutions, bodies and agencies are invited to participate.
- **Seats and nominations:** A maximum of 28 participants is expected.
- **Application and deadline:** Applications should be submitted by designated nominators using the ESDC ENLIST Platform <https://esdc.europa.eu/enlist/login>, **no later than 16 August 2025**. A list with the relevant ENLIST nominators can be retrieved from the ESDC website at <https://esdc.europa.eu/nominators/>.

Late registration: Subject to the availability of seats, the course is open for late registration. Please contact the course administration: Ms Anna MALEC (ESDC Training Manager, Anna.MALEC@eeas.europa.eu) or the Course Director, Colonel (OF-05) Hugo GOMES (gomes.hasb@gnr.pt).

- **Registration will not be final until confirmed by the ESDC Secretariat.** Please do not book flights and accommodation before receiving the confirmation.

For any issue concerning the application, registration and nomination processes, please contact the course administration: Ms Anna MALEC (ESDC Training Manager).

- **The selection of participants** will be based on applicant backgrounds, experience, suitability, gender balance and country of origin. The decision on which applications are accepted remains solely with the Portuguese GNR Course Director and the ESDC Secretariat. When the participants' list is finalised, the course administration will contact the selected participants and provide more detailed information about the course and logistics. The nominated participants will be directly requested by the hosting organisation (GNR) to send a supplementary Personal Profile Form (provided by the Portuguese GNR, at a later stage) to ushe.sft@gnr.pt. This information will be required for granting access to the event, the security facilities and the field visit to a Critical Infrastructure, as well as for setting-up working groups and course exercises.
- **Mandatory e-learning and attendance:** The course consists of an e-learning preparatory phase (online) to be completed using the ESDC e-Learning platform ILIAS, as well as a residential activity in Lisbon (Portugal); both parts are compulsory. In order to complete the



first part (i.e. the online modules), the ESDC will provide the relevant links to the selected participants. Participants must complete these online e-learning modules before the start of the residential part. The participants' attendance during the residential course in Lisbon is mandatory on all days. A certificate will be awarded, on the last day, to those course participants who have completed both the e-learning phase and the residential course.

- **Course venue (location):** The course will be held mainly in the Portuguese GNR conference room located in Quartel do Conde Lippe - Grupo de Segurança - Calçada da Ajuda 134, 1349-053 Ajuda – Lisbon (GPS Coordinates: 38.702723, -9.198692). Nevertheless, a field visit is also planned to a Critical Infrastructure. More details about the venue, daily transfers and access will be provided to all confirmed participants.
- **Language:** The working language is English, without translation.
- **Course (tuition) fees:** The course has no registration or tuition fees.
- **Travel expenses, transfers, accommodation, meals and catering:** Participants should arrange their own travel and accommodation. All costs for travelling to/from Lisbon, accommodation, catering and meals (including breakfast), daily allowances, transfers and local transport will be covered by the participants or by their sending authorities.

Hotel reservations: Recommendations on accommodation will be communicated to confirmed participants.

Participants should **not** make booking arrangements before the confirmatory message on their complete course registration.

- **Liabilities, medical and life insurance:** In the event of medical emergencies or accidents, the costs will be covered directly by the health, life and accident insurance provided by the participants' sending countries, national authorities or organisations. The organiser does not provide health, life or accident insurance for participants at the event or during their stay in Portugal.
- **Dress code:** As far as the dress code is concerned, we recommend that participants wear business attire (or a dress) for the opening event and closing ceremony. Members of the armed forces, gendarmerie and police are not obliged to wear their uniforms, unless they prefer. During the course, a networking social dinner will be offered to all the course participants, experts and trainers. For this specific event, as well as course classes and field visits, comfortable business/smart casual attire will be appropriate.
- **Additional info:** The Critical Entities Resilience Advanced Course standard curriculum can be consulted on the ESDC website at <https://esdc.europa.eu/curricula/>.
- **Arrival/Departure:** Participants are invited to arrive in Lisbon on Sunday 5 October 2025. The course will start at 08:30 on Monday 6 October 2025 and will finish around 16:00 on Friday 10 October 2025.
- **Diversity and inclusion:** The ESDC is committed to an inclusive, gender-sensitive and discrimination-free environment. We do not and will not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, religion, gender, gender expression, age, national origin, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation in any of our activities or operations. Only in an inclusive environment can all people, and therefore the ESDC and its partners, realise their true potential. We therefore



particularly encourage those applicants who are likely to be underrepresented to apply. The ESDC and the Portuguese GNR will not tolerate any conduct that violates these values.

