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YEARS

European Security
and Defence College



European Security and
Defence College

Annual Report 2025



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Priorities for the Future – ESDC 2030

Foreword

Fergal Ó Regan
Head of the ESDC

The year 2025 marked the 20th anniversary of the European Security and Defence College. In light of the serious challenges the Union faces in the security and defence domain, the College's mission, to create a common security and defence culture, is even more vital today. The recent Council Decision governing the ESDC of December 2024 reflects this evolving context and requires the ESDC to report directly to the Council and receive strategic guidance from it. This Annual Report is the first one reflecting this major change.

In this Report, we will not only reflect on the developments of 2025, but also look ahead. I am convinced that the ESDC stands at a crossroads, and the decisions shaping how the ESDC ought to look like in 2030 must be made now.

The ESDC holds a unique position. With one foot firmly rooted in Brussels and the other in the Member States, we deliver tailored, essential training directly to those who safeguard our security: military personnel and civilians from multiple domains including law enforcement, diplomacy, cyber security, civil protection and many more. As far as possible, we train these groups together.

Political objectives can only be achieved when those responsible for implementing them share a common understanding.

The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) encompasses broad aspects of peace, security, and defence, and we bring together the individuals who implement it

every day. True cooperation thrives when people know one another, when they share their stories and experiences, their ways of working, and their best practices.

We are proud to facilitate this for the thousands of participants trained each year, from all Member States and our partner countries.



When for example a police officer from Tartu, a navy officer from Lisbon, and an IT expert from Middelburg unite their expertise during a course on hybrid threats in Helsinki, our collective contribution to our shared security becomes stronger and more tangible.

Our network of more than 280 institutions across the EU and beyond is what allows us to create these unparalleled collaborations. As the Head of the ESDC, I

am committed to ensuring that we, together, do what is necessary to meet the challenges of our time.

The challenges Europe faces are serious and increasing. To meet them, Europe must be united and stand strong on its own. I see the ESDC playing an even stronger role in our future endeavours to build strength together. In this regard, we rely on the contributions of the Member States, not only through our network members, but also for our staff and funding. It is their strategic imperatives that guide us.

We are committed to addressing the challenges and achieving the objectives outlined in policies such as the EU's Policy on Training for CSDP, as well as adapting to the evolving realities we face. In the second half of 2026, we will provide a report to the joint EUCTG-EUMTG on progress made in implementing that policy.

Our training must align with the EU's strategic priorities on preparedness and territorial defence, while also upholding our more traditional mandate in continuing to support the CSDP missions and operations.

However, to do so effectively, the ESDC must be built on a robust administrative and financial foundation. Throughout my tenure as Head of the ESDC, forming and strengthening this solid foundation together with the Member States and the EU's institutions and bodies, has been and will remain one of my key priorities. I am confident that, together with our strong network, we are ready to meet the challenges ahead. I am also convinced that when we celebrate our next major anniversary in 2030, the ESDC will be even stronger than it is today and at the very heart of European defence integration.

I invite you to explore how we pursued this mission in 2025 and our plans for building on this work in the future.

Executive Summary

This chapter outlines the key developments of 2025, while subsequent chapters explore these achievements in greater detail.

New High Representative

By her appointment as High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy in December 2024, Kaja Kallas also assumed overall responsibility for the ESDC. The ESDC looks forward to a productive collaboration with High Representative/Vice-President Kallas, as well as to continuing its fruitful cooperation with all EU bodies and agencies under her remit.

New Head of the ESDC

In September 2025, Fergal Ó Regan was appointed Head of the ESDC by the High Representative, following his election by the Member States in the ESDC Steering Committee. His mandate runs for three years.

New Governing and Policy Framework

With Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/3116 on the ESDC coming into effect on 9 December 2024, 2025 marked the first year for the ESDC to operate under a new framework, both in the sense of governance through the Council Decision, as well as on the policy side via the EU Policy on Training for CSDP and its Implementing Guidelines.

The ESDC has committed significant efforts to implement this framework in the

most efficient way possible, and will continue to do so, always striving for improvements. Chapter 3, 'Innovation and the Future of Training' and Chapter 5, 'priorities for the future –ESDC 2030' provide more detail on how the ESDC can thrive even more under this new framework.

ATEC and 20th anniversary

The ESDC's 20th anniversary commemorations and the Annual Training and Education Conference (ATEC) were held at Egmont Palace in November 2025. The ATEC was innovative and cutting-edge, stimulating lively debates among participants and produced concrete outcomes to improve training and education. For further details, please refer to Chapter 3: 'Innovation and the Future of Training'.

