

Common Module on CSDP 2016 in Wiener Neustadt/Austria

From 26th to 30th of January, 2016, the international “Common European Security and Defence Policy Module” (Common Module on CSDP) within the Frame of the European Initiative for the exchange of young officers inspired by ERASMUS took place at the Theresan Military Academy (TMA).

The in-processing was the first task for the Cadets, because there were participants from twelve different countries of the European Union from Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and of course the third semester of the Austrian TMA, the class "Löwenstein".



All Participants of the CSDP Module 2016.
(Picture by TMA).

According to the entrance speech of the Course Director, Col Dr. Gell – Chairman of the Implementation Group & Head International Office – the aim of the module was not only to learn about CSDP, but also to build an international community of young officers to bring them closer to a whole European thinking and build up friendships across the borders.

The cadets of the class "Löwenstein" had to prepare different tasks, such as the organization of a sports competition of the syndicates, a student's party, guided tours through the TMA-castle and through Wiener Neustadt, a visit to the United Nations Headquarters in Vienna, consisting of a guided tour and a briefing with intense discussion afterwards, which was of course a highlight for every participant. These activities gave a good platform for social interaction and conversation, improved the organization skills of the Austrian officer cadets and made up an interesting and familiar climate.



Reward ceremony of the sports competition at the students` party (left) and visit to the UNHQ (right).

(Pictures by Capt Nikolaos Stratikis/Greece)

After the entry test, where everybody could determine his or her personal knowledge, the participants had to execute different tasks. The students got divided into multinational working groups of about seven Cadets to generate a friendly environment and improve the interoperability. These so called "syndicates" had to do different tasks every day. They had to work on a certain topic and prepare a presentation about it within a team. Later on, the syndicates had to present their work to all the other syndicates and to the international experts, who were changing every day. These experts feed-backed the elaborations for the purpose of increasing Cadets' knowledge.

To be able to receive a proper grading the syndicates were observed by the experts during their working tasks. They watched how the team cooperated together and how everybody used his or her competences. Additionally to this, there was a final test on the computer, about Cadets' post-module CSDP knowledge.

According to a quality management system all participants had to evaluate the entire module to optimize the procedure and lectures.



Different ways of learning, lessons and syndicate work.

(Pictures by TMA)

The closing ceremony took place in the Maria Theresan Knights-Hall. Both, the speaker of the class "Löwenstein" as well as Col Dr. Gell used the possibility to find some inspiring and thankful words. Subsequently, the Course Director handed out the certificates for the

successfully completed module to every participant, because fortunately not anybody failed this year. A Slovakian officer cadet could get the most points in the closing test.

As a conclusion one could say that the CSDP module encouraged the working-together with different nations because there was not only just the exchange of information and knowledge but also building international friendships and networks. Therefore, everybody could gain a lot of experience during the week. This is a major footstep on the long way towards an international cooperation, it boosts the interoperability and for this reason, it is a cornerstone for the formation of a European Security and Defence Culture of the young officer cadets.

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on initiative of Col Dr. GELL