



CSDP Annual Training and Education Conference 2025

Conference Package



Less Policy, More Practice

Welcome remarks

We are delighted to welcome you to Brussels to immerse yourself into the Annual Training and Education Conference (ATEC) 2025.

Creating platforms to meet, provoke, and exchange ideas lies within the nature of the ESDC, considering its constitution as a network, with a shared mission. Underpinning that shared mission are shared values and principles. Deriving from this organisational strength, ATEC has emerged as an annual event to gather across geospatial as well as functional boundaries, aimed at strengthening capacity building efforts at the European level.

While there is beauty in habits and traditions, this year's ATEC will be innovative and transformative in its conceptual design and creation process. Emerging from the ESDC network's and wider training community's appetite to focus on our daily bread and butter – training – in a way that is both, participatory and practice-oriented, ATEC 2025 is an invitation to deepen existing partnerships, explore new collaborations, sharing good (and bad) practices, create, inspire, learn from and with each other.

With your active participation, we trust that this conference will be enriching and memorable, providing a meaningful opportunity to develop new ideas in a dynamic and collaborative environment. Your participation, perspectives, and professional experience are highly valued. We count on you to co-create ATEC 2025 with us during the days in Brussels, and we are confident that we – together – will make it a successful event that translates into tangible and sustainable outcomes for us as community.



Fergal Ó REGAN
Head of ESDC

ATEC 2025 – our vision

The purpose of this year's ATEC is to explore and enhance the quality of training within the framework of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in the wider context of the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Under the conference theme of ATEC 2025, **Training in Motion – Transforming Needs into Action**, we will together address 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 break-out sessions, ATEC 2025 will create a space for enlightening discussions, exchanging experiences, and undertaking collaborative activities. It will thereby identify best practices and develop actionable strategies that can be directly implemented by training institutes across the wider training community to improve training and education relating to the CSDP.

Departing from the broader policy focus of previous ATEC editions, this year we aim to shape the event as an engaging, hands-on working conference. ATEC 2025 is centred on the stages of the training loop. This means **less policy, more practice**:



Key administrative reminders

Location: The conference will take place at Egmont Palace, with access via the entrance at Place du Petit Sablon 8b, 1000 Brussels. Additional information is provided in Annex 1.

Dress code: Business attire is requested. Uniformed personnel may attend in uniform, and participants are also welcome to wear traditional formal clothing that reflects their cultural or community heritage.

Schedule: Registration will open at 13:00 on 24 November. ATEC 2025 will begin at 14:00 on 24 November and will end on 25 November at 17:00. The ESDC 20th Anniversary Reception will start at 18:00. The detailed conference programme can be found below.

Entrance and security considerations: For security purposes, we advise arriving at least 30 to 45 minutes prior to the start of the event to allow sufficient time for the security screening process. Please also bear in mind the strikes¹ that could affect transportation arrangements and update your routes and travel methods accordingly. Upon arrival at Egmont Palace, please present the **QR code** that you received by email, and be ready to show your ID or passport. You will be issued a badge to be worn throughout the duration of the conference. Please be advised that **luggage** cannot be brought into the conference venue. However, it can be safely stored at the entrance, as well as at the location designated for the social gathering event.

Social gathering on 24 November: An informal networking event will be held after the conclusion of the conference's first day, at The Loft, Rue de Namur 51, 1000 Brussels, from 18:00 onwards. This gathering will provide attendees with an opportunity to engage with colleagues in a relaxed setting, with refreshments and beverages available for individual purchase. The Loft is located at close vicinity to the Egmont Palace as detailed in Annex 2.

Helpdesk: ESDC colleagues will be available at the helpdesk close to the conference room to assist you with any questions or concerns you may have. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us for support during the event. You can also reach us via the ATEC email address ESDC-ATEC@eeas.europa.eu.