Training and education

In 2025, the ESDC trained 4 697 participants, in addition to the thousands taking part in the so-called Military ERASMUS exchange of young officers. Our 161 training activities continued to cover a wide range of existing and emerging security threats. While the growth seen between 2022 and 2024 has slowed, in part due to financial constraints, we have made major strides in training prioritisation, standardisation and innovation.

For more information, see Chapter 3: 'Innovation and the Future of Training'.

Strong partnerships

In 2025, the ESDC continued to strengthen its partnerships both within and beyond the EU, with a particular focus on deepening collaboration with Ukraine. At the end of 2025, the ESDC worked with 18 partners in Ukraine, enabling a substantial and effective exchange of best practices and, above all, lessons learnt. New cooperative initiatives with NATO and its affiliated Centres of Excellence were also launched to foster mutual learning. For further information, please refer to Chapter 4 'Partnerships and outreach'.

Future of the ESDC

The Union is confronting unprecedented threats to its security and is in response steering towards a more unified and robust defence and security infrastructure. The ESDC supports this mission by fostering a common security and defence culture among practitioners. To continue fulfilling its role effectively, the ESDC must also evolve. Chapter 5, 'Priorities for the future –ESDC 2030' outlines the most critical challenges ahead and our planned responses for the coming years.



Annual Training and Education
Conference 2025 in Egmont Palace



Course on EU-NATO cooperation with the
George C. Marshall Center in
Garmisch-Partenkirchen

© George C. Marshall Center

Innovation and the Future of Training

Annual Training and Education Conference

Innovative and transformative in its conceptual design, the purpose of ATEC 2025 was to explore and enhance the quality of training within the framework of the CSDP in the broader context of CFSP.

Under the conference theme, *Training in Motion – Transforming Needs into Action*, the wider ESDC community addressed four key stages of the training loop - (1) Training Needs; (2) Standardisation & Adaption; (3) Innovation & Methodology; (4) Evaluation & Uptake - through a series of panels and interactive break-out sessions. The conference was a collaborative effort from the ESDC network where dedicated members actively engaged in the planning via the Group of Friends platform.

Feedback from participants highlighted the value of the dialogues and tools made available during the conference. The emphasis on a participatory, practice-oriented, and interdisciplinary approach facilitated a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted challenges inherent in CSDP training, underlining the importance of cultivating a learning environment that is

adaptable and forward-thinking. The structure and content of the sessions were crafted not only to inform but to inspire actionable transformation within training frameworks.

To be effectively woven into future training programmes, ATEC 2025 emphasised the need for a dynamic and collaborative approach. The innovation lab, a co-created exhibition and testing



area, acted as a catalyst for creativity, providing a space for participants to present, share, and interact with cutting-edge technologies and novel pedagogical techniques, fostering a culture of critical evaluation and contribution to the advancement of training methodologies.



Looking ahead, the insights and conclusions drawn from ATEC 2025 will serve as pivotal guidelines for developing future training interventions across the CSDP domain. By leveraging the collective expertise and observations detailed during the event, training institutes are better equipped to implement strategies that address current needs while forecasting future requirements. The conference reinforced the commitment to creating a resilient and responsive training ecosystem, adaptable to the evolving global security landscape.

ATEC 2025 demonstrated the impact of collaborative innovation and strategic engagement in redefining and enhancing training standards within the CSDP context. It established a strong foundation upon which the ESDC community can continue to build, ensuring future training endeavours are both strategically driven and highly effective.

Prioritisation

In recent years, the ESDC has seen a steady increase in its training activities, responding to the growing demand within the EU's evolving security landscape. By 2025, the number of trainings delivered has risen to *161*, underscoring the need for continuous strategic adaptation to meet this expanding requirement. Given the broad spectrum of security challenges the Union is facing on the one hand and the limited resources of the ESDC on the other hand, prioritisation is crucial, ensuring that the ESDC can focus resources on items that its main stakeholders consider the most pressing and relevant.

Against this backdrop, the ESDC Secretariat engaged with its stakeholders – the EU Member States, but also the EEAS, including MPCC/EUMS, and CivOpsHQ – to get the full picture of

priorities. The stakeholder consultation ensured a holistic, integrated perspective that covers both civilian and military preparedness, as well as the needs of missions and operations.

A key element of prioritisation is to support Ukraine and learn from Ukraine, thus enhancing our own preparedness. This approach goes hand in hand with the strategic and policy framework of the EU, such as the White Paper for European Defence and the ReArm Europe Plan-Readiness 2030, the Preparedness Union Strategy and the Niinistö Report on Strengthening Europe's Civilian and Military Preparedness and Readiness, and of course the Civilian CSDP Compact, the Strategic Compass, and the EU Policy on Training for CSDP. Accordingly, the ESDC is a major contributor to the 'EU catalogue for training', one of the main deliverables of the Preparedness Union Strategy, for which the European Commission is the penholder.

