

Name of the event	<b>Common Module Gender Perspectives in Security and Defence</b>
Institution, which organised the event	<b>Theresan Military Academy</b>
Country of the organiser	<b>Austria</b>
Year of the event	<b>2022</b>
Date of the event (from-to)	<b>21 – 25 November 2022</b>
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From 21 to 25 November 2022 the Common Module "*Gender Perspectives in Security and Defence*" took place at the Theresan Military Academy for the first time. This module was not only held for the first time in Austria, it was also the first event in this field generally

organised by EMILYO. A total of 37 international students and cadets from 14 nations took part. Austria was represented by two participants and by the organiser.



**Picture 1:** Participants of the *Common Module Gender Perspectives in Security and Defence* with H.E. Victoria Reggie Kennedy.

**Photo:** Theresan Military Academy.

The module focused on

international cooperation and the exchange of young officers in the context of the module-related topics in the field of gender. In order to fulfil the work assignments of the mixed groups, a fictitious situation was developed in advance of the training. The scenario was a fictitious, but realistic story about a UN-mandated EUFOR mission in an Area of Separation (AOS) on Ukrainian territory.

### **Setting the groundwork**

The week opened with a presentation by the leader and organiser of this module Major Mag. (FH) Alexander Spannbauer. In the beginning, the participants were divided into four syndicates. Special care was taken to ensure not only a balanced mixture of nations, but also a balanced composition of the groups in terms of gender. The first day was marked by his presentations, which were a basis for the fulfilment of the work assignments in the following days. Particularly noteworthy were presentations by Colonel Assoc. Prof. Nevena Atanasova-Krasteva; PhD and Lieutenant Colonel Per-Roe Petlund on Key gender aspects, UNSCR 1325, EU Gender Equality Strategy and NATO Action Plan Woman, Peace and Security. The first day ended with the first work assignment in the syndicates, familiarisation with the initial situation NADIYA, and presentation of a situation picture.

## Immersion in the Scenarios

From the second day onwards, the presentations by the speakers became much less frequent and the work assignments in the syndicates increased. The first scenario put the syndicates to the test. The focus was the planning and presentation of a house search, regarding possible problems and solutions in the field of gender analysis and key gender aspects. The visit of the US Ambassador to Austria, H.E. Victoria Reggie Kennedy, who expanded the field of gender perspectives with her presentation, should be emphasised.

During the following days, four further scenarios were dealt with in the fictitious Area of Separation. The first two assignments covered the topics of sexual violence in conflicts and sexual harassment in relation to Internally Displaced Persons and sexist jokes and mobbing in their own ranks. The task of the syndicates was to present the scenarios, give their possible reasons, and propose solutions. These two scenarios were also role-played for practice purposes in front of the fictional unit in the form of a debriefing.

The third assignment dealt with the EU Capacity Building Initiative. Here, the task was to create a presentation of a possible initiative in the fictitious situation of NADIYA. Emphasis was placed on female stakeholders and civil-military cooperation. Important points were to propose solutions for the recruitment of young female persons so as to better cope with this issue.

The last task was the problem of organising a press conference. The syndicates had time to prepare for a press conference, which was presented in a role play. The important background for this was the development of the situation in the fictitious setting and the correct conveyance of a statement. The core message was gender equality around the EU Capacity Building Initiative.

## All good things come to an end

After an exciting week with many new experiences, the Common Module Gender Perspectives in Security and Defence ended on Friday with a closing event. In retrospect, it can be said that this week has laid many foundations and proposed solutions for possible problems in national and international operations. Furthermore, a big praise must be given to the other lecturers, as they also contributed significantly to the keypoints of the course.



**Picture 2:** All national and international participants of the *Common Module Gender Perspectives in Security and Defence* at the Theresan Military Academy.  
**Photo:** Theresan Military Academy.