

**2nd MEETING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION GROUP (IG)
FOR EUROPEAN INITIATIVE FOR THE EXCHANGE OF YOUNG OFFICERS
(INSPIRED BY ERASMUS)**

Brno, 21 - 22 April 2009

Draft Minutes

I. Agenda

The meeting was conducted within the margins of a Seminar organised and conducted by the Czech Presidency and followed the agenda established for the Seminar.

II. Opening session

The Seminar was opened by the Czech Deputy Minister of Defence, Mr Padelek, underlining the importance of this initiative. As part of the general seminar programme, the Implementation group received subsequently briefings on the Czech point of view on Military training in the framework of Erasmus, on the Czech University of Defence, a Polish experience with the Erasmus Charter and a briefing on the German approach to students' exchanges..

The Czech delegation underlined the need to investigate how the different programmes of the European Life Long Learning Programme could be of benefit to the initiative (i.e. the Erasmus, the Leonardo de Vinci and/or the Grundtvig programmes). Also, exchanges of information/experiences with the NATO Training Group were envisaged, making use of the opportunity that many IG members are also involved in that activity.

III. Introduction to the IG meeting

The Implementation Group received a short briefing on the achievements made under the French Presidency concerning the European Initiative for the exchange of young officers.

Some clarification was given by the Chair on the subgroups' organisation/work plan, that has been adapted taking in account that several IG members were changed and some of the Chairpersons of the subgroups were absent.

IV. Detailed Stocktaking

Mr Sylvain PAILE, from the University of Liège, provided his first preliminary findings of the detailed stocktaking to the Implementation Group. Some Member States have so far not yet returned their replies on the questionnaires. This implied some difficulties in elaborating a comparative analysis of competences and curricula, needed at this stage of the stocktaking. A strong plea was then made to send these replies as soon as available back to the ESDC Secretariat.

V. Subgroup's Sessions

During the afternoon session of 21 April the Implementation Group split up in five subgroups (SG), whose findings are specified in the subparagraphs below.

Each subgroup discussed the advances in one of the Quick-wins (QW) defined in the previous meeting, with the exception of QW4. Additionally, one subgroup started discussions about the different programmes of the European Life Long Learning Programme and how to progress in this topic. A final subgroup further developed the work plan for the Implementation Group.

Concerning the QW 4 on "Framework agreement for administrative and legal challenges", since most of the subgroup were not present at this seminar, it was agreed to let them to follow their own

work plan, including the possibility to organise, if they so wish, a specific meeting on a date to be decided at their convenience.

The Implementation Group reconvened during the morning session on the 22 April, when the different subgroups reported back.

A. Subgroup 1: 'Implementation of the common module on ESDP'

Significant progress has been made in this field.

First of all the ESDC has obtained approval from the relevant copyright holders to make the content of the IDL system (the current 4 AKUs plus other material when prepared) available also to all courses relevant to ESDP, including the common module.

Secondly, Belgium has agreed to host with the support of the ESDC Secretariat a train-the-trainer seminar in early June 2009. In order to have the maximum benefit from this seminar, it was recommended that the instructors and teachers to be identified should have a good background in the field of political sciences.

Thirdly, Portugal signalled the intention to organise, again with the support of the ESDC Secretariat a first pilot module included in the regular curriculum of their Academy to which they will invite up to two cadets from each Member State.

Finally, a subgroup has started to develop the didactical support for these common modules to be made available to all Member States.

B. Subgroup 2 and 3: 'Protected internet access to raw data of detailed stocktaking' and 'Dedicated forum for the exchange programmes'

Bulgaria has made the necessary IT resources available, including the necessary personnel, to host a dedicated website (<http://emilyo.nvu.bg>, soon <http://emilyo.eu>) where the questionnaires will be made available for all Implementation Group members. On the same site, Bulgaria will host a forum, open to all military cadets. In a secure part of this forum, the Implementation Group and the subgroups can exchange information. The Bulgarian hosts will distribute a message to the IG members to make them aware of this site and to inform them how to use it.