In line with the 2024 EU Policy on Training for CSDP and its Implementing Guidelines, as well as the first EUCTG-EUMTG Annual Strategic Guidance and Strategic Priorities for CSDP Training of November 2025, the ESDC shall contribute to the process of matching the CSDP training offer with established training requirements and the analysis of such requirements. The ESDC plays its part in implementing this provision by engaging with the EU Civilian and Military Training Groups (EUCTG/EUMTG) in the Council, the penholders for training requirements, as well as with the EEAS, including CivOpsHQ and MPCC/EUMS.

A revised, more streamlined training requirement identification and analysis process allows for more flexibility in adapting to new needs where necessary and hence can be beneficial for the ESDC as key implementer of training for CSDP.

At the same time, the ESDC can then better align its prioritisation even more on strategic guidance provided by the Council and hence ensure full alignment of its annual work programme with the Union's strategic objectives.

The ESDC is eager to contribute to an even sleeker process in the future, for example by providing templates to EUCTG/EUMTG for the establishment of training requirements and further leveraging its network to translate political-strategic requirements into the operational reality of training and education, in close cooperation with the EEAS and other relevant CSDP structures.

Standardisation

Developing modalities for standardisation and certification is a key line of action for the ESDC identified in the EU Policy on Training for CSDP. Standards are a cornerstone of assuring quality of training and education activities.

In many ways, the curricula, regularly reviewed under the responsibility of the Executive Academic Board and its configurations, are the safeguards of standards of the ESDC. Nonetheless, there are issues for which a common level of knowledge and skill among personnel are vital elements and hence need to be absolutely reliable, to ensure duty of care in conditions that may change swiftly. This particularly applies to courses dealing with personnel safety, such as Hostile Environment Awareness Trainings (HEAT).

This work directly responds to the training-related deliverables agreed by EU Member States in the Civilian CSDP Compact, which states: *"From 2026, Member States will train their experts, including relevant language training, based on standard training material, training paths, and assessment of the long-term impact of training given, developed by the EEAS and ESDC."*

HEAT is a unique course with clear links to duty of care obligations. As it is heavily



exercise- and scenario-based, its primary objective is to strengthen a safety and security awareness mindset among staff members serving in missions. The EU Policy on Training for CSDP emphasises the mandatory nature of this training: *"For staff deployed to countries with high/critical risk, a standardised and certified Hostile Environment Awareness Training (HEAT), or equivalent national training, is mandatory and complements the pre-deployment training."*



When the ESDC began developing its HEAT portfolio in 2021, standardisation, streamlining, and quality assurance quickly became key priorities. Under the Working Group for Missions and Operations Training, a subgroup of HEAT experts and practitioners was established. Building on the work carried out under the European Commission-funded ENTRI project (2011–2019), guided by the Training Requirement Analysis (TRA) on Safety and Security (2021), and reflecting emerging needs in mission contexts, the group developed the ESDC HEAT course concept.

This concept, consisting of eleven mandatory modules, complements the existing course curriculum by providing specific training criteria, including methodological requirements, to meet the needs of civilian CSDP missions in support of their fulfilment of duty of care obligations. It constitutes a central component of the training pathway for CSDP mission personnel.

With these standards in place the work on a certification mechanism, to ensure that training institutes meet the agreed minimum criteria. This work is now in its final phase. As CivOpsHQ is currently drafting a dedicated HEAT policy for civilian CSDP missions, finalisation of the certification mechanism will await the policy's completion and approval by Member States, thus ensuring that any new parameters can be incorporated into the final framework.

eLearning

ESDC courses are primarily delivered through blended learning, combining online distance learning with face-to-face classes. At the ESDC, Advanced Distance Learning (ADL) typically serves as an asynchronous preparatory phase, conducted online before the essential

in-person classroom sessions.

For eLearning purposes, the ESDC maintains and develops its own eLearning resources. To manage this content, the ESDC relies on a range of IT platforms and tools. The ENLIST Platform is used for course participant enrolment and management, while the ILIAS Learning Management System (LMS) both facilitates the development and delivery of eLearning content and provides a joint online space for sharing documents with participants in a smooth and paperless way. Additionally, tools like Articulate 360 and Synthesia are employed for creating and managing ADL materials. Maintaining and upgrading systems such as ENLIST and ILIAS remains a top priority for the ESDC.