- The final course agenda will be distributed to all selected participants. Nevertheless, for matters regarding the course programme and planned activities, please do not hesitate to contact the Course Director, Colonel (OF-05) Hugo GOMES.
- **Points of contact:**
 - ✓ **Course Director, Colonel (OF-05) Hugo GOMES:** gomes.hasb@gnr.pt
Chief of Staff of GNR State Security and Honours Unit (USHE), PORTUGAL
 - ✓ **ESDC Cyber ETEE Training Manager, Anna MALEC:** Anna.MALEC@eeas.europa.eu
ESDC Representative, ENLIST registration, E-Learning and course information
 - ✓ **Personal Profile Form (PPF), Logistics and Administrative support** (in Portugal):
ushe.sft@gnr.pt - GNR State Security and Honours Unit (USHE)



CRITICAL ENTITIES RESILIENCE ADVANCED COURSE

Lisbon, 6–10 October 2025

Draft agenda / Tentative programme

| | Day 1 – 06OCT25 | Day 2 – 07OCT25 | Day 3 – 08OCT25 | Day 4 – 09OCT25 | Day 5 – 10OCT25 |
|----------------|---|---|---|--|--|
| 08:30 to 09:20 | Course Opening / Welcome Address GNR Security and State Honours Unit Commander | Emerging trends, risks, vulnerabilities and (cyber) threats ENISA (EU Agency) | ERNICIP and the new approach for the CER Directive. POSEIDON platform for TTXs | UAS Strategy Joint Research Centre (JRC) – ISPR European Commission | Cybersecurity and Cooperation with CERTS and Private Sector Altice & EUROPOL Expert |
| 09:30 to 10:20 | ESDC Presentation; GNR Presentation Course Administrative Remarks Tour de Table (participants expectations) | Ambidextrous Cybersecurity | Climate change impact on defence related CEI Joint Research Centre (JRC) – ISPR Joint Research Centre (JRC) / European Commission | Fostering resilience by tabletop exercises in energy sector Joint Research Centre (JRC) – ISPR European Commission | NIS2 Directive National Cyber Security Centre CNCS |
| Coffee Break | | | | | |
| 10h40 to 11:30 | Critical Entities Resilience (CER) Overall regulatory framework and conceptual elements. EU Security Union Strategy. CERG National Security Council (SSI) | Geopolitics of CIP – transformations, trends and multidomain perspective CSDS | General concept of hybrid threats. Protection of buildings against terrorist attacks and related tools Joint Research Centre (JRC) - ISPR | (Practical) Tabletop exercise in energy sector / POSEIDON TTX led by Joint Research Centre (JRC) – ISPR European Commission | Emerging Technologies and Artificial Intelligence National Cyber Security Centre CNCS |
| 11:40 to 12:30 | Critical Entities Resilience (CER) Networks and interdependencies Resilience and Complex Systems Governance Theory | | Natech risk analysis using RAPID-N Joint Research Centre (JRC) – ISPR European Commission | | Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI) EEAS |
| Lunch Break | | | | | |
| 13:30 to 14:20 | Critical Entities designation: complexity on defining criteria CNPCE | Introduction to JRC structure and activities on Security Scenario-building for a Blueprint on Critical Infrastructures Joint Research Centre (JRC) - ISPR | Critical Entities Resilience (CER) National Strategy formulation for CER - A Portuguese perspective | New dimensions of Critical Entities (Infrastructure) Resilience - Initiatives and Projects Consultation Forum for Sustainable Energy in the Defence and Security Sector (CF SEDSS), European Defence Agency (EDA) | New dimensions of Critical Entities (Infrastructure) Resilience - Initiatives and Projects Lisbon Municipality |
| 14:30 to 15:20 | Emerging trends, risks, vulnerabilities and threats National intelligence service | | Portuguese GNR Case Study - Initiatives and Projects GNR | | Course Evaluation & Official Closing Ceremony |
| Coffee Break | | | | | |
| 15:40 to 17:00 | Energy Blackout 2025 Case Study Lessons Learned | Decision Making Under conditions of uncertainty Joint Research Centre (JRC) - ISPR | Critical Infrastructure Entity/Facility Field Visit Digital Infrastructure Sector Altice Group | Critical Infrastructure Entity/Facility Field Visit Transport Sector Infraestruturas de Portugal | Departure of participants |
| 19:00 | | Official Networking Event (social dinner) | | | |