



# Common Security and Defence Policy Module

## *Theresian Military Academy, Austria*

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## External Evaluation Report

*Sylvain Paile*

(European Studies Unit – University of Liege)



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## **Executive summary:**

In the context of the European initiative for the exchange of young officers in their initial education, inspired by Erasmus, the European Union (EU) Member States want to promote a European culture of security and defence during the first education and training of the future national military elites. As a first and concrete step in this direction, the Implementation Group of the Initiative established within the European Security and Defence College (ESDC), with the supported by its Secretariat, prepared training modules to be addressed to cadets and aimed at introducing them to the concepts, mechanisms and challenges of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Starting in 2010, the Austrian Theresian Military Academy (TMA) organised this module as a regular part of its educational offer and invited cadets from all the Member States to take part in this training. In December 2012, it organised a session of this module and convened European and international participants to share their lifestyles, cultures and opinions about the CSDP in an interoperable environment.

76 trainees coming from the military institutions of 8 Member States and the United-States of America, including the cadets completing their third semester at the TMA, accepted this challenge. In order to obtain 2 ECTS credits that can be recognised in their home institutions as a part of their curriculum, the participants had to complete the two stages of a learning path and successfully pass an examination.

First, they had to go through the high standards content of an internet-distance learning module made available by the ESDC. This phase was successfully completed by all participants.

Following the completion of this phase, the cadets met at the TMA in Wiener Neustadt for a one-week residential module, held from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> December 2012. During these modules, the cadets attended lectures given by Austrian civilian and military scientists, academics and professionals working in the field of the CSDP and participated in syndicate workshops aimed at fostering ownership of their learning process. The detailed programme of the modules covered the main aspects of the evolution of the CSDP, including the study of its missions and operations. However, the provision of knowledge has only been a part of the success. Necessary skills and competence for a future actor of this policy were also an objective pursued by this seminar because these qualifications, such as the ability to communicate in a foreign language, are meant to sustain the knowledge and curiosity that were enhanced in Austria. Once again, the participants expressed their high level of satisfaction with the form, the content of this training and the important role played by the hosting cadets in the organisation of this event and formulated suggestions, based on the successes of the method chosen by the organisers, for future organisation of similar seminars.

“Interaction” has not only been the centre of gravity of the CSDP training. It has also been a social reality of the modules, thanks to the international participation especially, and a major contribution to their success. Friendships were created, new

attitudes toward the European Union and its CSDP were acquired, which are the seeds of a culture of interoperability.

As a global conclusion, then, it can be stated that the module organised by Austria not only attained a high level of satisfaction but also reached their objectives of spreading knowledge of the CSDP and conscience of the European constructive diversity. In the context of the initiative for the exchange of young officers, this success is undoubtedly a good step towards more ambitious achievements in the future. Member States and their military higher education institutions should continue organising similar seminars in order to give the opportunity to a larger number of military students to become efficient actors within the European Union in general and its Common Security and Defence Policy in particular.

## Introduction:

The profession of military officer is, by essence, one of the most internationalised profession. It requires not only an understanding of the complexity of the theatre of operation but also a mutual respect between the partners in the mission and positive attitudes toward the internationalisation of the responses to the threats. In the context of the European Union, the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) is not only a search for efficiency but also an incentive for reaching a common European identity. The European developments in the area require from them to be familiar with the principle of interoperability and its multiple aspects. Interoperability of the national armed forces for a European action, interoperability of the services, given that complex missions require complex responses, and interoperability with the civilian instruments with view to act comprehensively for the security and defence of the Union and its Member States. These multi-fold objectives make it highly necessary to train the future officers, as soon as possible in the course of their training, to their role and responsibilities in the cohesion of the CSDP.

In a political declaration of November 10<sup>th</sup> 2008, the 27 Ministers of Defence of the European Union agreed on the shapes of an initiative for the exchanges of young officers in the course of their initial education, inspired by Erasmus<sup>1</sup>. An implementation group was tasked to define the main actions to be taken by the responsible institutions for the education and training of the future military elites. In the context of an ever-developing CSDP, this group started to work on the definition of the main axis of this Europeanization of the military higher education with the particular objective of stimulating a common culture of security and defence proper to insure the continuation of the progress made. Two main directions were particularly emphasized: the education and training of the young officers to the CSDP and the provision of a European environment in the different aspects of the initial education and training. There is however a third lines for action that has been progressively developed by the group, which is intended to combine these two aspects: the common training of European military students<sup>2</sup> to the concepts of the CSDP. As soon as December 2008, the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) had prepared a version of its *Orientation Course* adapted to a cadets' audience. The Implementation group of the Initiative, which started to work at the beginning of 2009, prepared the needed material for allowing the willing institutions to use it in the organisation of their own CSDP modules.

As a first remarkable realisation of the Initiative, the Ministry of Defence of Portugal and the three military academies of Navy, Army and Air Force organised the first one-week seminar entirely dedicated to the learning of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP/CSDP) in September 2009. In order to provide also an adequate learning environment, Portugal convened military students from all European Union Member States to participate to this training and share their views on the CSDP with their Portuguese counterparts. The EU Spanish Presidency, on the basis of this first success and the lessons learnt from the Portuguese precedent,

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<sup>1</sup> Hereafter called he "Initiative".

<sup>2</sup> Hereafter called "students" or "cadets".

organised similar events in Spain in March 2010. In January 2010, the Austrian Theresian Military Academy (TMA) decided, with the support of the Austrian Ministry of Defence and the ESDC, to organise this module within its premises and to open it to European participation. Its aim was to provide this knowledge on CSDP to all of its cadets, as a regular part of its educational offer. Two modules were organised in October and November 2010. In parallel, the Greek Ministry of Defence organised a similar module at the Hellenic Air Force Academy in November 2010. The Austrian TMA, in October 2011, organised again two CSDP modules and opened them to European and international participation.

In December 2012, in accordance with its decision to propose it as a regular offer in its academic programme, the Theresian Military Academy organised for the third year a CSDP module. First, the cadets were offered the possibility to get an introductory overview of the CSDP through the completion of an internet-distance learning module, using the means of the ESDC network. Then, they were invited to come to the Theresian Military Academy, in Wiener Neustadt, for the residential part of the seminar following predefined programmes<sup>3</sup>.

In order to insure the quality of the training to be provided with regard to the general objectives defined by the Initiative, the Theresian Military Academy asked support for an external evaluation of the conduct of the module, which is hereby provided in collaboration with the European Studies Unit of the University of Liege. The evaluation was conducted by an external evaluator<sup>4</sup>, attending the lectures on the field, discussing with the participants, the lecturers and, more generally, witnessing the life of the module. Therefore, the evaluation was based on observations from the field and the collection of data from the participating cadets and the organisers themselves. The method that was used for collecting the insights is inspired by the Kirkpatrick's model for the evaluation of training and professional modules<sup>5</sup>, followed by the ESDC for the evaluation of its activities, and its four stages:

- Evaluation of the satisfaction of the participants (level 1 subjective outcomes);
- Evaluation of the acquisition of knowledge through the taking part to the module (level 2, objective differential between similar general knowledge questionnaires administered before and after the module);
- Evaluation of the outcomes of the new *acquis* regarding the work performed by the participants after the module (level 3);
- And the evaluation of the outcomes for the organisation that required from its human resource to undertake the training (level 4)<sup>6</sup>.

Using this method, and on the basis of questionnaires prepared by the evaluator and the organisers and using a 1 (corresponding to a negative assessment / "no") to 6 (corresponding to a positive assessment / "yes") scale, satisfaction assessments were made. They represent an important part of the observations presented in this report. Furthermore, following the chronological logic of this unique initiative,

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<sup>3</sup> The programme of the residential module is attached in Annex 1 to this report.

<sup>4</sup> The external evaluator was also the external evaluator for the previous editions of the CSDP modules in Austria.

<sup>5</sup> Donald L. Kirkpatrick & James D. Kirkpatrick, *Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels*, San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1998.

<sup>6</sup> The level 4 investigations would be conducted later at the end of the academic year 2012-2013 in order, for the sending institutions, to be able to "measure" to the possible extent the impact of the seminar.

teachings from this experience were drawn with the objective of providing resources for future organisers of similar modules for young officers. As already mentioned, it was not the first time CSDP modules were organised for cadets. In order to allow the reader to find more rapidly the concrete information he or she needs for identifying the added values of these two modules, the same structure was adopted for this report than for the external evaluation report issued for the 2010 and 2011 Austrian editions. However, this report is, in no way intended to strictly compare the respective strengths and weaknesses of the different experiences. Even though the organising team is the same as in 2010 and 2011 and that it has implemented “corrective” measures based on the lessons learnt from these previous editions, which will be sometimes referred to for analysis of the solutions found, the module organised in 2011 is original and has its own logic. Therefore, even if lessons learnt from previous experiences will be taken into due consideration, the main object of this evaluation is to highlight the quality of the choices operated for this module.

The seminar held in Wiener Neustadt in December 2012 issued its own lessons and will become, for possible future organisations, a precedent. Furthermore, in the broader context of the Initiative, other seminars on different topics of interest for the European cadets will be soon organised. Some of the lessons learnt from this Austrian experience on CSDP modules, when relevant, can possibly be used as a source for inspiration for the Member States or their educational institutions which would be willing to organise these training.



## **Common Security and Defence Policy: fully integrated in the Austrian officers' education**

As briefly introduced, the CSDP module is a component of the TMA educational offer that is fully integrated in its core programme. Therefore, all Austrian cadets since 2010 are required to complete the module as a part of their third semester's academic education. Beyond the fact that CSDP is now a topic with which all the future military officers will be familiar with when commissioned, posted and sent to international operations, this means that Austria organises the CSDP module(s) every year. Therefore, the lessons learnt from this 2012 module, itself based on the lessons learnt from the experience acquired in 2010 and 2011, is expected to prepare the ground for a continuous running of these modules, not only for the Austrian organisers but also for the stakeholders like the European education and training institutions which have sent or will send students to the CSDP modules.

The Austrian experience of these modules is specific to many regards while it is not an exceptional event, but the regular organisation of a module of the TMA's academic programme. When it comes to this characteristic, the process of external evaluation is inextricably connected to the sovereign specificities of the Austrian educational system. Even though it is not in the capacity of the external evaluator to assess them, it is important to report about these contextual elements in order to provide - perhaps not an exhaustive but a comprehensive - view on the organisation of the CSDP modules.

