

**„Alexandru Ioan Cuza” POLICE ACADEMY
NATIONAL COLLEGE OF HOME AFFAIRS**

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY ORIENTATION COURSE

16-20 June 2025, Brussels

Between 16 and 20 June 2025, the *Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) Orientation Course* was successfully held in Brussels, co-organised by the *National College of Home Affairs (CNAI)* from the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Police Academy and the *European Security and Defence College (ESDC)*. The event brought together 48 participants from EU Member States, EU institutions and agencies, candidate countries, and international organisations for an intensive and dynamic week of learning, networking, and exchange.

The CSDP Orientation Course is one of the ESDC’s key training programmes aimed at developing a foundational and cross-cutting understanding of the EU’s external action and security and defence architecture, addressing both the civilian and military dimensions of CSDP through a blend of academic insight and operational expertise.

The official opening of the course took place at the *Albert Borschette Conference Centre* and was led by Mr *Prof. Cătălin Andruș PhD, Police Quaestor and Director of CNAI*, acting as Course Director, alongside Ms *Nancy Vellone, ESDC Training Manager*, and *Prof. Bogdan Marinescu*,



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who acted as moderator on behalf of CNAI.

Later that evening, participants were welcomed at a welcome reception hosted by the Permanent Representation of Romania to the EU. The welcome dinner featured opening remarks from Mr Cătălin Andruș, Mr Fergal O’Regan (*Head of ESDC*), Minister-Counsellor Cezar Rotaru (*Head of Home Affairs Unit - PermRep Romania*), as well as from two of the keynote speakers, Prof. Bernard Siman and Prof. Sven Biscop, both from the *Egmont Institute*.

The programme of the course unfolded over five days, combining expert presentations with practical sessions and interactive group work. On the first day, Prof. Sven Biscop delivered an in-depth lecture on the EU’s

strategic environment, the Global Strategy, and the Strategic Compass, offering participants a comprehensive analytical framework. The day continued with the launch of a practical exercise designed by Prof. Bogdan Marinescu and Dr. Iulian Coman, representing CNAI.

The scenario-based simulation placed participants in the midst of a complex crisis in the EU's eastern neighbourhood, challenging them to develop coherent policy responses within a CSDP context. Participants were divided into three syndicate groups, carefully balanced in terms of gender, geography, and professional background.



<https://shorturl.at/vl4F5>

Each group was tasked with producing strategic recommendations in response to the simulated scenario, encouraging negotiation, role-play, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

The second day took place at the *Romanian Permanent Representation to the EU* and featured a series of high-level interventions on the institutional and operational foundations of the CSDP. Mr Daniel Grammatico from the *EEAS Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC)* opened the day with a detailed presentation on the CSDP institutional framework. Prof.

Bernard Siman followed with a lecture on *hybrid threats*, while Ms Jowita Mikolajczyk from EEAS offered insights into *the EU's Integrated Approach*. In the afternoon, Mr Douglas Darius Carpenter, *Head of Division at the Civilian Operations HQ*, discussed the civilian command structure, followed by an engaging session led by Capt. Schruppf and Lt. Col. Murat Cevik, from the *EU Military Staff* on current CSDP military operations and missions.

The day concluded with dedicated working group sessions in preparation for the final exercise presentations.

On the third day, participants continued their activities at the PermRep, focusing on thematic and regional dimensions of the CSDP. Dr Andreea Niculiu from the *European Commission (DG HOME)* addressed issues related to border management and maritime security. Ms Christine Mardirossian, *Policy Officer at EEAS*, followed with a presentation on the *Strategic Compass and its implementation*. Mr Cristian Contan from the *European Defence Agency* provided a detailed overview of EU defence initiatives and capability development, while Ms Katarzyna Sumislawska addressed *the growing challenges of foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI)*, an area of strategic concern for the EU. Group work progressed steadily, with each team refining its policy recommendations and scenario analyses.



Thursday brought the focus to horizontal issues and resilience-building. Mr Alfio Gullotta from EEAS opened the day with a presentation on the *EU's approach to cultural heritage protection in conflict settings*. Ms Mervi Patosalmi and Ms Marianne Fennema, both from the EEAS, delivered complementary presentations on *gender and human rights in CSDP missions*, respectively, highlighting the EU's commitment to values-based action. Mr Michele Merloni presented the *EU's counter-terrorism policy within the CSDP framework*, followed in the afternoon by Ms Johanna Lauritzen, who addressed *the link between climate change and security*. The final presentation of the day came from Mr Evangelos Englezakis, *Cyber Training Manager*



<https://shorturl.at/CTeY7>

at ESDC, who outlined key principles in *EU cyber defence and security training*. The session sparked significant interest among participants, who actively engaged in a lively Q&A, raising questions on cyber resilience, hybrid threats, and the role of cyber capabilities in CSDP missions.

The final day of the course returned to the *Albert Borschette Conference Centre* and opened with the presentation of the outcomes of the working groups. Facilitated by Prof. Marinescu, each group delivered a strategic briefing based on their simulated crisis scenario, addressing political, operational, legal, and human rights dimensions. Their proposals reflected a strong understanding of CSDP procedures and highlighted the importance of cooperation, strategic communication, and local partnerships. The final lecture of the course, focusing on the future of CSDP, was delivered by Mr Michael Merker from EEAS, who provided a *comprehensive overview of current trends, strategic challenges, and institutional developments*. His intervention offered a synthesis of the key themes discussed throughout the week, drawing conclusions that reinforced participants' overall understanding of the evolving role of CSDP in EU's external action.



<https://shorturl.at/ArzYi>

The closing session featured remarks by Mr Fergal O'Regan, *head of the European Security and Defence College*, Ms Alina Pădeanu, *Deputy-Ambassador, Romania's permanent representative to the Political and Security Committee (PSC)*, and Mr police questor, Prof. Cătălin Andruș PhD, *Director of CNAI*. In their addresses, the speakers praised the high level of engagement shown by the participants and emphasised the continued importance of CSDP training in building a common European security culture. Mr O'Regan underlined the ESDC's commitment to fostering professional excellence and mutual understanding across institutions and





Member States. He emphasised that training is not merely a formality, but a strategic investment in the EU's capacity to act coherently and decisively in a rapidly changing security environment.

Ms Pădeanu highlighted Romania's active contribution to EU security policy and the significance of dialogue and learning platforms like the Orientation Course. Mr Andruş expressed gratitude to all participants, lecturers, and institutional partners, reiterating CNAI's dedication to supporting the strategic training needs of the European Union. Certificates of participation were awarded to all those who successfully completed both the eLearning and residential components of the course, acknowledging their full involvement in this joint learning journey.

The 2025 edition of the CSDP Orientation Course confirmed once again the value of investing in people, shared values, and inter-agency cooperation. As highlighted throughout the week, the CSDP is not only a set of policies and instruments, but a collective commitment to a stronger, safer and more resilient European Union. The course concluded with a renewed sense of purpose and unity, equipping participants to contribute more effectively to CSDP-related fields and to the broader goals of EU external action.

