

## **Non-paper “The accreditation of the programmes of national military academies”**

### **Introduction**

The Yerevan Communiqué (2015) have raised a goal to achieve an European Higher Education Area (EHEA) where common goals are implemented in all member countries to ensure trust in each other's higher education systems which would allow automatic recognition of qualifications and enhance the exchange of students and staff.<sup>1</sup> The European Initiative for the Exchange of Military Young Officers (Emilyo) created an opportunity for the exchange of officer which contributed to the collaboration between the national military academies.<sup>2</sup> Further initiative on Security Qualification Framework for Military Officer Profession (SQF-MILOF) have taken major steps in developing a coherent and consolidated SQF for the entire military officer profession.<sup>3</sup>

### **The problem**

Taking into consideration the need for further collaboration between military academies in order to consolidate their programmes to increase the mobility of officers and staff of national military academies, Dr Mantas Bileišis, Vice-Rector for Studies and Research of the Military Academy of Lithuania, called for a need of the accreditation process harmonisation of the programmes of national military academies.

The accreditation of the programmes of national military academies by a single entity is the key in helping the Higher Education Institutions to adopt best practices and achieve the goal of harmonisation of competence development of officers (in reference to Emilyo mandate). Despite the existing national regulation of the accreditation procedures, it is necessary to aim for the harmonisation of the accreditation procedures at the international level in order to have internationally recognised programmes.

This initiative would be a logical next step in strengthening the collaboration between national military academies following the success of the Emilyo Initiative. In addition, this initiative would complement the SQF-MILOF initiative.

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<sup>1</sup> 2015 Yerevan Communiqué, [http://www.ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/2015\\_Yerevan/70/7/YerevanCommuniqueFinal\\_613707.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/2015_Yerevan/70/7/YerevanCommuniqueFinal_613707.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Council Conclusions 2018, [http://www.emilyo.eu/sites/default/files/Gell%20History/2008%2011%2010\\_11%20Council%20Conclusions.pdf](http://www.emilyo.eu/sites/default/files/Gell%20History/2008%2011%2010_11%20Council%20Conclusions.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> EU Military Training and Education Annual Report 2015, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-11066-2016-INIT/en/pdf>

## **Potential solutions**

The programmes of national military academies could be accredited by the single quality assurance agency outside their national accreditation agencies. The ESDC could potentially take the role in the accreditation of national military academies. The ESDC would take up the role of a facilitator inviting independent outside experts for support. In addition, the ESDC would have to satisfy the requirements of being registered as a quality assurance agency on the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

### *Advantages:*

- This initiative would contribute to the development of common standards and procedures of the accreditation of programmes of national military academies.
- The ESDC would set common standards and procedures for the accreditation of the programmes in the military academies within the EU and partner countries. Thus, the ESDC would have an oversight of the quality of the programmes at the national military academies.
- The common standards and procedures would contribute to a further collaboration between military academies (including sharing best practices).
- The programmes accredited by the ESDC would contribute to the recognition of qualification so that young officers and staff's mobility could be ensured (i.e. the programmes would be recognised at the international level).
- The ESDC could avoid the additional financial burden by using the existing funding mechanisms related to the accreditation costs.

### *Disadvantages:*

- The ESDC would have to develop the competence in the accreditation process which would mean that additional resources will be needed.
- National accreditation bodies might object the transfer of this competence to the ESDC.

## **Further steps to be taken**

- Draft of non-paper distributed to the members for the purpose of the exchange of views and discussion of way ahead.
- Upon the agreements of the members of the IG, first stage of consultations with member states and the ESDC will be initiated.