### **The complete recognition of this *acquis* in the curriculum**

Similar to the previous CSDP modules that were organised in Portugal, Spain and Greece, an objective of the Austrian organising team has been that this first contact with CSDP is recognised as a valuable experience in the training of the participants. Owing to the fact that this module is an integral component of the TMA's training programme and that the institution and its education fully comply with the prescriptions of the Bologna process, the award of European credits ECTS<sup>7</sup> is compulsory when it comes to the Austrian participants. The TMA, as agreed by the Implementation Group of the European initiative for the exchange of young officers in December 2011, offered 2 credits to all the European participants while they have followed the same learning path.

In addition, the Austrian cadets were all given, as will be further developed hereafter, a task related to the organisation of the seminar. Their ability to fulfil this task, which required dedication of both time and skills, together with their successful completion of the learning path is assessed and recorded as an element of their military curriculum. The different experiences of the first two years of the organisation of these modules in Austria demonstrate that the shape of CSDP module, as designed at the European level, nonetheless allows creativity in order to adapt to the national specificities of military higher education.

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<sup>7</sup> European Credit Transfer System.

When looking at the strict calculation of the number of ECTS in terms of students' workload<sup>8</sup>, it may be asserted that 2 is a correct number. In average, as will be seen from a next section of this report, students need 7 hours for completing the IDL<sup>9</sup> and the programme of the residential phase of the module amounts slightly more than 30 hours of contact with the CSDP topic.

Additionally, at the end of the residential phase, the TMA awarded certificates of attendance, provided by the ESDC and signed by the High-Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union and Vice-President of the European Commission, Baroness Catherine Ashton, as well as, for those who successfully completed the module, diploma supplements emanating from the TMA's authorities and describing the objectives and content of the module and the number of ECTS attached to it<sup>10</sup>.

### **An examination for passing the module**

In line with the philosophy of the Bologna process and the fact that the module is a core component of the TMA's educational programme, the Austrian organising team conditioned the award of the 2 ECTS to the successful completion of an examination, since 2010. Only the Austrian and European students who had both attended and succeed to the examination were entitled to "validate" the credits and receive the diploma supplement.

The examination was aimed at assessing the knowledge acquired by the participants, as well as their progresses in understanding the CSDP topics and their articulation. The instrument used for the examination was the level 2 questionnaire set for the evaluation of the module itself. At the beginning of the residential phase, the participants were asked to answer 12 questions picked among 21 possibilities and chosen randomly by the computer. The participants thus had different tests. At the end of the module, 12 questions were again selected but, this time, asked in the same way to all the students. Therefore, the course director was able to look at the progresses of all participants between the beginning of the residential phase and the end of the module. Contrary to previous Austrian editions of the module, the participants were not invited to take part to a similar survey of their global level of knowledge on CSDP at the beginning of their learning process, *i.e.* the IDL phase. It would be interesting, for next editions, to resume this practice in order to follow on the evolution of this knowledge and, therefore, the efficiency of the educational choices operated. For "passing" the examination<sup>11</sup>, the reference was the individual results of the participants at the last round of level 2 evaluation, meaning at the end

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<sup>8</sup> In the European Higher Education Area, the numbers of ECTS are usually calculated on the basis of students' workload (between 25 and 30 for 1 ECTS) and learning outcomes.

<sup>9</sup> See Sylvain Paile, Common Security and Defence Policy Modules 2011 External Evaluation Report, Armis et Litteris 27, Theresianische Militärakademie - Wiener Neustadt, Schutz & Hilfe, 2012, 79p.

<sup>10</sup> It must be mentioned that the four participants coming from an EU-third country – *i.e.* the United-States – did not received the certificate of attendance awarded by the ESDC, since they have not completed the IDL phase, neither the ECTS, since they did not need them in their education and training system, but only the diploma supplement upon completion of the requirements.

<sup>11</sup> According to the regulations of the Austrian TMA, the examination is passed only with more than 50 per cent of right answers.

of the module. The participants were all informed about this evaluation process and, as regards the Austrian cadets, made aware of the importance of the successful completion of this module for their curriculum already in at the end of the academic year 2011-2012.

If, on the principle, the use of a knowledge assessment as an examination leading to the award (or not) of ECTS credits is fully in line with the practice of the European military institutes and the prescription of the Bologna process and is in position to ease and accelerate the recognition by the sending institutions of this *acquis*, the use of the level 2 questionnaires is normally not adapted to this purpose. First, the level 2 questionnaire is merely shaped for assessing the global level of knowledge acquired by the students but not the knowledge itself. It was drafted for assessing the efficiency of the module in spreading knowledge on CSDP mechanisms and issues, but not specifically on “EU and NATO cooperation”, for example. In this module, this risk has been mitigated thanks to communication and exchanges between the organising team and the lecturers so that all the questions would be dealt with in the learning process. Then, the fact that the questionnaire is given a value of test, with the additional pressure of the result for the students, makes it difficult to use it also, as originally intended, as a “dispassionate” instrument for all CSDP modules for the assessment of the improvements of the global level of knowledge about CSDP in general. It may be proposed for next editions, therefore, that the level 2 questionnaire - possibly updated - is used only for the purpose of the evaluation of the module at its different stages and that a separate test, prepared by the organising team in close collaboration with the lecturers, is used for the examination of the participants at the end of their learning path.

### **An approach based on qualifications**

The CSDP module is an integral part of the Austrian officers’ basic education. Therefore, the organising team considers that it is not a “one-shot” action but a yardstick on the longer road of the acquisition of qualifications that characterise an Austrian officer. While the basic education extends beyond the acquisition of knowledge, meaning skills and competences, the TMA fully integrated these dimensions in their CSDP educational project. A matrix of learning outcomes<sup>12</sup> to be fostered by the CSDP modules were defined and used for measuring the self-development of the future Austrian military elites. Four foreign evaluators<sup>13</sup>, then, attended the syndicate groups’ work, switching groups during and between the sessions in order to compare their views on the cadets’ accomplishments, and observed the work and interaction of the members through the glasses of these learning outcomes. The expected outcomes were categorised in 4 main sections, namely:

- “Special knowledge”;
- “Decision-making and responsibility”;
- “Social competence”;
- “Personal competence”.

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<sup>12</sup> This matrix is attached to this report in Annex 2.

<sup>13</sup> These evaluators were officers accompanying European delegations of participants to the module, from France, Poland and Romania. They did not know the Austrian cadets, therefore, and had a neutral view on their achievements during the module.

Each of these sections were defined and illustrated by examples for the use of the matrix by the evaluators.

These outcomes do not correspond to the external evaluation inspired by the level 3 of the Kirkpatrick's model. They are focusing on the education of an officer as a whole, not only with regard to the European dimension of defence policies. In the Austrian educational system, these matrices are used for monitoring the self-development of the cadet, his/her leadership abilities notably, and his/her progresses with regard to the qualifications that are deemed necessary for becoming an Austrian officer. These instruments may be referred to, for example, when a cadet fails an exam for the second time and defend his/her case in front of a commission. The TMA envisages that individual "certificates of competences" made out of the observations by the lecturers themselves or by specific evaluators for wider audiences like in the CSDP modules, become generalised in the future. The experience is relatively recent while these outcomes have been described internally in the year 2010 and the path may be long because the mentalities in education in general must slide from a focus on knowledge toward becoming more sensitive to qualifications and outcomes in general.

The guidelines provided to the observers, under the form of these matrices, did not correspond either to the description of the modules such as it appeared on the course description on the TMA's website or on the diploma supplement. The reason is that this experience of re-centralisation on qualifications is only at a start. The matrices are an effort from the TMA for describing learning outcomes and for taking them more into account, as it is prescribed by the Bologna process. The intention of the organisers in the future is to harmonise these descriptions according to the (expected) outcomes of the line of development 2 of the Initiative<sup>14</sup>. In doing so, it may become possible, for instance, to finalise these certificates of competences and communicate them to the sending institutions at their request. In these CSDP modules, indeed and even though the European cadets have also been followed, the practical impact of this outcome-based monitoring on them has been minimum.

Finally, the internal evaluation of the outcomes also encompassed the role played by the Austrian cadets - as will be developed in the following section of this report – in support of the organisation of the modules. Their participation in the organisation of the events, indeed, fostered organisational qualifications which have been monitored by the course director and somehow "recorded" for the continuation of their curriculum at the TMA. Furthermore, their role has also been stressed - as will be illustrated later in this report – in the level 1 "satisfaction" questionnaire and (extremely positive) comments have been provided by all participants, including the European and international guests.

The successful completion of the learning path was thus assessed through 3 types of criteria: the knowledge through the level 2 questionnaire used as a test, the involvement in the organisation of the module assessed by the course director, and the skills demonstrated by the evaluators in the syndicate groups.

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<sup>14</sup> The line of development 2 of the Initiative aims at creating a framework of qualifications focused on military higher education. From these qualifications, the military institutes are expected to implement them in describing learning outcomes for some or all of their courses.

## **The internal assessment of the quality**

Owing to the fact that the CSDP modules are, for the TMA, an integral part of the educational programme, the quality of the modules has - like any other course according to the Bologna prescriptions - to be reviewed under quality assurance mechanisms. After the CSDP module, therefore, the quality will be assessed internally through questionnaires distributed to the Austrian students. These questionnaires, which assess the satisfaction of the students and their perception of the coherence of a given course or vocational training with other courses, for example, are then analysed by a structure within the TMA and followed-up by the chain of command. This structure also organises regularly reviews of the opinions of former TMA students who are posted. These feedbacks "from the field" allow improving the quality of the lectures and training of the future Austrian officers within the premises of the Academy. It may logically be thought that the CSDP modules will be an essential element of this specific internal evaluation in the future.

Finally, as the TMA's quality assurance system follows the European standards, the quality of the Austrian education and training is also reviewed through external mechanisms. It follows notably the ISO 9001 standards in this area and is comprehensively assessed every five years by external actors of the higher education world.

## The shape and audience of the module

Before entering the subject of the conduct of the seminar, it is necessary to introduce further some elements of the context, such as the organising team, the programme, the pedagogical contributors and the audience, which are specificities of these modules and are likely to clarify observations that will be made along this report.

### The organising team:

Like in 2010 and 2011, the managers and organisers of the CSDP module, properly, were the International Office of TMA's Institute for Basic Officer Training, which also represents Austria in the European organs of discussion of the Initiative. The Course Director for the module being also in charge for the international relations of the Institute, he had thus not only the experience of the CSDP module but also the technical expertise on CSDP and on the organisation of the international events.