¹ The Belgian trade unions are organising three days of strike on 24, 25 and 26 November. Rail services will be paralysed for 72 hours starting on 23 November at 22:00. The strike will affect all SNCB staff and its subsidiaries. A limited alternative service, based on the availability of volunteers, will be put in place. Other public transport operators (STIB, De Lijn and TEC) have also announced major disruptions throughout the entire period. They are currently unable to specify which tram and bus lines will operate. STIB anticipates a "very limited" service on its Brussels network between 24 and 26 November, while De Lijn warns of a reduced service and advises passengers to check their route on a daily basis.

ATEC 2025 Innovation Lab – a space to co-create

The Innovation Lab – located in the hall on the first floor – will be available throughout the duration of the conference, offering a dedicated space to present and explore innovative training-related approaches. Its purpose is to inspire and be inspired, helping us collectively reflect on how to further advance and refine our training practices.

Designed as a blend of exhibition, testing area, and collaborative workspace, the Innovation Lab will enable participants to discover, experiment with, and discuss new tools, methods, and materials first-hand during the breaks. It will remain open for the entirety of the conference, allowing you to visit and engage at your convenience.

QR codes will provide direct access to the materials on display, including links, tools, training aids, documents, videos, and more.

Conference programme – Day 1

DAY 1 – 24 November 2025	
13:00-14:00	Arrival & registration
14:00-14:35	Opening Main Plenary
14:40-15:45	Appetiser discussions Main Plenary Discussion 1 – Building smarter training systems for CSDP: how to improve mechanisms for assessing the needs? Discussion 2 – Assuring quality in CSDP training: how to balance standardisation and adaptability?
15:45-16:15	Transfer and coffee break Tapestry & Mirror Gallery
16:15-17:45	Break-out sessions Main Plenary & Mirror Gallery Session 1 – Building smarter training systems for CSDP: how to improve mechanisms for assessing the needs? Main Plenary Session 2 – Assuring quality in CSDP training: how to balance standardisation and adaptability? Mirror Gallery
17:45-18:00	Closing of Day 1 Main Plenary & Mirror Gallery
18:00	Social gathering The Loft

Session overview – Day 1



Appetiser discussion 1

Building smarter training systems for CSDP: how to improve mechanisms for assessing the needs?

This first session will focus on improving mechanisms for identifying, assessing, and addressing training needs within the CSDP context.

Objectives

- Explain the current training needs assessment process and how the needs are addressed.
- Discuss lessons identified in addressing training needs, specifically for CSDP missions/operations.
- Examine innovative/future processes for addressing training needs.

Guiding questions

- What is meant by training needs, training requirements, TRA?
- What are current mechanisms for conducting training needs assessments?
- What are lessons identified regarding the TRA process and training provision in response to them?
- What is the purpose of the training paths for civilian CSDP missions?
- How could the ESDC support in identifying future training needs?

Moderator

- Kinga DÉVÉNYI, CMC – Finland

Speakers

- Philipp BOVENSIEPEN, EEAS
- Evangelos ENGLEZAKIS, ESDC
- Patrick FOX, MSB – Sweden
- Michael MERKER, EEAS



Appetiser discussion 2

Assuring quality in CSDP training: how to balance standardisation and adaptability?

This session will discuss opportunities and limitations of standardising training, to ensure consistency and interoperability within the wider context of quality assurance.

Objectives

- Define what 'standardisation' means in the context of CSDP training — including what aspects should be standardised (e.g. content, methodology, trainer, training material) and to what extent.
- Analyse how training standards support quality assurance while allowing space for flexibility and innovation.
- Compare military and civilian approaches to training standardisation and identify synergies or transferable practices.
- Discover the potential for certification mechanisms to ensure adherence to minimum training standards.
- Identify a typology of courses for which standardisation and certification would be useful.

Guiding questions

- How can standardisation enhance – rather than limit – quality and adaptability?
- Should all aspects of training (content, delivery, trainers) be standardised?
- How does an optimal balance between standardisation and flexibility look like in different training formats (residential, hybrid, online)?
- How do military and civilian approaches to standardisation differ, and what can we learn from each?
- How could a certification mechanism look like to ensure adherence to training standards? What should be the role of the ESDC in this process?