At present, the ESDC's eLearning resources comprise approximately 70 individual courses, known as ESDC Learning Lessons (ELL). Since some of these lessons are divided into multiple modules, the total number of learning units amounts to approximately 115.

By the end of 2024, the ESDC began a comprehensive overhaul of its eLearning catalogues. With strong support from our network and advanced digital solutions, we now produce ELLs that are far easier to update. Using text-to-video tools with artificial avatars instead of the traditional method of filming a person reading a script, we can modify individual words or sentences and upload revised videos within minutes. This approach removes the need to reshoot entire scenes whenever content changes and ensures that content remains up to date, even in a fast-changing political environment.

However, the process to overhaul the existing eLearning catalogue and transposing the existing relevant ELLs into new ones based on text-to-video tools,

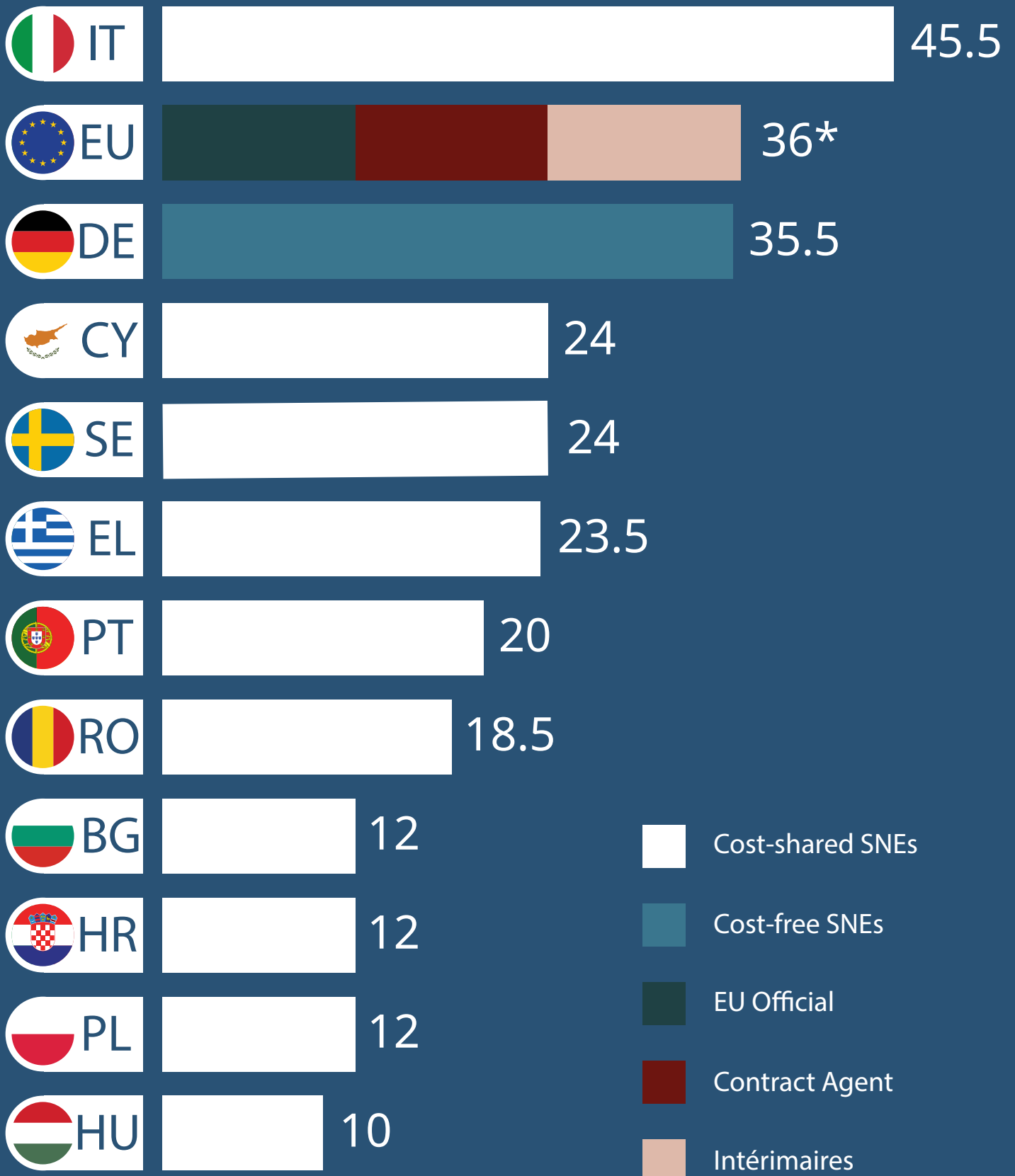
while at the same time necessarily updating the contents, requires time and effort of both experts in the ESDC network and staff in the ESDC Secretariat. A key challenge here is finding and funding sufficient specialised staff to manage and optimise these platforms.