Because the technical solution for QW 2 and 3 are provided by the same provider, the subgroups 2 and 3 were merged and will remain so in the future.

During the Seminar, the content for this website was better defined, including i.a. experiences from exchange programmes, contacts with universities, possibility to send suggestions to the administrators, links with national websites, names of PoCs, names/contact infos on Erasmus coordinators.

To facilitate the work of the administrators, all Implementation Group members are invited to send the link to the website of their training institutes to evelina_kinova@abv.bg. At the same time, they are invited to make the existence of the forum known to their students and to include the link on their own website in a couple of weeks.

C. Subgroup 5: 'Other common training modules'

Subgroup 5 has already identified five main topics that can be used to develop common modules, which the Member States can integrate in their curricula should they so wish. These five topics are:

- *Humanitarian law and legal aspects of crisis management operations;*
- *Peace Support Operations;*
- *Leadership in multinational context;*
- *Communication and media;*
- *Globalisation and security.*

By the end of April other modules can be proposed. In general, an expert of a MS interested to develop one of these modules should be likely identified. The subgroup agreed to define aim and objectives by end of May and develop items to be included, taking in consideration those that are already part of the current national curricula.

In addition the subgroup identified some topics to be included in the ESDP common module, in coordination with subgroup 1.

A share of the workload among the subgroup members has been decided on.

D. Subgroup on the Military Life Long Learning Programme

Considerations were made on the need of a stronger cooperation between all concerned actors at national and EU level, in order to identify a wider range of opportunities, particularly concerning those needed to resolve the financial issues. The general idea was also to have a more in-depth look to the entire Military Life Long Learning Process, in the view of a more harmonised way to form military officers.

E. Development of the work plan

The ESDC Secretariat proposed future actions to be taken on board in the coming months. These proposals were discussed and the Implementation Group reached agreement on the way ahead.

In particular 6 lines of development (LoD) were identified, as natural evolution of the current QWs and concretely implementing the Council recommendations. A description of these lines of development will be distributed by the ESDC Secretariat at the same time as the minutes.

It was agreed to include the meetings at Commandants/staffs at Military Academies level in the work plan of the initiative, in order to create synergies between the work done in both contexts and to facilitate the exchange of information.

VI. Conclusion and recommendations

The Czech representatives underlined that cooperation between all actors and a natural trend towards more harmonized criteria for education and training from the basic/initial phase to the courses at senior level, are becoming stronger and more relevant. The new proposed subgroup to focus on the life long training programmes could help in this perspective.

The Czech delegation continued with the main conclusions for the seminar as follows:

- 1. All military educational and training facilities should make full use of European Life Long Learning Programmes.*
- 2. All military educational and training facilities should look for ways to implement European requirements for education and training criteria unification and (help to) establish national qualification systems in compliance with the European Qualification Framework.*
- 3. To establish a Working Subgroup on Military Colleges /Academic Education*
- 4. To build and further develop cooperation in military education and training based on bilateral agreements and mainly a reciprocity principle (when applicable) in exchanges of young officers.*

The Swedish representative then gave the message that this Initiative will remain an important aspect under the upcoming Swedish Presidency and that special priority will be accorded to the creation of the framework agreement on legal and administrative aspects. A seminar on the Military Erasmus Initiative will be organised in Stockholm in November 2009 at Academy/University level, as follow- on activity after the seminar in Brno.

From the IG side, the Chair concluded by clarifying that the IG is in support of the Military Academies, not a separate entity. Ideally IG members can be members of the staff of Academies in charge of/dealing with exchange programmes. This would imply the best use of human and financial resources, and will guarantee more coordination and synergy. Concerning the specific work of the subgroups, it was recommended to have a close coordination between the SG1 and SG5, as they focus on issues of the same nature.