Like in 2011, the choice was made by the organisers to leave room for the action of the Austrian cadets, which had not only the task of being hosting students but also the role of co-organisers. The managers, indeed, wanted to give more responsibility to the hosting cadets and foster their capacity for managing elements of the module and contributing to the success of an important international event in their curriculum and for the life of the Academy. The different tasks were defined by the Course Director but they were not specifically assigned. There was room for each Austrian cadet for being in charge of one or the other aspect but it was their task to distribute the roles.

The global objective of their participation in the organisation was the "integration of the European and international participants", in providing them with a friendly and learning-prone environment. Therefore, their mission implied not only the daily life at the Academy during the module, e.g. in "accompanying" a foreign cadet, but also the preparation and management of the so-called "social events" or, in a more general way, all activities outside the classrooms<sup>15</sup>. The Course Director had only in his hands a list of "duty cadets", with general coordinators for one or the other activity to whom he could address if he had questions or information to give and they had informal "follow-up" contacts with the Course Director according to the – administrative, logistical, financial, e.g. - needs. The intention behind this delegation of power was to make the Austrian cadets<sup>16</sup> responsible before the managers and the lecturers but primarily before their comrades and their fellow European colleagues, and to leave them learning from their own experiences... And from their mistakes if needs be.

As already mentioned, their preparation and the implementation of the different aspects left between their hands from the first to the very last days of the modules

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<sup>15</sup> Even inside since referents had been also designated for welcoming, introducing and accompanying the different guest lecturers and for being leaders of the syndicate groups.

<sup>16</sup> It must be noticed that some of the European cadets have been given tasks to fulfil within the syndicate groups, such as presenting the results of their works to the other participants.

have been observed, though not “controlled”, by the Course Director. In the context of this external evaluation, it does not belong to the evaluator to assess the success or not of these achievements but only to report, on the basis of the level 1 surveys, about the satisfaction of the participants (and participants-organisers) and testify about the - undoubted - adequacy of the approach chosen of letting the role of the hosting cadets developing to this extent. It is, indeed, a first way for the participants to develop ownership for their learning path.

### **The programme:**

Even though the core of the programme of the CSDP modules has been defined as early as November 2008 when the ESDC adapted its Orientation Course for a cadets' audience, it is interesting to notice that the practice of these modules in Portugal, Spain and now in Austria left space, nonetheless, for creativity and innovation in the choice of additional topics which give a particular colour to these modules.

The themes proposed in Austria were:

- The European Union;
- EU Missions and Operations (EUFOR Chad);
- EU Relations to Third Parties;
- Capability Development;
- EU Missions and Operations (SSR, CCMO, C2-option);
- CSDP and the Lisbon Treaty;
- EU-UN relations;
- CSDP history;
- CSDP and the European Security Strategy;
- Human Rights;
- Europeanization of Basic Officers Education;
- Future Perspectives of CSDP.

Eventually, this programme appears to be now a “classical” one for the CSDP modules conducted at the TMA since the topics chosen – and most of the lecturers as will be seen hereafter – were the same as in 2010 and 2011. Some differences, however, appeared, mainly due to the issue of availability of lecturers. A learning unit was added on the “CSDP history” in order to give to the participants the geopolitical and global context of the birth and raise of the policy. The learning unit on the missions and operations has been divided in two lecturing units. The learning unit on “mainstreaming and gender issues” and “EU crisis management” – though highly relevant for the in-depth study of the policy - were exceptionally withdrawn because of the unavailability of the lecturer for this period. For the same reason, the sequence of the learning units was changed compared to previous years, thus leading to a change in the logic of the learning path. It may be though, at this stage, that learning about the capability development or relations to third parties before the history of the CSDP or the European Security Strategy makes their learning process more difficult with view to the global understanding of the internal logic of the policy.

Then, it must be noted that, compared to previous years, the time dedicated to the lectures was generally reduced in order to allow more time for the syndicate work<sup>17</sup>. In addition, due to the large amount of participants and for the need of the smooth organisation of time, those ones were divided in two groups which attended the lectures one after the other. The lecturers thus provided the same lecture twice in the day.

### The opening lecture



The Austrian organisation team, indeed, pursued interaction as a key for the learning process of the participants in the module. The pedagogical methodology, was not limited to lectures but attempted to develop interaction among the students and between the students and the lecturers in order to promote self-learning processes. Each day of the residential phase, before the lectures<sup>18</sup>, syndicates convened for “discovering” the topics and making group researches aimed at answering to questions or fulfilling particular tasks in relation with the lectures. Once their tasks were completed, the syndicate groups had to designate two presenters who had to brief the other syndicate groups of the same half of the class and the other half of the class, in front of the lecturer, before they attended the lecture. In proceeding like this, all the students were briefed before the lecture, being authorised as well as the lecturer to ask questions on the researches made. However, most important, the half of the class that did not make the researches on the topic of the following lecture had only as a prior knowledge the viewpoints and information provided by their colleagues from the other half of the class. The syndicate groups and the designated briefers, therefore, were responsible in front of all their fellow participants for the outcome of their work. This original approach is the most important contribution to the ownership of the learning process for the participants to the 2012 CSDP module.

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<sup>17</sup> As an example, in 2011, 2,5 hours were dedicated to the lecture on the “European Union” and 1,5 for the lecture on “Human rights”. In 2012, these two lectures were allowed respectively 1,5 hours and 45 minutes.

<sup>18</sup> For comparison, in previous editions, the syndicate groups convened after the lectures and had for tasks to deepen or illustrate the knowledge they received during these lectures, working on questions or cases provided, for example.



The syndicate groups were composed of 9 to 10 students, mixing Austrian and foreign students, and made their researches separately, based on the material they received for the CSDP module – the Handbook on CSDP, mainly – or for the cases they had to study, and they had access to the internet. As for their briefings, the syndicate groups were constrained to a 8 to 10 minutes timeframe, thus forcing them to exercise their abilities to analysis, synthesis and reporting not only within but also outside the small groups.

It must be noted, however, that syndicate tasks were not organised for every lecturing units, due to the lack of time allowed for the module. The organisers had thus to make a selection of topics for which they considered important to treat them through syndicate work in priority: “EU relations to third parties”, “capability development”, “EU-UN relations”<sup>19</sup>, “human rights” and “CSDP and the ESS”.

A syndicate group preparing a forthcoming lecture:



Although it did not provide additional workload for the students, because no preparation before the course was needed, this configuration supposed that the lecturers prepared questions or case studies before their intervention. Eventually, the continuous interaction between the lecturers and the organisers allowed the smooth running of the CSDP module.

In addition to the educational programme, more “social” events were formally planned and directed by the hosting cadets during the week the participants stayed at the Academy. A guided tour of the castle of the Academy was provided on the first evening for an insight of Austrian cadets’ life. A sport session, consisting in small competitions between the syndicate groups, was organised by the cadets on the first day, as an icebreaker and a contribution to the birth of an *esprit-de-corps* among the participants. A formal party was organised by the cadets after the sport session at the cadet’s club on this same first day and they also organised informal activities outside the walls of the Academy on the fourth day... Notably! On the last day, after the module, the foreign cadets were also offered the possibility to have a tour of the Military Museum and the city of Vienna before leaving.

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<sup>19</sup> Though the task for the syndicates related to this topic was to prepare questions for the lecture provided later that day.

## **The lecturing team**

It is also necessary, in order to give a clear picture of the Austrian modules, to present briefly the pedagogical contributors to the residential module, *i.e.* the lecturers. Indeed, the backgrounds of the different speakers can help understanding comments from the participants. Therefore, it is possible to evaluate them as a whole, *a priori*. The team was composed of 11 lecturers, plus one key-note speaker, one of them lecturing twice during the module. As a specificity of this Austrian module, it must be noticed that the representation of civilian and military lecturers was balanced. These civilian lecturers served in ministries of foreign affairs or defence, in universities, or in international organisations such as the United-Nations. Most of them had a strong and relevant experience of the CSDP functioning from the inside and many had acted in the mechanisms at play in Brussels.

Two of these lecturers (only) were foreigners. It was, indeed, an intention of the organisers, already in 2010, to have a maximum number of Austria-based lecturers in order to gather a pool of high-quality experts (ambassadors and other diplomats, scientists, academics, decision-takers) that would be sustainable with regard to the projected organisation of the modules every year. A potential drawback of this is that the emphasis may be put on a very “Austrian” viewpoint on the CSDP, which was seen by some participants as too present in their learning path. However, this approach explains also why most of the lecturers of these two modules already lectured in the modules held in 2010 and 2011 and were thus familiar with their shapes and objectives. In the future, the lecturing team thus constituted should potentially be discussing the content of the test for the examination.

This configuration of the team allows saying that no specific teaching on the Austrian views on CSDP was necessary, while most of the lecturers practiced CSDP on a day-by-day basis in their functions, notably within the ministries. However, the European background of a large number of them also witnessed the reliability of the content of their return from experience to the participants. Some of them also expressed their interest in principle for contributing to other common modules created or to be created in the framework of the European initiative for the exchange of young officers.

## **The participants:**

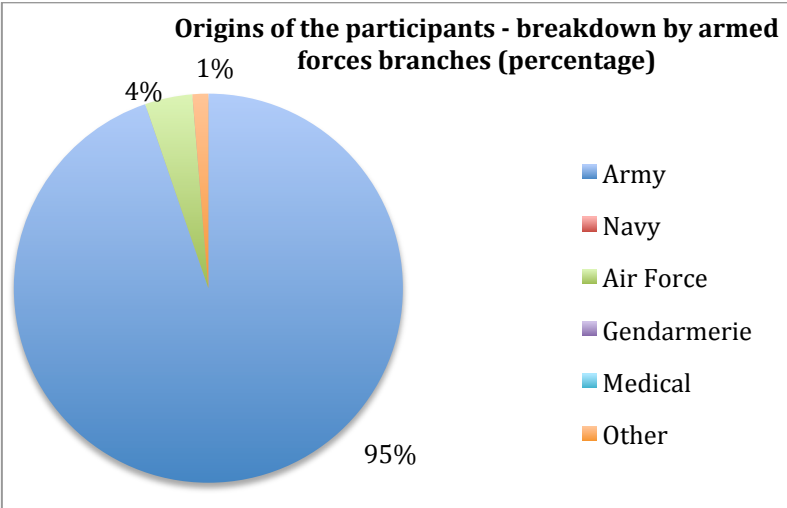
76 cadets<sup>20</sup> from 8 Member States<sup>21</sup> of the European Union as well as the United-States of America took part to the CSDP module organised by Austria. The international participation amounted 32 per cent of the audience, which is higher than in previous modules organised by Austria. With the exception of the students from the United-States and Lithuania, who were staying at the TMA in the framework of an exchange arrangement with the Academy of Westpoint and the Military Academy of Lithuania.

