

Impressions on the common module on CSDP and the Emilyo-program

During the first half of October two sessions of the common module on CSDP were organized by the Theresan Military Academy in Austria. I, 2nd lieutenant – cadet Robbie Eyckmans from the Royal Military Academy of Belgium, had the pleasure of attending the second session, which was held from the 10th until the 14th of October. In this article I will elaborate on the common module on CSDP and the Emilyo-initiative.

For the CSDP-module I could distinguish two main efforts: the academic part on CSDP and social/cultural activities. The classes took place during working hours and were afterwards followed by social activities.

After the opening ceremony on Monday, the courses started. During that first day the history of CSDP was explained, followed by lectures on the European Security Strategy. Topics like European Capability Development, CSDP & the Lisbon Treaty and future perspectives for CSDP took up the remainder of the week. A very interesting feature of the CSDP-module is that the class is divided in several syndicates. Each day these syndicates were presented with different questions on CSDP related issues. The syndicates needed to discuss these questions and present the outcome of the discussion to their fellow young officers. The discussions proved to be very interesting because in this way the young officers could learn the opinions and visions of their international colleagues.

On Wednesday there was a visit to the United Nations Headquarters in Vienna. During the visit a guided tour was planned, as well as a presentation on EU-UN relations. This visit to the UNHQ stresses the importance of multilateralism and international cooperation.

As explained above, the CSDP-module provides young European officers with a good academic knowledge on CSDP related issues but in my opinion the positive aspects of the module go even further. The module puts young officers in touch with their international/European colleagues and so they can develop their cultural awareness. This is very important for the future career of the young officer. When later on in their careers they will be sent abroad on an international mission, they will be able to rely on some of the social/cultural competences the common module on CSDP provided them with.

For reasons already mentioned before I can conclude that the Emilyo-initiative enables young European officers to learn the basis of CSDP and to develop their relations and cultural awareness with their international/European colleagues. In my experience I can say I have learned very much and I would recommend the module to all of my European colleagues. The module really is an eye-opener for a young officer and by getting to know your European colleagues you learn that we all work to achieve the same goal: a secure Europe in a changing world.

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