Contributions and support from Network Members are highly valued and encouraged in order to speed up the process for the ESDC to be able to offer the most up to date and user-friendly eLearning experience possible to its course participants.



ESDC Staff

Months worked at the ESDC by Member State of origin in 2025



* Staff solely funded through the ESDC budget is not attributed to Member State

Partnership and Outreach

Partnership and outreach remain central to the ESDC's work. In 2025, the ESDC's partnership efforts can generally be divided into three areas: the ESDC as part of the Union's diplomatic toolkit, ESDC-Ukraine relations, and the ESDC network itself.

The ESDC within the EU's diplomatic toolkit

Training and education in security and defence continue to serve as a tangible, rapidly deployable, and trust-building instrument within the Union's diplomatic toolbox – both in the sense of disseminating knowledge and of creating network effects. In close collaboration with the EEAS, the ESDC has contributed, within its mandate and limits, to key Security and Defence partnerships for the Union, including those signed with the United Kingdom and Canada in 2025.

Furthermore, and in close coordination with the EEAS, the ESDC has developed contact to a number of third countries to discuss cooperation on security and defence training.

The ESDC also conducted fruitful bilateral exchanges in close cooperation with the EEAS, including with Albania and the United Kingdom.

The ESDC continues to address the Western Balkans through dedicated training programmes in and with the region, while also supporting the Union's

broader diplomatic efforts by leveraging the ESDC's resources.

The ESDC has continually strengthened its close and productive relationship with NATO and its affiliated Centres of Excellence. A notable achievement in this collaboration is the memorandum of understanding signed with the NATO Climate Change and Security Centre of Excellence in 2025 (picture below). The ESDC maintains a strong and productive collaboration with NATO DEEP, particularly in the field of cyber security. Finally, the



ESDC also explored potential enhanced cooperation with the European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management.

ESDC – Ukraine Partnership

The European Union and Ukraine are continuously deepening their partnership in security and defence at a time of



unprecedented geopolitical instability and persistent threats to European peace and security. Russia's war of aggression has fundamentally reshaped Europe's strategic environment, underscoring the need for stronger cooperation, enhanced resilience, and greater interoperability between EU and Ukrainian institutions.

The ESDC is dedicated to supporting this endeavour through tailored, needs-driven training and education. Beyond capacity building, it seeks to embed Ukraine's invaluable operational experience within the EU's security and defence architecture. By organising specialised seminars, training sessions, and conferences, the ESDC creates platforms for Ukrainian experts and EU personnel to exchange knowledge and experiences, with a particular focus on integrating the lessons learnt from Ukraine's experience to enhance the Union's strategic resilience and adaptive capabilities. Notably, the ESDC was represented at and able to contribute to the fourth EU-Ukraine Cyber Dialogue in Kyiv in October 2025. The ESDC aims to mainstream these lessons learnt into all its curricula.

ESDC Network

The ESDC operates as a network-based institution. The network is composed of institutions active in the field of training and education for peace, security, and defence, that are categorised into 'Members' (based within the Union) and 'Associate Network Partners' (from candidate and third countries or representing international organisations). Overall, the ESDC Network comprises more than 280 Network Members and Associate Network Partners, which together constitute the ESDC's training providers. In 2025, the ESDC welcomed five new Network Members and thirteen new Associate Network Partners.

Communication

In 2025, the ESDC made significant progress in enhancing its communication efforts. Building on developments from 2024, the ESDC unveiled its new visual identity at the beginning of the year. The updated logo and accompanying communication tools underline an even clearer EU identity while paying tribute to the ESDC's twenty-year history, retaining key elements such as the book and the shield.

Digital communication was further advanced with the launch of a completely redesigned website. The new site aligns with the logo's modern direction, strengthening the ESDC's identity as an EU body and offering a much more user-friendly experience.

As a result, the ESDC has reached a wider audience than ever before through its digital channels. Social media followers increased by over 33%, and engagement rose driven by a more focused social media and overall communication strategy.

Looking ahead to 2026, the ESDC plans to provide potential participants with more detailed information through targeted newsletters, complementing the general training information available on the website.

Additionally, the ESDC once again took part in the EU Open Day at the EEAS Headquarters, where it informed numerous interested participants about the concrete work carried out by the ESDC.