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<sup>20</sup> This number including a civilian student, who will nonetheless be hereafter be referred to as belonging to the group of “cadets” for reasons of convenience.

<sup>21</sup> Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Italy, Lithuania, Poland and Romania.

In the same way, it must be noted that the breakdown in terms of armed force branches showed an obvious misbalance in favour of the Army, as demonstrated by the following figure. This must be connected to the characteristic of the Austrian national armed forces, for which cadets are mostly Army cadets. A consequence of the lack of other “colours” on the picture is that the apprenticeship of inter-services interoperability is more difficult, or, at least, remain theoretical. One civilian student, studying at the Polish Army Academy, also took part to the CSDP module.



Finally, it must be noted that only 5 participants were female students, representing only 7 per cent of the audience, which is somehow equivalent to their participation in previous modules.

## Welcoming ceremony in the Knights' Hall of the Theresan Military Academy:

### Find a picture (CD)

As will be illustrated hereafter, international representation is one of the keys for the success of the common CSDP modules. Therefore, an adequate communication on these events is fundamental. To this regard, it must be stressed that the fact that the TMA already organised such modules the years before, that it clearly expressed its intention to organise them every year from 2010 on and that it communicated the approximate dates of the 2012 module as soon as in November 2011 have proved efficient in spreading adequate information on these modules.

51 of the participants were Austrian cadets in their third semester of education, which corresponds to first cycle studies (bachelor level). 16 of their international colleagues<sup>22</sup> were studying at the same academic level and 8 at the second cycle level (master level). However, even if one may wonder if the CSDP module is not too high-level for the majority of cadets, the level of studies did not play any role - after a close look - in the results of the examination. Regarding the Austrian cadets, more particularly, it must be recalled that they had been briefed on the importance this module would have on their curriculum, the examination procedures and the organisation of the IDL and the residential phases, a few months before the start.

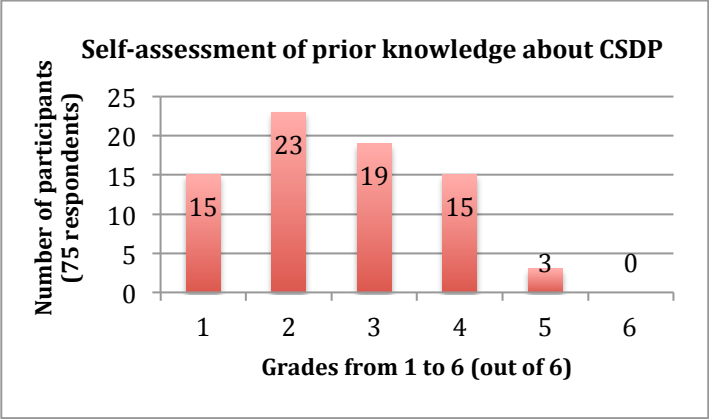
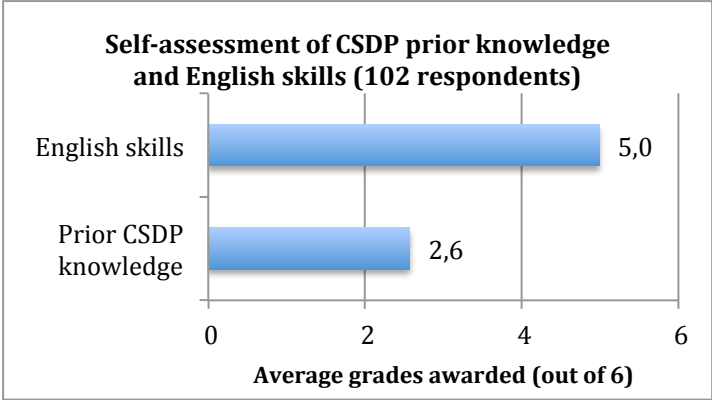
As seen from the graphs below, these participants, independently from their level of studies, considered that they were unfamiliar with the CSDP before the module, as they rarely had the opportunity to approach this topic during their higher education. As observed on the field, notably from the discussions held in syndicate on the first days of the residential phases, the participants had effectively little prior knowledge of the European Union (its mechanisms, the relations between its institutions and the Member States and policies) and the CSDP but showed curiosity and interest for these topics, especially with regard to technical aspects such as the missions, the capabilities' development or the perspective for future developments. Some of them even stated, in their comments, that they were more familiar with NATO and its role than the European Union.

Furthermore, the participants considered<sup>23</sup> that they sufficiently managed the English language for following the module. The CSDP module, indeed, requires that the participants are able to read the IDL, the material, follow the lectures, communicate in the syndicate groups, ask questions if needed in English and, in general, interact with their comrades.

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<sup>22</sup> Including the participants from the United-States.

<sup>23</sup> All along the external evaluation processes, as introduced earlier, the participants were invited to answer to questionnaires using a 1 to 6 scale, 1 being the weakest/"no", 6 being the level of certainty/"yes".



## The IDL: a self-introduction to CSDP

The TMA, as it is the practice in the CSDP modules set in the framework of the Initiative, opted for introducing the cadets to CSDP through internet-based distance learning (IDL) studies, using the ESDC IDL resource. The IDL preparatory module was made available on an ILIAS Learning Management System administered by the ESDC and provided by the Romanian National Defence University. As stated, the cadets had to complete this module, opened three months before the arrival of the participants at the Academy, as an integral condition for completing the course and validate the ECTS credits. Two sections of the ESDC IDL course, called “Autonomous Knowledge Units” (AKUs), were chosen:

- “History and context of the CSDP development” (AKU1) containing explanations and illustrative documents related to the evolution from the origins of the cooperation (the birth of the WEU, the European co-operation, the shaping of the CFSP) to the developments of the CSDP (foundation and links with the CFSP);
- “European Security Strategy” (AKU2) starting from before the ESS, then going through the adoption of ESS, its content, main characteristics, role and impact, and finishing with the ESS revision prospects.

The AKUs consist in synthetic texts presenting the topic and recommended reading, usually short essential documents, illustrating and explaining a subject area. They were prepared, for a use by the European Security and Defence College in its different activities, in cooperation with highly recognised scientific societies, such as the Geneva Centre for Security Policy for AKU1 and the Egmont Institute for International Relations for AKU2. Therefore, it does not belong to this evaluation to review the content of the IDL module but only the *bien-fondé* of its contribution as an integral part of the modules on the CSDP for the European cadets. It should be noted, however, that the content and level of these training materials was specific to ESDC course audiences, different in some respects from the cadets taking part in the CSDP modules. All participants completed the IDL phase in time.

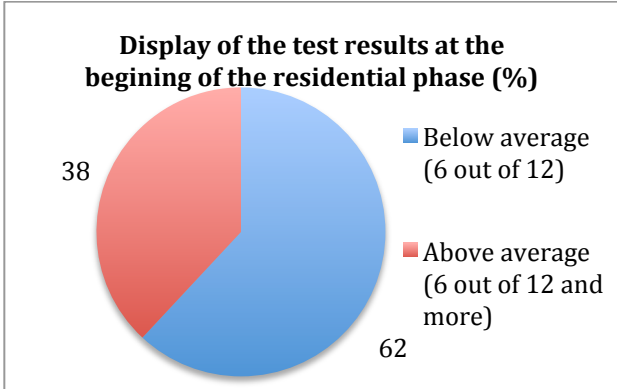
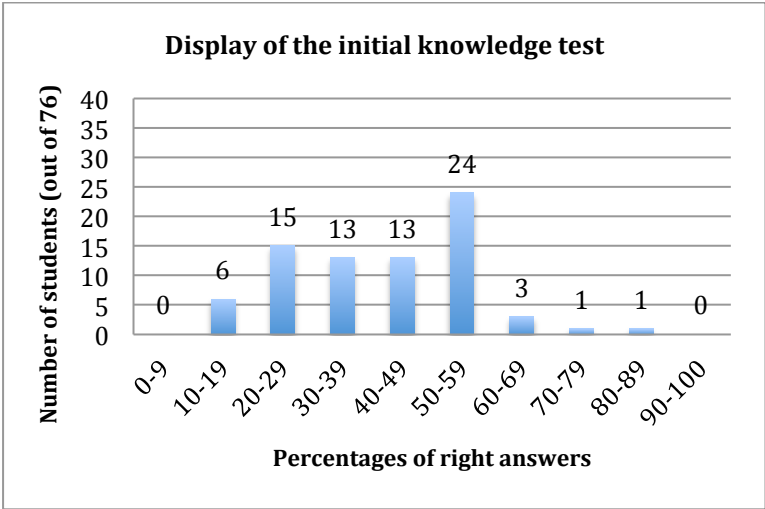
The cadets went through the AKUs, fulfilling a short knowledge test at the end of each of them, in order to confirm they achieved the learning objectives. The results from these tests will not be made available because they do not give relevant information regarding the evolution of their knowledge. They had to succeed in the AKU1 test, after as many attempts as necessary, before acceding AKU2, and succeed in AKU2 test in order to complete the module. For the support of the cadets in their learning, a series of links toward relevant institutions or scientific societies’ websites were made available on the IDL platform. Moreover, some learning material was made available to the participants already on the ILIAS platform: the CSDP Handbook, edited in 2010 and prepared by the ESDC Secretariat and the Austrian Armed Forces, and an extract of the “EU Acronyms and Definitions” prepared by the EU Military Staff and aimed at providing learners with vocabulary of the CSDP. A forum is also accessible to the participants if they want to report on technical aspects or communicate on administration, technical support or on the content of the AKUs. It is operated and moderated by the ESDC.

In previous editions of the CSDP modules, the IDL path ended with a satisfaction questionnaire (level 1 of Kirkpatrick’s model of evaluation) distributed by the ESDC

and to be filled online. In 2012, this instrument was not included in the platform and the comments provided in the final satisfaction questionnaire for the entire module did not specifically highlight the role and quality of the IDL in the learning path. It could be suggested to include it again for future modules since it may contribute to updating and improving the IDL phase as proposed to these young participants. To this end, a reference to it in the final satisfaction questionnaire would not be contributing enough. Most participants, indeed, had completed the IDL long before the end of the module.

In order to “measure” their progresses along the different stages of the modules, as already presented, investigations on the global level of knowledge on CSDP issues (level 2 in the Kirkpatrick’s model of evaluation) were conducted at the beginning of the residential phase and at the end of this phase. The multiple-choice answers, though the content of the questionnaires were not exactly similar from one student to another for the first session, were randomly shuffled in order to avoid “mechanical answers”.