Moderator

- Jutta WEINMANN, EEAS

Speakers

- Alin BODESCU, Land Forces Academy – Romania
- Nina CEPON, CEP – Slovenia
- Markus FEILKE, Federal Police Academy – Germany

Resources

- EU Policy on Training for CSDP
<https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-11362-2024-INIT/en/pdf>
- Implementing Guidelines for the EU Policy on Training for CSDP
<https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15973-2024-INIT/en/pdf>
- NATO QA HUB <https://qa.sidecloud.net/>
- ESDC HEAT curriculum and Course Concept
https://www.esdc.europa.eu/training-and-education/course-catalogue-and-curricula_en

Conference programme – Day 2

DAY 2 – 25 November 2025	
08:15-09:00	Registration
09:00-09:30	Recap break-out sessions Day 1 Main Plenary
09:30-10:35	Appetiser discussions Main Plenary <p>Discussion 3 – From sage on the stage to guide on the side: innovation in methodology</p> <p>Discussion 4 – Evaluation is creation: how to translate lessons learnt from training into institutional practice?</p>
10:35-11:05	Transfer and coffee break Tapestry & Mirror Gallery
11:05-12:35	Break-out sessions Main Plenary & Mirror Gallery <p>Session 3 – From sage on the stage to guide on the side: innovation in methodology Main Plenary</p> <p>Session 4 – Evaluation is creation: how to translate lessons learned from training into institutional practice? Mirror Gallery</p>
12:35-13:35	Lunch Tapestry & Mirror Gallery
13:35-14:05	Recap break-out sessions Day 2 Main Plenary
14:10-15:10	Concluding discussion: Closing the loop Main Plenary
15:10-15:45	Transfer and coffee break Tapestry & Mirror Gallery
15:45-16:45	ESDC 20th Anniversary panel: Integrating lessons learnt from 20 years of the ESDC Main Plenary
16:45-16:55	Award ceremony: 2024 and 2025 ESDC – Egmont Global PhD Prize Main Plenary
16:55-17:00	Closing remarks Main Plenary
18:00	ESDC 20th Anniversary Reception Mirror Gallery

Session overview – Day 2



Appetiser discussion 3

From sage on the stage to guide on the side: innovation in methodology

This session will explore the integration of innovative methods and didactic practices into CSDP training to foster comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and quality-oriented training experiences.

Objectives

- Examine innovation in training methodology, focusing on how learning design and delivery can better meet the needs of adult learners.
- Discuss what neuroscience and constructivist approaches reveal about effective learning and explore the concept of blended learning and its advantages in flexibility, engagement, and outcomes.
- Collaborate in the interactive segment to identify challenges and develop practical principles for innovative design across residential, hybrid, and online courses.

Guiding questions

- How can the principles of adult learning, constructivism, and social learning theory inform the way we design and deliver training so that it actively engages learners and bridges the gap between theory and practice?
- What does it mean to be intentional in blended learning design, how do we decide which elements are best delivered face-to-face, online, or through self-directed study to achieve the desired learning outcomes?
- In what ways can blended approaches support learner autonomy and motivation and reflection while still providing the right level of support and connection to a learning community?
- How can we balance the need to maintain high professional and educational standards with the courage to innovate?

Moderator

- Katie WOODWARD, DSTL (MoD) – United Kingdom

Speakers

- Jon-Hans COETZER, UNITAR
- Guido WEBER, LAFP – Germany



Appetiser discussion 4

Evaluation is creation: how to translate lessons learned from training into institutional practice?

Building on the previous discussions, this session will centre the attention on the evaluation of training outcomes and the continuous improvement of training programmes.

Objectives

- Discuss the purpose and benefits of evaluating the effect of training interventions at various levels (satisfaction, learning, impacts, results, and ROI).
- Discuss operational challenges in evaluating training interventions.
- Explore innovative approaches to evaluating training interventions.
- Explore how to ensure institutional learning occurs from the uptake of training evaluation.