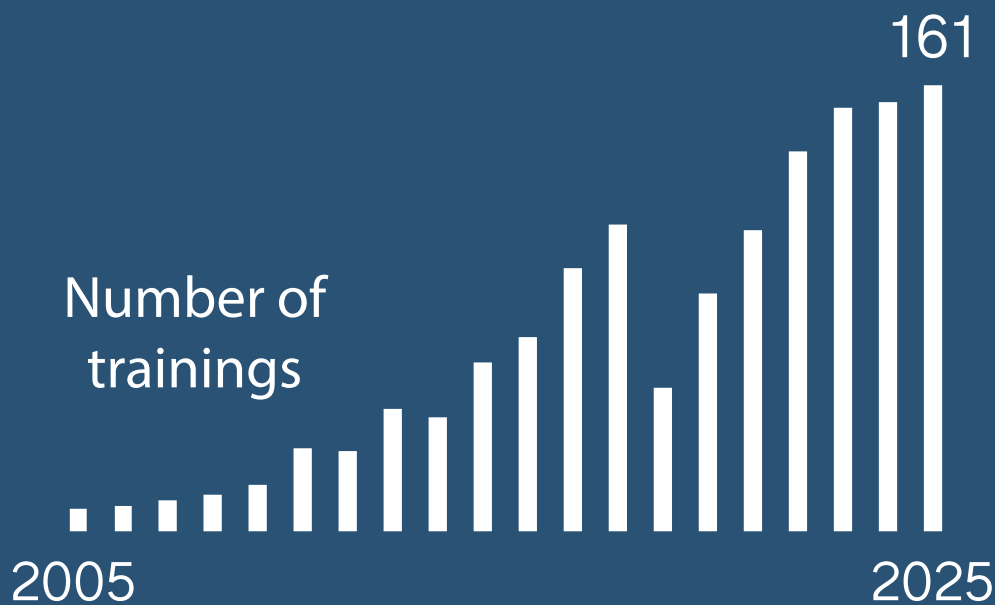
Participation Statistics

Excluding Military Erasmus

4 697
Participants

28.27%
Women

71.73%
Men



42.24%
Military

38.64%
Civilians

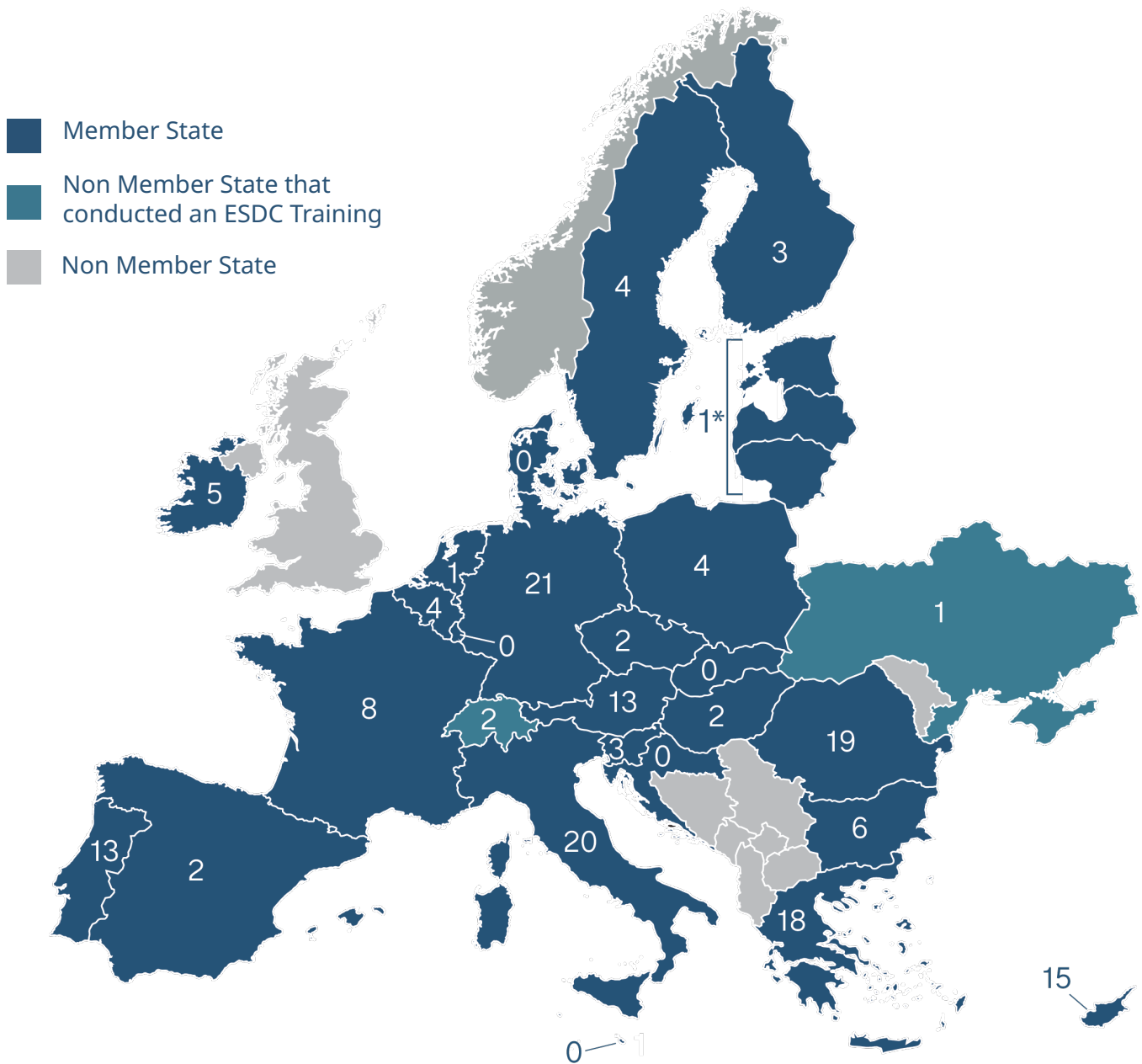
6.34%
Diplomats

11.03%
Police

Number of trainings by training institutes based in each country

Activities are credited to the Member State in which the organising institute is based, and not necessarily to the country where the activity took place.

Excluding Military Erasmus



*Training conducted by the Baltic Defence College

Priorities for the Future – ESDC 2030

Fergal Ó Regan
Head of the ESDC

CSDP and CFSP are experiencing the most profound changes since their inception. The ESDC adapts rapidly and effectively to this transition, advancing strategic readiness and territorial defence through education and training under Member States' guidance.

Defence integration and a stronger, more autonomous Europe is a multifaceted endeavour. Beyond production capacities, joint procurements etc., a common strategic culture forms the backbone of a capable defence framework. The ESDC supports the people-centred side of this transformation. Through training at all levels, from strategic-level leadership to new recruits, we actively shape a shared, integrated defence culture. By bringing together those who implement our security and defence policies, we enable both collaborative learning and networking effects, thus fostering an epistemic community dedicated to European peace, security, and defence.

However, the ESDC can and must do more to ensure this process succeeds at scale. As we mark our 20th anniversary, I am convinced that the ESDC of 2030 can achieve even greater impact than it does today. To make *ESDC 2030* a success, we must ask ourselves two critical questions:

First, what can we do within the ESDC to become more efficient, strategic, and responsive to the demands placed upon us?

Second, how must we adapt the structures that have served us for 20 years to meet the evolving needs of today's security landscape?

Becoming more efficient