It appears from the results of the first round of evaluation that the participants to the module form a rather homogenous “group” as regards their pre-existing knowledge on CSDP in general. The results obtained, as much in terms of average grade - the percentage of correct answers amounting 41 per cent - as in terms of repartitions below and above the 50 per cent are similar to results obtained for previous editions of the CSDP module.



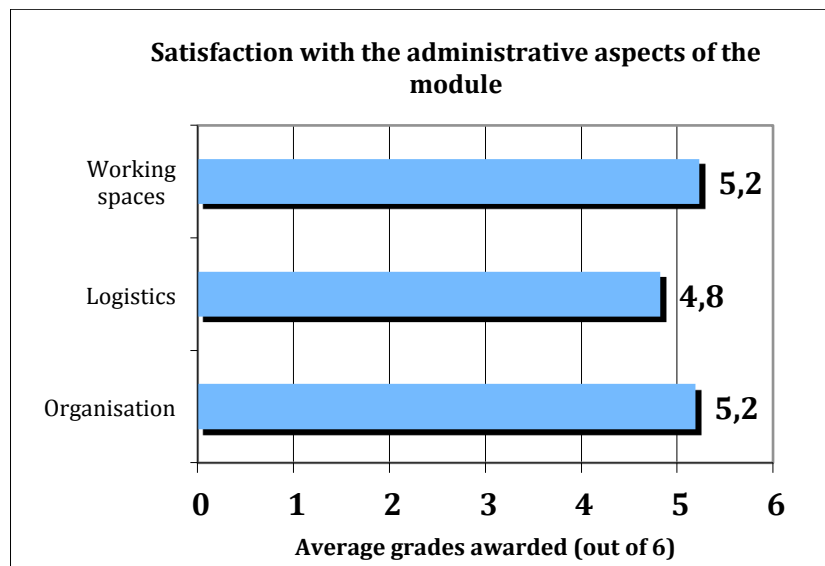
These numbers, even though the students had already completed the IDL phase, show that there are rooms for improvements, and that the mission of the residential phase, consequently, is relatively important. As a concrete illustration, it is interesting to look at the slight differences existing between the results of the half of the class which passed the test in the morning and the second half which passed it in the after, *i.e.* after the lecture on the “European Union”. 3 questions directly related to the European Union and basic facts of the CSDP in the context of the European Union history obtained averages of 21 to 38 points higher than the percentages obtained by the first half.



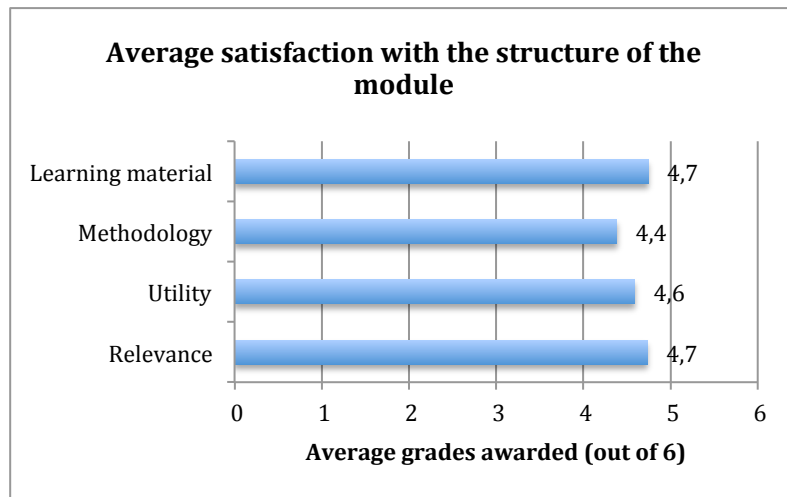
## The residential phase: learning and living CSDP

### The organisational aspects of the residential phase:

The formal administrative aspects of the CSDP module, as they were organised by the TMA, have met the satisfaction of the participants, even though most of them were familiar with the Academy. As showed by the graph below, the grades they awarded to these administrative aspects (organisation, logistics, working spaces) are objectively good. The comments provided by the participants of both modules were similar and stressed the excellent organisation, including the role of the hosting cadets, the communication of the managers prior and during the modules, the quality of the premises – suggesting however to install microphones and leave access to WLAN in the syndicates' rooms as to work faster with their own computers -, accommodation and the food for breakfasts and lunches. They stated also that the intensity of the modules in terms of time organisation can be seen as a drawback... As well as accommodation and food for dinners.



The following graph has an important place in an external evaluation of CSDP modules because it describes the feeling of the participants related to the organisation of their learning process and more particularly with regard to the content's relevance and utility, the methodology and the learning material. The ratings of the relevance and utility of the content is slightly higher than in previous CSDP modules. The rating of the methodology is also a little higher than the previous investigations and so is rating of the learning material – although it was globally similar to the material provided in 2011. It shall be kept in mind, when reading these ratings and results, that the 2012 group has its own dynamic and logic. Therefore, the results of the present investigations cannot be strictly compared to previous experiences without taking into account the specific dynamic.



At their arrival in Wiener Neustadt, the participants received a package containing information about the Academy and the module, the city of Wiener Neustadt and the - highly supportive according to the words of the international cadets – castle of the Academy, such as maps. In addition, all the participants received a hardcopy of the CSDP Handbook (edited in November 2012). They had the possibility, furthermore, to download further material from the webpage of the module<sup>24</sup> on the TMA's website:

- The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, which provides an insight of the EU values and, subsequently, the CSDP values;
- The Lisbon Treaty;
- The CSDP-related provisions of the Lisbon Treaty;
- EU acronyms and definitions, already provided on the IDL platform;
- Videos;
- And articles in German or in English about the CSDP (most of them written by lecturers of the CSDP modules).

At the end of the modules, the international participants received a DVD with all the presentations provided by the lecturers, as well as the pictures taken during the week at the TMA. However, the organisers did not provide the presentations and the hardcopies of the Handbook in advance – for reasons of equity with the foreign cadets -, on purpose. Even though they explained it to the participants, these latter ones perceived it as a difficulty in their learning process. Some also suggested that a similar booklet on the general characterisation of the EU as a whole would be an adequate additional support. Nevertheless, the big majority of the comments demonstrated the high level of satisfaction of the participants with the material provided, especially with the CSDP Handbook and the welcome package. The risk, however, as it appeared from the comments, is that students expected that the programme of the CSDP module and the structure and content of the Handbook would perfectly match, e.g. quoting the Handbook in the lectures. It may be suggested to inform the future participants that the Handbook, as supportive and complete it is, is only a support to their personal apprenticeship.

On the method used for teaching CSDP, the participants' satisfaction can be seen as good. Their comments showed that they were highly satisfied with the syndicate

<sup>24</sup> See: <http://www.miles.ac.at/campus/iep/module.php>

system, the connection that was always made with the content of the lectures, and the opportunity it gave them to exchange their respective knowledge. “Putting the syndicate works before the lectures results in more active discussions”, reported a student. Most of these comments called for even more of these group works, as it improves their competences, notably in giving the chance to everybody to make a presentation of the work done. The syndicates were, according to these comments, adequately balanced with the lectures, which they found being of high quality thanks to the important international experience of the different lecturers and the use of media as supports for sharing knowledge. References to the role played by the hosting cadets, notably in introducing the lecturers, and the social activities complete this frame. However, other comments claimed for more extensive use of media supports and practical illustrations based on experience in the lectures, which is touching more on the methodology of the lectures than the methodology followed by the CSDP modules themselves. Interaction and direct interaction must indeed, according to the participants, be at the heart of the lectures, notably with longer timeframes dedicated to questions and answers. Finally, some participants reported their feeling that the topics for the syndicates were not commented extensively enough, notably with regard to their coherence. They suggested, therefore, that the sequence of these subjects become the “red line” of the lectures on the topic. In addition, they noted that the level of ownership depended on the nature and extent of the task given to them. They felt more responsible and more confident of their learning, in a general way, if they were asked to solve a case through in-depth researches than merely debating on the pros and cons of a given statement, for example.

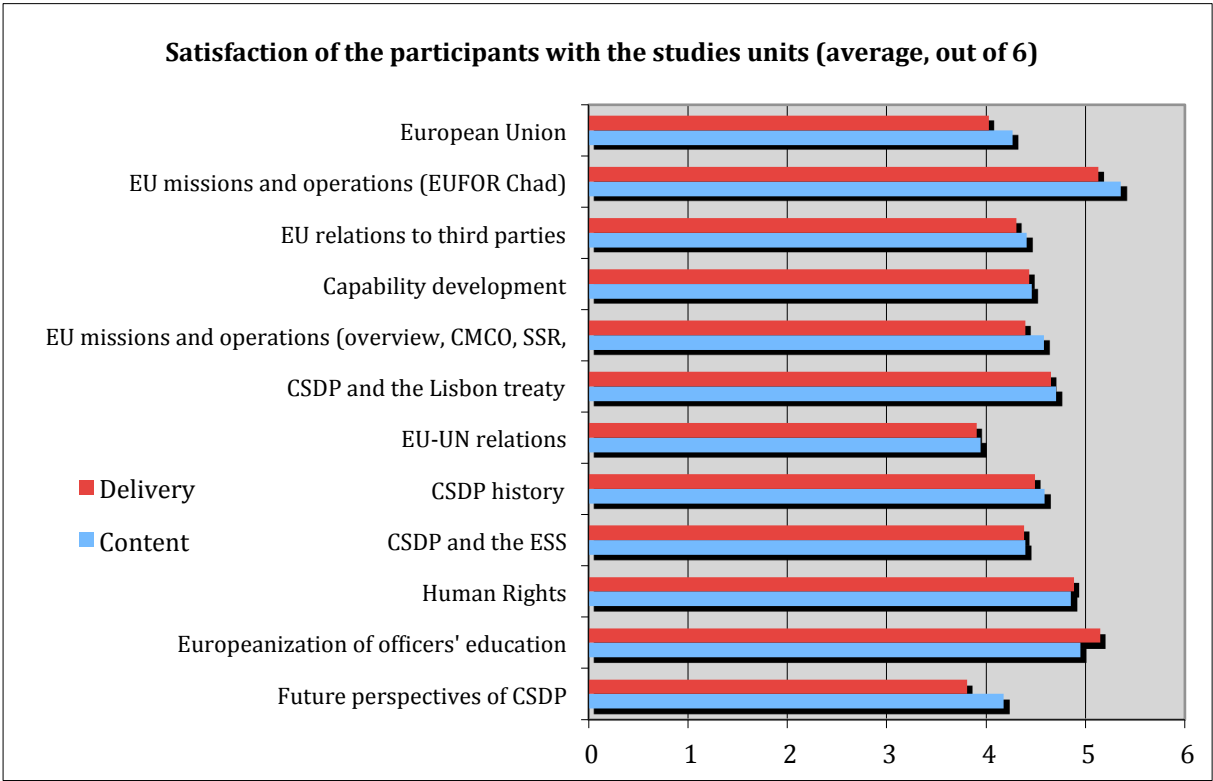
A lecture on CSDP missions and operations, an eye on their future:



Regarding the content of the module - encompassing both its relevance and utility - the comments provided by the participants stressed the interest of the topic and knowing the “architecture of the CSDP” for a young officer, which “defines the framework of future operations in which I will be deployed” as one of them stated. The participants particularly stressed the “better knowledge of the way of thinking in other nations’ armies” and the improvement of their English through interaction in a multinational environment as most positive effects. However, voices raised and emphasised the intensity of the module, not leaving enough time for reaching a “professional” English level for example. Interestingly also, several comments stressed the CSDP

weaknesses and the current “winter” it goes through, as a mitigation of the interest of the module itself. Along the lectures, indeed, the participants have been often exposed to academic criticisms of the CSDP and the lack of political cohesion within the EU for implementation of the policy. As a consequence, many comments made a connection between the utility of the module and the current “fatigue” of the CSDP itself, either for considering that this knowledge will not be necessary or for considering that the module was a “brainwash”, artificially promoting a policy that broke down.