Guiding questions

- What are challenges and opportunities in evaluating ESDC courses, for all five Kirkpatrick/Phillips stages (satisfaction, learning, impact, results, ROI)?
- What are innovative ways to measure learning, impact, and results?
- How do you ensure institutional learning occurs from the uptake of these evaluation results?
- How do you ensure that this stage of the training cycle feeds into the other stages (TNA, standardisation, innovation and methodology)
- What role should the ESDC play in facilitating evaluation standards across the network?

Moderator

- Paul HENDRIX, Clingendael – The Netherlands

Speakers

- Kieran DOYLE, Maynooth University – Ireland
- Monika PSENNER, ACP – Austria



Concluding discussion

Closing the loop

Following 1.5-days of hands-on and dynamic sessions, this session serves to explore linkages between different stages of the training loop. Taking into account different perspectives from the conference attendees, it aims to leverage lessons learnt and practical insights by translating them into tangible outcomes.



ESDC 20th Anniversary panel

Integrating lessons learnt from 20 years of the ESDC

The final session of this year's ATEC serves as a segway into the ESDC 20th Anniversary Reception. Embracing insights from the evolution of the ESDC, the panel seeks to develop and promote a training paradigm for CSDP training that is quality-focused, responsive to current and future challenges, and a generative force based on the EU's values and principles.

Moderator

- Sven BISCOP, Egmont Institute

Speakers – Part 1: Embracing lessons learnt

- Dirk DUBOIS, Former Head of the ESDC (2015-2022)
- Hans-Bernhard WEISSERTH, Former Head of the ESDC (2013-2015)

Speakers – Part 2: Promoting a future training paradigm for CSDP

- Foteini ASDERAKI, University of Piraeus – Greece
- Kirsi HENRIKSSON, CivOpsHQ/EEAS
- Gábor HORVÁTH, EUMS/EEAS
- Ciara Ó BRIEN, EEAS
- Fergal Ó REGAN, ESDC

Speakers' biographies (in alphabetical order)



Prof Dr **Foteini Asderaki** is a Professor of European Integration Theories and European Educational Policy, a Jean Monnet Chair in European Union Education, Training, Research and Innovation Policies, Vice Chair of the Department of International and European Studies, and Director of the MSc in International and European Studies at the University of Piraeus, Greece. Since 2019, she has been the elected Chair of the European Doctoral School for the Common Security and Defence Policy of the ESDC. She served as a Board member and Vice Chair of the Steering Committee for Group I – Western Europe and North America at the International Bureau of Education, UNESCO, Geneva (2016–17), as a Bologna Follow-Up Group Member (2004–09), and as a member of various national, regional, and bilateral education committees. She is an evaluator of European research programmes and awards. She has been the academic coordinator of several Jean Monnet and Erasmus programmes and the academic coordinator of the European Parliament School Ambassador Programme (2020–24, 2025–30) in Greece. She has co-edited books and published several chapters and articles on EU studies, the European Higher Education Area, European migration policy, and the CSDP with well-known publishers and journals.



Hans-Bernhard Weisserth started his career in the European Union in November 1999 in the Policy Unit/CSDP Task Force of the former High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana. Later, he was working in the European External Action Service/Crisis Management and Planning Directorate. In 2005, he became responsible for the development and management of the ESDC. According to the different status of the ESDC development, he acted as 'Head of the ESDC Secretariat', as 'Acting Head of the ESDC', and finally, in 2013, he was appointed by the former High Representative Catherine Ashton as 'Head of the ESDC' when the ESDC was established as a legal entity. Before taking up his post in the Policy Unit of the High Representative in November of 1999, he was a career General Staff Officer (German Armend Forces); he graduated from Bundeswehr University in Munich (Education & Sciences), the General Staff Officer Course at the Führungsakademie Bundeswehr in Hamburg (1984–1986) and the Hogere Krijsschool in the Hague (1988–1990), and subsequently performed various planning functions at operational and strategic level.