Within the ESDC, we must become even more efficient, timely, and strategic. We will achieve this by modernising our Executive Academic Board and, in turn, the structures that underpin our work. Our approach will centre on strengthening our configurations, the dedicated working groups of experts from training and education institutions across the Union and beyond. These groups focus on key topics such as mission preparation, cybersecurity and war college level education.

Our goal is to expand the number of configurations to cover all areas of training we offer. Each configuration will and already does bring together focused teams of experts, comprising representatives from the leading institutions in their respective fields. This structure creates a dynamic environment for mutual learning, peer review, and knowledge sharing. It enables us to harness the collective expertise that already exists across the Union, while also fostering the agility and focus of small group collaboration.

By building on these synergies, we not only ensure a highly efficient use of resources but also promote continuous



improvement through shared insights and best practices. This approach keeps us closely aligned with the latest policy developments and operational needs, allowing us to deliver targeted, up-to-date training and education.

It reinforces our ability to connect Brussels with the Member States and maximising the value of the expertise available across Europe. The structure of the Executive Academic Board plenary will be streamlined to create a smaller, more efficient board based on more focused working groups. We aim to take action in this regard during the first half of 2026.

At the same time, a refined training requirement identification process within the Council, involving a more substantive footprint of the ESDC (see Chapter 3, 'Innovation and the future of training') would ensure efficiency gains in transposing strategic priorities of the Union directly into ESDC training and education activities.

The work of our training managers will be directly influenced by these changes. We will leverage the strong expertise we have cultivated within the ESDC, placing greater emphasis on evaluation, training design, and, above all, training innovation – and less on direct training organisational support.

Advancing the Institutional Structures

The second question raises a fundamental issue: where does the Union and its Member States see the ESDC in five, ten, and twenty years?