Regarding the selection by the organisers of the topics to be dealt with in “learning units”, including the syndicate works which were integral part of them, the general level of satisfaction of the participants<sup>25</sup> reached equivalent levels to what was met during previous CSDP modules, which is most positive. The display of these individual ratings is shown within the graph below. Naturally, some of the topics are preferred to others, especially when it comes to the details of the preparation and running of an operation, or the education of the European cadets.



The comments provided by the participants to the 2012 module organised by the TMA are consistent with those provided by their predecessors. A majority of participants expressed its appreciation for the syndicate work structure, which allowed them debating, confronting their understanding and opinions of the CSDP and gave them responsibilities for their own learning. They also stressed the didactic and interactive methods of some lecturers, the expertise of the lecturers who have, for some of them, a practical experience of CSDP as strong points of these modules.

<sup>25</sup> As he has no expert view on these topics, it does not belong to the evaluator to assess the relevance and delivery of the content of these learning units.

Some stressed that the expression in English or the use of an adequate level of technical vocabulary are keys for the lecturers in order to transmit their expertise. Some comments – even though few - suggested also that the sequence of the learning units should be changed for giving the priority to “basics”, such as the history of the CSDP, before the more in-depth topics. The added that the briefing on the “Europeanization of the officers education”, as it touches them directly in their cadet’s life, showed them literally a “window of opportunity”. Finally, most of the comments positively stressed the opportunity they were offered to visit the UN Headquarter in Vienna and to experience a place where decisions are concretely taken.

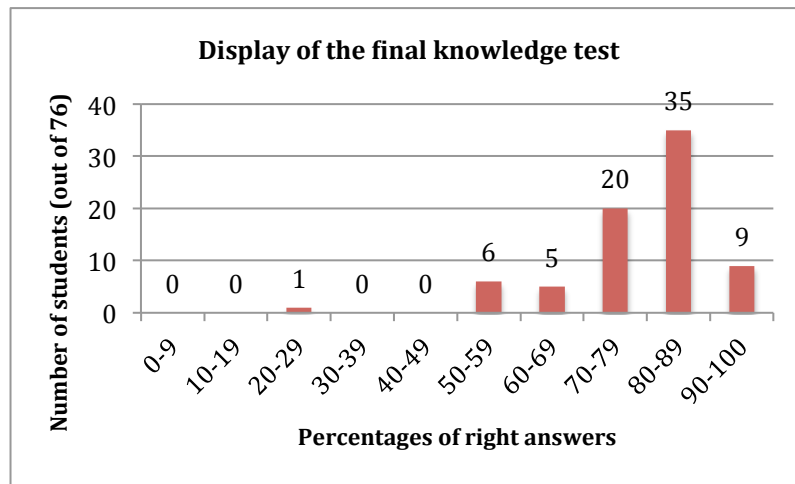
Visit at the United-Nations headquarter in Vienna:



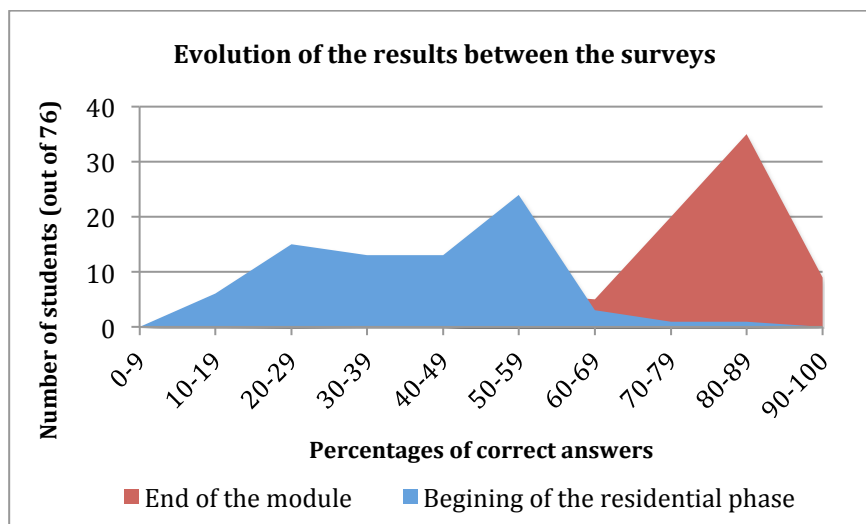
**The technical outcomes of this learning process**

**Knowledge**

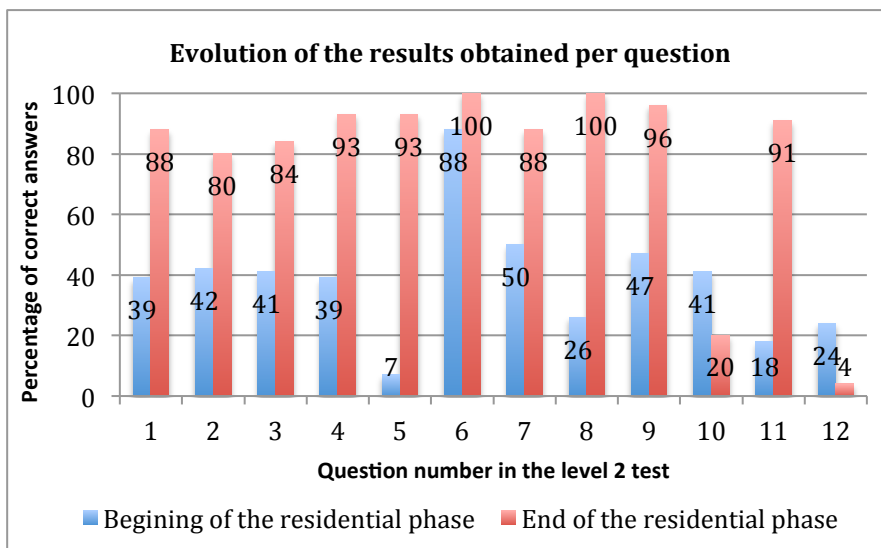
In order to measure the progresses of knowledge of the participants in relation with the CSDP, a second round of level 2 evaluation was conducted at the end of the residential phase in Wiener Neustadt. This test was crucial for the participants due to the fact that the evaluation was also used as an examination and that the results decided on whether they obtained or not the 2 ECTS. This “extra motivation” can be effectively read in the results obtained, as seen from the following graph. Only 1 participant did not reach the median of 50 per cent. The grades obtained have been objectively very good, the average one amounting 78 per cent of correct answers.



As shown by the graph below, which presents the evolution of the results obtained along the two knowledge surveys, the improvements are actual, important and general.



When looking at the display of these results per question, it seems that most of the areas of knowledge on CSDP have been adequately covered during the module. It has thus fulfilled its mission regarding the objective of “learning CSDP”, undoubtedly. However, as shown in the graph below, the students felt more difficulties with 2 questions. Question number 10 touched on the crisis management procedures of the European Union, which – even if the topic was discussed in other lectures – was not the object of a specific learning unit in the 2012 CSDP module. Question number 12 touched on the EU-NATO cooperation in capabilities but it may have not been specifically covered during the lectures. It must be noted that, during the first round of test, this question already received a statistical – *i.e.* 1 chance out of 4 choices – percentage of correct answers. The results obtained during the second test demonstrate that, in addition, confusion has been raised during the residential part of the module.



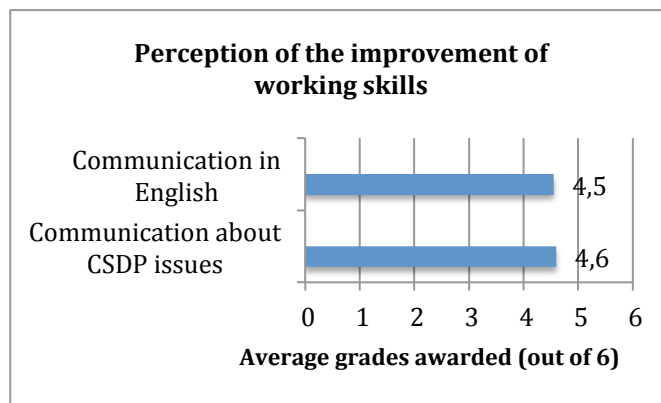
The system of monitoring of the knowledge improvements must thus be amended in order to make sure that the tests, which condition the completion of the module by the participants, cover only areas and questions purposely dealt with in the IDL and residential phases of the module. This test must thus be the product of exchanges between the organisers and the lecturing team. The level 2 questionnaire can be maintained, nonetheless, as a reliable and “dispassionate” instrument for assessing exclusively the “global level” of knowledge – and not the knowledge itself - of the participants along the main stages of the module.

### Skills, competences and attitudes

The CSDP modules do not only intend to spread knowledge, which may soon or later fade away, but also to raise skills and competences which support the education of a future military elite on the long-term and, practically, enter into the allocation of ECTS to a learning process. Inspired from the Kirkpatrick’s model of evaluation<sup>26</sup>, the level 3 questionnaire has attempted to monitor the outcomes of the modules with regard to progresses in terms of qualifications other than knowledge. However, it is not the role of the evaluation to define what qualifications an “ideal European officer” shall have. Therefore, the few qualifications approached by the level 3 questionnaire shall only be taken as a sample of (the most logical) qualifications any officer should have, ideally, when sent to a European mission. Furthermore, it would take too long to the participants to take part to an objective survey, like the level 2, on the progress regarding these outcomes. It was thus chosen to ask the participants to self-evaluate their perception of their progresses. The average grades are illustrated by the graph below.

