

**1st MEETING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION GROUP (IG)
FOR EUROPEAN INITIATIVE FOR THE EXCHANGE OF YOUNG OFFICERS
(INSPIRED BY ERASMUS)**

On, 19 February 2009 in Brussels

Draft Minutes

I. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted unanimously.

II. Opening session (10.00 – 11.30)

A. Opening and Introduction by the Chair

The chairman of the IG provided general information and introduced the initiative based on the political declaration of EU Defence Ministers on 10 November 2008. Emphasis was given to the multidimensional character of the work to be done (short actions and middle-long term programmes, common and single service issues,...).

A "tour de table" for introducing each member of the Implementation Group followed. A list of participants was updated and distributed together with these minutes.

B. The Czech Presidency vision

The Czech delegation emphasized that the Presidency expects a systematic approach to this initiative. They see it developed in three distinct fields : co-operation between military universities, exchanges during basic military training and finally the initiative should provide a forum for specialised military training and education.

This was followed by a short presentation of the Seminar on the European initiative for the exchange of young officers, that the Presidency intends to organise in Brno on 21 and 22 April 2009.

C. ERASMUS - the EU's flagship education and training programme

The Commission provided an overview on the current Erasmus programmes, state of affairs, progress reached, problems and future perspectives. Special attention was given to the success factors of the initiative and in particular on the intensive language courses that are provided to participants.

D. Implementation of the measures approved by Council (20')

The ESDC Secretariat introduced a framework work plan for the IG.

III. Views from the Member States (11.30 – 13.00)

All Delegations had the opportunity to summarize their state of affairs in exchange programmes, related issues and respective basic education and training system. Some of them informed the group on existing transformation process adopting a more "Bologna" oriented system or provided a short

presentation on their view on the initiative. The presentations were collected by the Secretariat, transformed in PDF-format and sent out together with these minutes. The general trend was that this initiative can count on full support from a wide majority of Member States.

IV. Study and Stocktaking

The Secretariat provided additional information on the study for a new stocktaking that is being conducted in close co-operation with the University of Liège. This study should provide all the necessary information to bring the task of the IG to a good end. A short discussion between the experts ensued.

V. Way ahead and work plan

A. Identification of priorities

The group agreed with the proposal of the ESDC Secretariat concerning the possible 'quick wins'. The creation of subgroups for some of these 'quick wins' was considered to be the best way ahead.

B. Development of the work plan

The ESDC Secretariat illustrated the draft work plan, including dates of relevant events.

A general agreement was reached on the possibility to organise the next meeting in coincidence with the Seminar in Brno on 21-22 April, when there will also be the opportunity for presentations and discussions with the Commandants of National Institutions dealing with initial military education and training.

The ESDC Secretariat was invited to further elaborate the identified 'quick wins' in a separate document. Based on this document, Member States will be invited to participate or contribute to the implementation of these quick wins, allowing the subgroups to start their work as early as mid-March.

VI. Conclusions

The Chair summarized the main decisions of the IG and identified priorities, as well as the key points for the next meeting.