Prof Dr **Sven Biscop** read political sciences and obtained his PhD at Ghent University, where today he is a professor, lecturing on grand strategy and great powers, and on Belgian foreign and defence policy. In addition, he is the Director of the Europe in the World Programme at the Egmont – Royal Institute for International Relations in Brussels, the think-tank associated with the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since 1 October 2025, he also is the acting Director-General of the Institute. Sven is a Member of the Royal Academy for Overseas Sciences of Belgium, and an Honorary Fellow of the ESDC. He is a regular speaker at the Royal Military Academy in Brussels and at the People's University of China in Beijing, where he is a Senior Research Fellow. His two latest books are "Grand Strategy in 10 Words - A Guide to Great Power Politics in the 21st Century" (Bristol University Press, 2021) and "This Is Not a New World Order - Europe Rediscovered Geopolitics, From Ukraine to Taiwan" (Owl Press, 2024).



Col (ret) **Alin Bodescu**, PhD, is assistant professor with the Land Forces Academy, Sibiu, Romania. He served with the European Union Military Staff (EUMS) as Action Officer (2011–2016), where he coordinated EU military training and education, co-drafted the EU CSDP training policy-related documents, and developed internal training programmes for EUMS personnel. Between 2017 and 2021, he was seconded as Training Manager to the ESDC, where he led the development of the Sectoral Qualifications Framework for the Military Officer Profession (SQF-MILOF) and the Advanced Modular Training Course. His operational experience includes a tour in Iraq, with Italian Joint Task Force (2004), and a mission with the USCENTCOM HQ (2006), contributing to planning and coordination efforts of the multinational coalition.



Philipp Bovensiepen is an Assistant Chief Constable from the German police. Currently, he is seconded to the European External Action Service as a Senior Capability Development Planner for the Civilian CSDP Sector in the Security and Defence Policy Directorate (SecDefPol). Before joining SecDefPol, he served at EUPOL COPPS as the Senior Police Adviser for Training. Prior to his deployment, Philipp was Head of Training at the Department for International Police Missions of the North Rhine-Westphalia State Police, a certified Peacekeeping Training Institute for the UN and EU. His experience further includes corporate strategic planning for Europol and service as Chief of Staff and Head of Operations in a regional police department. Prior to his career in the police, Philipp worked for British and Canadian law firms and served in the German Armed Forces. He holds degrees in law and social sciences and is a certified internal auditor.



Nina Cepon is a dynamic and results-oriented executive with over 15 years of experience in international development, peace and security, and public administration. Currently serving as Executive Director at the Centre for European Perspective (CEP), responsible for strategic leadership, financial management, and international representation of the organisation. She has proven expertise in project and program management, particularly in EU-funded initiatives related to civilian crisis management, peace operations training, and regional cooperation in the Western Balkans. She is skilled in coordination, stakeholder engagement, and capacity building. Fluent in English and several regional languages, she has a solid academic background in European Studies and Political Science.



Dr Jon-Hans Coetzer is a senior higher education manager with over 25 years of experience in higher education. He focuses on instructional design and programme management, delivery and assessment practices, and academic and quality assurance management in the ever-changing landscape of higher education. He also worked as Project Coordinator in Strategic Crisis Management Training for the Swiss Federal Presidency in Bern from 2010 to 2015. Jon-Hans has also worked as senior delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) responsible for training the armed forces in the Law of War and the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols, during 1995 to 2002, in more than fifteen countries at war. He currently serves as Team Leader for the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), including establishing collaborative partnerships with institutions of higher education and universities focusing on Inclusive Pedagogy, Business, Conflict, Peace, and Sustainable Development Studies. Jon-Hans led the planning of UNITAR's First International Research Conference hosted at the UN Bonn Campus in November 2023 focusing on Climate Security: Peace and Security Consequences of Climate Change.