<sup>26</sup> In the Kirkpatrick’s model, level 3 measures the progresses “on the job” of the trainee. In the case of CSDP modules, the participants do not go back to a job, but to an other and more global educational process.

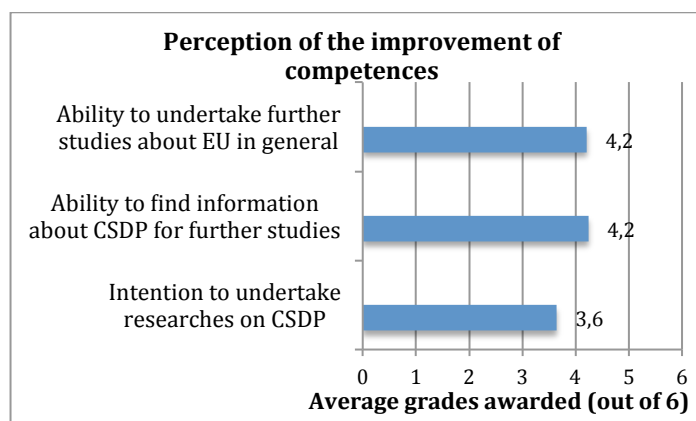




The comments made for the self-assessment of the progresses in communicating in English stressed that taking part to this module has been a very interesting challenge for these students. They reported, despite a (always too) short time, they improved their communicative skills not only through the lecturing time but also through social events and free times, acquiring new – CSDP and “daily life” – vocabulary.

Regarding their ability to communicate about CSDP issues, the participants perceived actual progresses. They felt able to communicate more easily on the basics of CSDP but also on their own opinions – positive or negative - on CSDP. They reported that this module provided them with technical knowledge on this policy and, in a more general way a “broader picture and interest” for the EU in the global context.

Similar investigations were conducted on the self-assessment of progresses on a sample of competences. The display for the module was as follows.



The comments provided by the participants on the abilities to undertake further researches on CSDP and EU comfort the idea that the CSDP module is an adequate introduction to a specialised knowledge. They stated that they received a good basis of knowledge, a basic understanding of the whole EU organisation and CSDP which would make the researches easier, and some material to start from, the CSDP Handbook notably. Some participants even suggested to dedicate more time in the module for teaching the adequate research skills and methods although some other would like more intervention from the lecturers in the syndicate groups.

The concrete intentions to undertake such further studies depend on the nature of the curricula followed by the respondents. Some participants affirmed an interest for

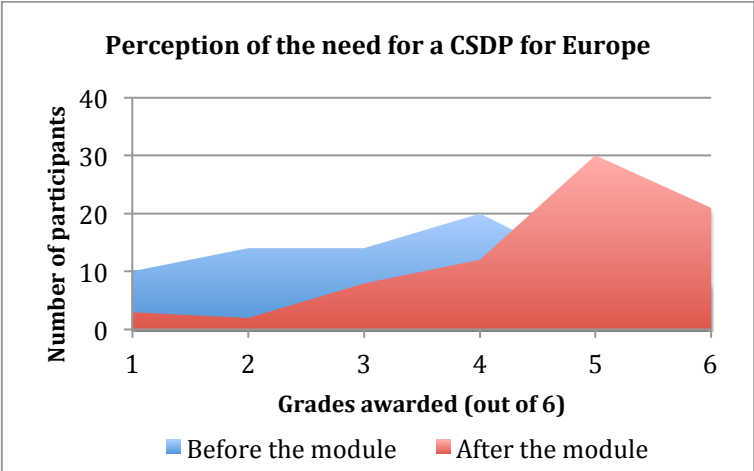


studying further this topic through research projects in the framework of thesis, for example, although other declared that they are rather interested about the topic for their personal knowledge, mainly.

Graduation ceremony:



Finally, the participants were asked to self-evaluate their attitudes with regard to the need for a CSDP for the European Union before and after their participation to the module. The breakdown of answers is as follows and demonstrates that their position, which is expected to be a long-term gain, has obviously and positively evolved thanks to their experience. One may argue that such modules most certainly have a “propaganda effect” on the participants since the whole week is articulated around this only theme. All along the week and the different lectures, however, it could be observed that the phenomenon of “European fatigue” which the EU cruises through at the moment due to the lack of political impetus and the economic crisis had been stressed in every lecture and reported by most of the syndicate presentations. The different speakers always provided both positive and negative arguments *vis-à-vis* the perspectives of development of the CSDP and the comments provided by the participants in the satisfaction questionnaires demonstrated that they were (perhaps too much) aware of the current weaknesses of the CSDP. These positive changes in the attitudes can thus be seen as genuine.



## The social outcomes of this learning process

The CSDP modules are not only aimed at learning CSDP but also at learning CSDP in living it. The modules, as it was again the case in Austria, are open therefore to international participation. The purpose is to provide the participants with an insight of the interoperable environment they will live in when sent to an international or European operation in sharing their cultures, their visions on the conduct of operations, the traditions of their educational systems and, more concretely, sharing time and living conditions. This immersion into the European diversity was again successfully proposed by the Theresan Military Academy. Parts of the programmes of a vocational or purely social nature were formally dedicated to the fostering of a European *esprit-de-corps*:

- A guided visit through the castle of the Academy;
- An afternoon sport session which was organised like an “icebreaking” competition between the syndicate groups;
- The cadets had to line up together with their Austrian counterpart in the morning before the start of the classes;
- A party was formally organised by the Austrian students at the cadets’ mess after the sport session;
- An evening was left free for activities to be organised by the hosting cadets<sup>27</sup>;
- And sightseeing activities (Military Museum and city centre) in Vienna were proposed, the day after the end of the residential phase.

All these activities, except lining up in the morning, were planned and organised by the Austrian cadets. The cadets were also free to leave the Academy in the evening and they effectively took these opportunities for more and informal social events...

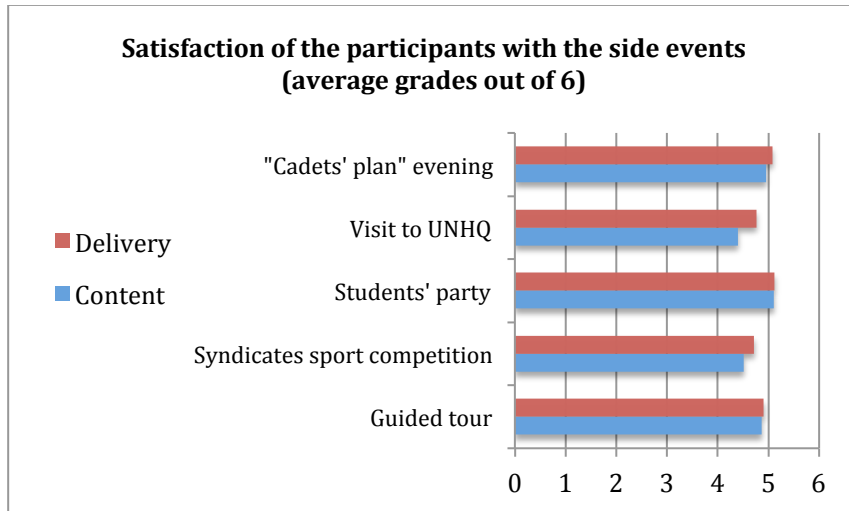
### Guided tour of the Academy by resident cadets:



The satisfaction of the participants with these events, as well as the visit to the United-Nations headquarter in Vienna<sup>28</sup>, was rated, as shown in the graph below.

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<sup>27</sup> They visited the city centre of Wiener Neustadt and its Christmas market, notably.



As expected, the participants expressed a high level of satisfaction with all these activities and for the realisations of their Austrian comrades. The comments provided in addition to these ratings, indeed, were similar. The guided tour of the Academy on the first day was appreciated by the international participants and the Austrian cadets suggested that it could be extended as to include also a more in-depth presentation of the Austrian cadets' life at the Academy, their traditions... And secret places. Mixed feelings, but mostly positive, for the sport session which was, according to the participants, a perfect teambuilding event which allowed creating comradeship among the participants. Some participants suggested that sports or military-coloured challenges, rather than games, would have been more adequate in order to make all the participants playing in the same time and not group after group. The two parties (formal and informal) have been awarded with the highest levels of satisfaction, as foreseeable, with the exception of the dress code (desk uniform) for the formal party of the first day. The visit at the United-Nations headquarter, also, has been favourably commented, in majority.

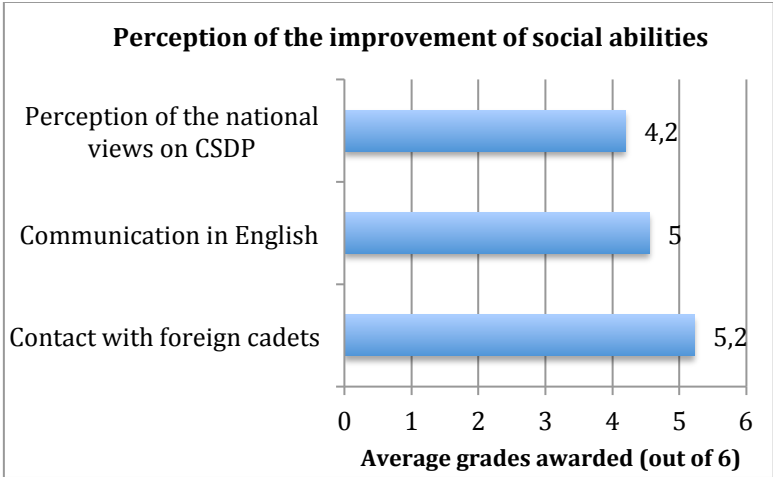
A sport session after the class, building a European *esprit-de-corps*:



<sup>28</sup> Which is formally not a social event but which, like the social event, had been logistically organised by the Austrian cadets. Being a part of the achievements of the cadets, the choice was made to present the satisfaction with this event in this same figure.

In a general way in the comments, (all) the participants expressed their highest level of (self-) satisfaction with the effective and efficient role played by the hosting cadets in the organisation of these events, which contributed to the success of this module and to their individual improvements, for example in constructing an adequate environment for expressing themselves in English.