If the vision is for an ESDC that actively shapes the security culture across the Union and leaves a lasting impact on defence integration, then our structures must be adapted to rise to that challenge. After 20 years, there is no doubt that the

ESDC is here to stay. However, our budgetary, human resource, and legal structures must evolve to reflect this reality. Currently, our ability to engage in long-term planning is constrained by annual budgets and the structural inability to fully implement human resource decisions taken by the Member States.

As an autonomous EU body, our institutional memory and internal organisation are undermined by the legal inability to recruit staff beyond Seconded National Experts (SNEs). This limits our capacity to retain individuals who can shape and understand the ESDC and its environment over the long term, as well as take on tasks that fall outside the foreseen framework for SNEs.

Addressing this challenge is essential to ensuring the ESDC's continued effectiveness and its ability to foster a true common culture on European security and defence.

The EEAS is and will remain the closest partner of the ESDC. Our mutual beneficial cooperation on all matters the ESDC provides training on remains a cornerstone of the ESDC's identity and we strive to consolidate or even further deepen the relationship. The sharing of burden and responsibilities on an administrative and financial level still requires clarification and potential adjustments.

The ESDC is firmly rooted in the Member States through our extensive network. These members often provide state-of-the-art training facilities, offering the high-quality environments needed for the advanced training we deliver together. When thinking boldly, we must also consider the physical structures in which the ESDC operates and assess whether they are suited to delivering training and education in Brussels. Over 25% of all



Lessons Learnt in Dynamic Defence
Environments: Ukrainian Experience,
together with the Swedish Defence
University and the Ukrainian Boryviter
Center of Excellence in Stockholm.

© Swedish Defence University



ESDC trainings take place within EU premises in Brussels, which are primarily designed as meeting rooms, rather than dedicated training spaces.

In our vision for *ESDC 2030*, we should aim to have access to training facilities that reflect the high quality of the training delivered by our partners.

Innovation

These structural innovations align with our overarching goal to enhance our capacity for innovation. We have already made significant progress in the domain of eLearning, where we are currently overhauling our entire catalogue. Additionally, we have improved our strategic communication with a completely refreshed appearance, including an updated logo and a brand-new website.

Innovation in training is essential to staying relevant, and we are actively working to achieve this through both our methods and the content we deliver. At the same time, we must continue to critically reflect on our work. When it comes to innovation, there will always remain considerable room for improvement.

By relieving our training managers of administrative burdens, we aim to enable them to focus more on political developments, policy changes, training methods, and innovation, further advancing our efforts in this area.

When it comes to determining what we provide training on, the ESDC looks to the Council for strategic guidance. In this regard, the strategic guidance and priorities for CSDP training provided by EUCTG/EUMTG on an annual basis are of crucial importance. However, strategic guidance and priorities not only on

substance of training for CSDP, but also the institutional setup of the ESDC, would be highly welcome to make the ESDC fit for 2030. Establishing a dialogue on this is essential for the ESDC to focus on what truly matters.

We envision the ESDC in 2030 as being even more closely aligned with the Union's overall security and defence strategy, making Europe stronger, together.

Ukraine

In 2025, the ESDC developed its first comprehensive strategy on ESDC Training and Education Support to the EU-Ukraine Partnership. Through this initiative, and in close consultation with our Ukrainian partners, we remain steadfast in our support for Ukraine's resistance against Russia's unprovoked war of aggression, operating within the scope of our capabilities.

As a training body active in the field of peace, security, and defence, the ESDC places great emphasis on facilitating lessons-learned opportunities and enabling bi-directional knowledge transfers. In practice, we have much to learn from our Ukrainian partners, and the ESDC takes pride in organising such exchanges. We are fully committed to continuing and expanding these efforts. In this context, ESDC staff have travelled to Kyiv to engage with our Ukrainian colleagues, and we have brought Ukrainian colleagues to Brussels, to deepen our cooperation.

Our objective is to intensify this collaboration and ensure the full implementation of our strategy, reinforcing the strong relationship between the ESDC and Ukraine in the broader framework of the EU's partnership with Ukraine.

ESDC 2030

ESDC 2030 is not just about adapting structures or expanding capabilities, it is about shaping a common culture on security and defence. By fostering innovation, strengthening our people-centred approach, and aligning closely with the Union's strategic goals, we will ensure the ESDC remains important for the European security for the decades to come.

If this vision ought to become reality, decisive commitment from all sides is required.



European Security and Defence College

Doc: ESDC/2026/127

Date: 06/03/2026

Origin: ESDC Steering Committee

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Rue d'Arlon 62
1046 Brussels - Belgium

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Published on 05 May 2026.