Kinga Dévényi is the Head of Training and CMC Finland, a Finnish governmental institution and a centre of expertise in civilian crisis management. Her responsibilities include ensuring that international organisations' training requirements are met and that secondees are prepared to take on their tasks in missions and operations. She has worked in numerous EU training projects related to civilian crisis management training and capacity-building. This work has involved not only implementing training, but also looking at ways for standardisation and certification. Kinga Dévényi has worked on CSDP in two ministries nationally as well as in the field, and in Brussels.



Dr Kieran Doyle is an Associate Professor and Deputy Director of the Edward M Kennedy Institute in Maynooth University. The Institute delivers executive programmes with a high level of external engagement with key practitioners and organisations active in national and EU conflict intervention.

Since 2019, Dr Doyle reported to the EU Civilian Training Group (EUCTG), on mediation and negotiation capacity of staff in EU civilian missions and is the Irish representative on the Executive Academic Board of the ESDC.

His primary research and teaching interests lie in building sustainable institutions (SDG 16), peacebuilding, and practice-based learning.

Over the last 20 years, he has worked with partners in the ESDC to prepare over 1500 Member State, Third Country, and EU diplomats; government personnel, and security representatives in mediation, negotiation, and dialogue capacity, institutional capacity building, integrated working capacity, and strategic communications.

In 2014, he was a Visiting State Department Fellow in Law and Governance in Boston College, and in 2023 was Visiting Fellow in the Weatherhead Centre for International Affairs, Harvard University, researching the role of EU integrated working.



Dirk Dubois is a former Head of the ESDC. Following his graduation from the Belgian Royal Military Academy with a Master's degree in Social and Military Sciences, Dirk Dubois joined operational units as a field artillery officer and worked as an instructor and staff officer at the Belgian Artillery School. After various deployments, he joined the Belgian Defence Headquarters and became a member of the team responsible for the development and follow-up of the strategic management objectives for the Belgian Defence. In 2007, he joined the ESDC as training manager, dedicating his efforts particularly to launching the European initiative for the exchange of young officers ('Erasmus militaire'). Returning to the Belgian Defence Headquarters in 2012, he took up the duty of chairperson of the Implementation Group for the European initiative for the exchange of young officers, inspired by Erasmus, in the summer of 2013.

In 2015, he was appointed by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to take up the position of Head of the ESDC. Since retiring in 2022, he uses his time to actively volunteer for Natuurpunt (largest Flemish nature conservation organisation) by monitoring wildlife population in the North of Antwerpen, engaging in activities to promote biodiversity, and preserving or restoring the natural habitat of plants and wildlife, including in the harbour of Antwerpen. Aside, he is an active board member of the European Citizens Association, which strives to preserve and protect the EU's core values.



Major Evangelos Englezakis is the ESDC Training Coordinator, working within the ESDC Cyber Education, Training, Exercise and Evaluation (ETEE) platform. He is responsible for the overall coordination of ESDC training activities, training needs assessment and prioritisation, as well as developing cyber related trainings. A seconded national expert from the Cyprus Ministry of Defence, Evangelos is an officer in the Cyprus Air Force with a career as an attack helicopter pilot since 1998. He also brings extensive experience in cyber defence, gained through roles at the Cyprus Ministry of Defence Cyber Defence department and the National Security Authority of Cyprus. Complementing his aviation studies, he holds a BSc and MSc in Information Technology, and numerous professional certifications in Cybersecurity. His expertise and interests focus on cyber resilience, ethical hacking, and cyberspace training utilising cyber ranges.



Markus Feilke is a Senior Chief Superintendent with the German Federal Police with 43 years of experience in police work. Since his first deployment abroad for the German Police Project Office in Afghanistan in 2006/07, international deployment became his area of interest. He was deployed to UNMIL (2011/12) and two times seconded as a planner to the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (2008/09 and 2014/15). Since 2009 he has been the Head of Section Foreign Assignments at the German Federal Police Academy. In this function, he focuses on training management and curricula development as well as on international committee work, networks, working groups and projects. His team provides several trainings within the ESDC network, e.g. HEAT, 4x4 driving, Monitoring Mentoring and Advising, and Team and Conflict Management. He is an active member of the WG MOT and German National Training Expert for the EUCTG.