Considering that social abilities are as much important for a future actor of the CSDP than the technical ones, the same investigation on the self-assessment of progresses on key abilities was made through the level 3 questionnaire. The display of answers is reproduced in the graph below.



The comments added by the participants in the evaluation form stressed the fact that the module gave them the opportunity to open their minds to other perceptions, confront experiences of their cadet's life and traditions not only during social timeframes but also during learning times. The individual improvements of the English are also one of the remarkable *acquis* of this module even though in a limited timeframe, thanks to acquisition of a new vocabulary, the social interaction and the integration of the foreign guests by the Austrian cadets, including the American "residing" cadets. It was reported also that despite the fact that it was a new topic for them and that CSDP is not yet a mature policy for a robust Europe in security and defence, all the viewpoints could be openly discussed between the participants and with the lecturers. The final word for this aspect would thus be from a participant who reported that "*international cadets are very important for this module*".

The medals' ceremony after sport, kick off of the party:



**Participants' satisfaction and sources for improvements**

Finally, the participants were invited, in the frame of the level 1 investigations, to share their view on the aspects they considered negative or positive in the CSDP module and provide their suggestions for further and future improvements. Naturally, these comments were never unanimously shared but they reflect the internal diversity of the audience.

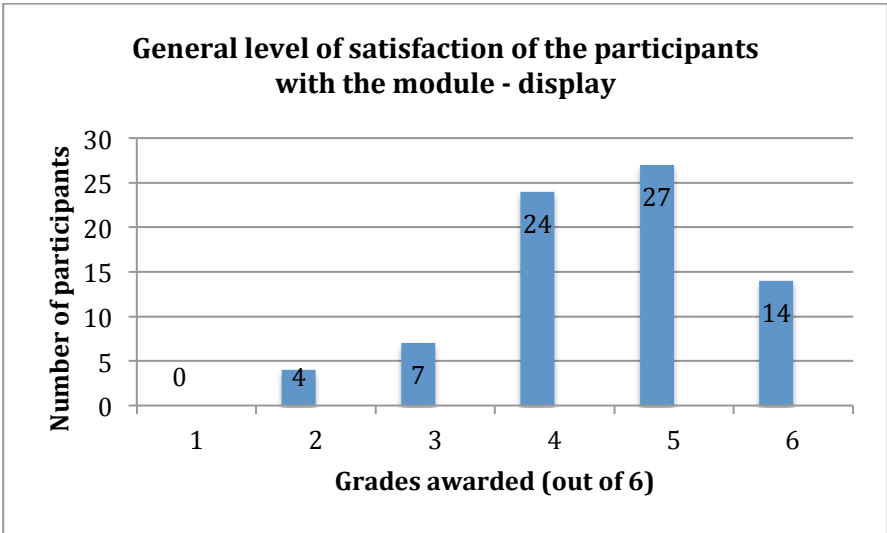
As of aspects they disliked, the participants mentioned that they found the module loses its interest when taking into account the difficulties faced by the CSDP for affirming itself a strong policy on the European stage. They felt also that the module was too intense for such a short period of time whereas the lectures are too long, despite the time transferred to syndicate work compared to previous editions. The presence of “competence observers”, even though limited to syndicate meetings, has also been disregarded by some of them. Only few comments provided mentioned the idea that the module was too high-level for cadets, at this stage.

As of the aspects they liked, it is interesting to note that comments generally stress the organisational aspects, such as the diversity and expertise of the lecturers, and the hosting of their Austrian comrades. However, meeting and networking with cadets from many different Member States and the United-States, communicating in English and cooperating for common tasks within the small syndicate groups were reflected in most of these comments. One participant summarized all these dimensions, stating that “the networks (I) created with officer cadets from the other participating countries are the most important (gain) from this module”.

As it could be expected from the observations summarized along this report, the suggestions for improvements provided by the participants mostly focused on organisational aspects. They suggest to allow more time to this module, in order to decrease its intensity, and to extend and deepen – e.g. with more tasks assigned - even more the experience of the syndicate works in preparation of the lectures. In addition, it can be proposed to “institutionalise” the questions and answers sessions, which the participants seemed to have appreciated. Informally, the lecturers proposed such constructive exchange of views at the end of their presentations but

the participants rarely took advantage of these opportunities, due perhaps to a very intense programme. One solution, therefore, would be to make these “Q&A” sessions formal, together with reducing the timeframe of the lecture itself if necessary, in order to favour direct interaction between the lecturer and the audience. Finally, taking into account all the comments provided, it must be stressed again that no action taken by the organisers and, collectively, by the European military higher education institutions for maintaining a high level or increasing this high level of European participation in the CSDP module can be seen as superfluous.

All in all, these comments show that the 2012 edition of the CSDP module in Austria fulfilled the objectives it was assigned and that the participants self-appropriated the module. As shown by the graph below, the module met a very high level of satisfaction. The average grades awarded for the module amounted 4,5 out of 6, which is somehow normal for the CSDP modules. The feeling of general satisfaction, furthermore, is objectively comforted by the fact that more than 54 per cent of the participants rated this module with a 5 or a 6 out of 6.



## **Conclusions:**

The CSDP module conducted at the Theresan Military Academy in December 2012 had been a success not only from the satisfaction aspect but also in terms of outcomes. 76 participants from 8 Member States and the United-States of America were introduced, for almost all of them for the first time, to this important theme for the future of the European armed forces and gained precious understanding, skills, competences and – also critical - attitudes that are expected from a future actor of the European defence. The external evaluation provided through this report attempted to measure these outcomes but does not pretend to have made an exhaustive list of them.

The CSDP module, itself, is a living support of this acquisition of qualifications by the future military elites and is in constant evolution, as the Austrian experiences demonstrated. It became “hard” education in the meaning that the learning process is sanctioned by an examination, which decides upon the award of ECTS credits or not. It became comprehensive in the meaning that learning outcomes had a real importance in the learning process of a student and have an impact on his/her curriculum. The CSDP module has now become a traditional pedagogical offer of the Theresan Military Academy since all the future Austrian cadets have already or are about to experience this module.

The CSDP module is still growing, but the keys for success remain those who contributed to its success at its birth: international participation and interactive learning. These keys are forged by the organisers, the lecturers, the participants and the stakeholder institutions acting together. It has been seen, from the investigations conducted during this module, that interaction between the participants and the lecturers and between the participants leads to increasing self-confidence of the participants in their individual abilities and ownership for their learning process. In the same way, international participation remains a strong expectation of the participants and the key for broadmindedness, solid networking and self-development of the individuals and the group. The intercultural aspect of the module means for the participants that “living CSDP” is an essential complement to “knowing CSDP” and a profound characteristic of the CSDP itself: the superposition of defence cultures, traditions and objectives.

In Wiener Neustadt, the organisers found original solutions for promoting interactive learning in the process and successfully put them into practice. Furthermore, they developed new dimensions for the implementation and development of these modules in making the hosting cadets responsible for parts of the module before their European comrades and, above all, responsible for their own learning. Their achievements and their major contribution to the success of this 2012 Austrian edition suggest not only that their role deserves to be developed further with regard to these modules but potentially also at the scale of the Initiative for the exchange of young officers itself.



## **Annex 1: Programme of the residential phase**

### **Sunday 2 Dec.:**

In-processing

### **Monday 3 Dec.:**

07:30-08:00 Fall-in at inner court of the TMA  
08:15-09:00 Administration and opening ceremony  
09:00-10:30 Key-note speech  
10:45-12:15 Lecture "The European Union" / Entrance test and guided tour  
12:15-13:15 Lunch  
13:15-14:45 Entrance test and guided tour / Lecture "The European Union"  
15:15-17:00 Syndicate sport competition  
17:00-18:00 Dinner  
18:00-21:00 Student's party

### **Tuesday 4 Dec.:**

08:00-09:00 Lecture "EU missions and operations: EUFOR Chad"  
09:00-09:15 Tasks for syndicate work  
09:15-12:00 Syndicates "EU relations to third parties" / "Capability development"  
12:00-13:00 Lunch  
13:00-13:45 Syndicates briefings  
13:45-14:30 Lectures "Capability development" / "EU relations to third parties"  
15:00-15:45 Syndicates briefings  
15:45-16:30 Lectures "EU relations to third parties" / "Capability development"  
16:30-17:15 Dinner

### **Wednesday 5 Dec.:**

08:00-09:30 Lectures "EU missions and operations" / "CSDP and Lisbon Treaty"  
10:00-11:30 Lectures "CSDP and Lisbon Treaty" / "EU missions and operations"  
11:30-12:00 Course photo  
12:00-13:00 Lunch  
13:00-14:00 Syndicate: preparing questions for the EU-UN briefing  
14:15-19:15 UN headquarter and briefing "EU-UN relations"

### **Thursday 6 Dec.:**

08:00-09:30 Lecture "CSDP history"  
09:30-09:45 Tasks for syndicate work  
09:45-12:00 Syndicates "CSDP and ESS" / "Human rights"  
12:00-13:00 Lunch  
13:00-13:45 Syndicates briefings  
13:45-14:30 Lectures "Human rights" / "CSDP and ESS"  
15:00-15:45 Syndicates briefings  
15:45-16:30 Lectures "CSDP and ESS" / "Human rights"  
16:30-17:15 Dinner  
17:15-21:00 Activities according to Officer Cadets' plans



**Friday 7 Dec.:**

08:00-09:30      Lecture "Europeanization of basic officer education"  
10:00-12:00      Lecture "Future perspectives of CSDP" / exit test – individual  
preparation for departure  
12:00-13:00      Lunch  
13:00-15:00      Exit test – individual preparation for departure / lecture "Future  
perspectives of CSDP"  
15:30-16:15      Closing ceremony

**Saturday 8 Dec.:**

08:30-18:00      Sightseeing in Vienna and out-processing

## Annex 2: Austrian matrix of learning outcomes

<b>Syndicate</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	Name of Evaluator/Observer/Instructor	Start- time	End- time
(please tick off) →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

<b>Austrian grades</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
	<b>very good,</b> outstanding, with high distinction, best of Syndicate	<b>good,</b> above average, with distinction, among the bests	<b>average,</b> indicates average performance	<b>below average,</b> is the lowest passing grade	<b>not satisfied (failed),</b> did not participate in anything of the Syndicate

↓	<b>Special Knowledge</b>	<b>Decision Making &amp; Responsibility</b>	<b>Social Competence</b>	<b>Personal Competence</b>																				
	has a special knowledge  (knowledge in given topic)	gives impulses to solve the problem(s)  (acts actively)	works together with the group  (accept other solutions)	has interconnected thinking  (brings various problems together)																				
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Additional general comments (if needed):