Dr Patrick Fox has a MSc in Agricultural Engineering and a PhD in Natural Resources Management from Uppsala and Stockholm Universities respectively. Dr Fox is the Senior strategic advisor on Environment and Climate Security at the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), Peace Building Unit.

In March 2019, Patrick assumed the position as Environmental Coordinator at the European External Action Service (EEAS) to the Missions of the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability, a position he carried until end of 2021. Dr Fox has more than 25 years of experience in broad international settings on Crisis Management, Disaster Response, Disaster Risk Reduction, Recovery and Development particularly through the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (ICRC and IFRC). Patrick is furthermore a regularly engaged trainer/ facilitator/ moderator on thematic topics covering his expertise.



Paul Hendrix is a senior Academy fellow at Clingendael, the Netherlands Institute for International Relations. In this capacity, he is responsible for the coordination of training programmes for professionals working in the international security sector. In addition to this, he regularly provides training sessions on the analysis of armed conflict and (countering) disinformation campaigns, as well as contributing regularly to the development of didactic and institutional capacity with partner organisations. He also serves as the institutional POC for the ESDC and EUTI networks.

Prior to joining Clingendael in 2015, Paul worked as an independent filmmaker and -teacher in India, Peru, and the Netherlands. Paul holds an MA in Conflict Studies and Human Rights from Utrecht University, an MEd in History from the same university, and is an internationally certified Intercultural Communications trainer.



Kirsi Henriksson is the Deputy Managing Director / Deputy Civilian Operations Commander, in the Managing Directorate Civilian Operations Headquarters (MD CivOpsHQ) at the European External Action Service (EEAS).

The Civilian Operations Headquarters acts as the European Union's headquarters for civilian CSDP missions and supports the Civilian Operation Commander in the execution of his mandate. EU civilian missions are currently deployed in Europe, Africa, and Asia with 2000 staff members. The Deputy Managing Director / Deputy Civilian Operations Commander represents and assumes the tasks of the Managing Director of the Civilian Operations Headquarters / Civilian Operations Commander in his absence including in operational command decision making and the planning and conduct of Missions.

In her previous post, Kirsi Henriksson was the Director of Crisis Management Centre (CMC) Finland, which is a governmental agency operating in conjunction with the Ministry of the Interior. Ms Henriksson has extensive experience of EU CSDP civilian missions. She was Head of the EUCAP Sahel Niger Mission (2016-2018) and Deputy Head of EUCAP Sahel Mali Mission (2014-2016). She also worked in EUBAM Libya Mission (2013-2014) and EUJUST LEX-Iraq Mission (2010-2011). In 2020-2024, Ms Henriksson acted as a President of the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) Foundation Council. In 2018, the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs nominated her as a Member of the Nordic Women Mediators.



Major General **Gábor Horváth** graduated as Motor Rifles officer in 1986. His further education included, among others, the Joint Defence College in France, the NATO Senior Officers' Course, the ESDC High Level Course, and the Generals, Flag Officers, and Ambassadors Course at the NATO Defence College.

Following troop command from 1986 to 1991, his national positions included staff officer and instructor post, Commandant of the NCO Academy, Commander of the HDF 25th Brigade, Acting Chief of the Land Forces and lastly, Director of Training and Exercises (J7) of the HDF Defence Staff.

Internationally, in 2003 he was appointed as the first Hungarian Deputy MILREP to the EU Military Committee in Brussels. From 2006, he headed the NATO Permanent Liaison Team to the European Union Military Staff (EUMS). Promoted to Brigadier General, he served as Director Concept and Capabilities of the EUMS from 2009 to 2011. In 2018-2019, he had a tour as Chief of Staff EUFOR HQ, Operation ALTHEA, in Sarajevo.

Promoted to Major General in 2020, in 2021 he returned to Brussels as Hungarian MILREP to NATO and EU. Later he assumed the duty of Hungarian National Military Representative to SHAPE, Mons. Since 15 September 2022, he is the Deputy Director General and Chief of Staff of the EUMS.

Michael Merker is an EU Official with key competence in EU internal/external security.



Since 10/2022 *EU civilian CSDP*, Special adviser on Conduct and Operational planning of EU civilian CSDP missions

9/2020-9/2022 *EU civilian CSDP*, Senior Adviser to the Civilian Operations Commander, Director of CPCC

9/2015-9/2020 *EU civilian CSDP*, HQ of civilian CSDP – CPCC in EEAS – various functions *Acting and Deputy Chief of Staff, Head of Horizontal Coordination Division (policy – civilian Compact, Strategic Compass, civ/mil cooperation with MPCC)*

Head Operational Planning and Horizontal affairs, lead of operational planning CSDP missions and horizontal dossiers – civ/mil CSDP cooperation, CSDP – JHA and UN cooperation, rule of law/SSR, human rights/gender, CSDP Training and coordination with other EU programmes (EU integrated approach)

2010-9/2015 *EU External Action Service Head of Counter-terrorism Team* (EU external Counter terrorism policy including cooperation with third countries multilateral cooperation and EU CT assistance)

2008-2010 *Council Secretariat, EU Military Staff* (civ/military cooperation)

2008-2010 *European Commission, DG RELEX. A4*, Security/CT Policy

2004-2008 *European Commission, DG Justice and Home Affairs*, combating organised/financial crime, police and criminal justice cooperation

2003-2004 *European Commission, DG Enlargement*, Evaluation/Horizontal

1997-2003 *European Commission, Justice and Home Affairs Advisor, EU Delegation Prague*



Ciara Ó Brian has been a diplomat since the mid-1990s with broad expertise on issues of human rights, human security, and peacebuilding. She worked for over fifteen years in international development policy, managing a broad range of bilateral programmes for Irish Aid (e.g. Palestine, Sierra Leone, Malawi, Liberia, and Kenya), as well as majoring in humanitarian response, and EU and UN development policy. She has had diplomatic postings to Paris, to the UN in Geneva, and Brussels.

As an Irish diplomat she was also involved in the Northern Ireland peace process from its inception, and she has pursued roles in peacebuilding since that time. Since 2015, she has been based in the European External Action Service initially as the second permanent Chair of the human rights working party of the Council of the EU, COHOM. She subsequently led on EU policy on Eastern Europe and Central Asia including as permanent Chair of the COEST and COSCE working parties of the Council since 2021. She has taken up the role of deputy head of division on the integrated approach to peace and security in September 2025, including within it the role of Chair of the Steering Committee of the ESDC.



Fergal Ó Regan is a senior EU civil servant and academic. Currently, he is the Head of the European Security and Defence College, the EU body that provides military and civilian training and education in the field of the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in the wider context of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

Prior to joining the ESDC in April 2023, Fergal Ó Regan was Head of Unit and then Chief Legal Expert at the European Ombudsman, the EU body which carries out inquiries in relation to allegations of maladministration by European institutions and agencies. Before becoming an EU civil servant in 2006, he worked at a major Brussels-based law firm, specialising in EU law. He has been a visiting professor at the College of Europe in Bruges from 2012 until 2022, and also gave lectures at a number of other third level institutes, primarily on EU law. Mr Ó Regan holds a Master's degree in European Law from the College of Europe in Bruges, as well as law degrees from the Université d'Aix-Marseille (Maîtrise in International Law) and the Universidad de Deusto, Bilbao (Licenciatura in Law). He has been admitted to the Bar in Bilbao and Brussels. He has also been Chair of the Brussels Branch of Ireland's primary think tank on EU integration, the Institute of International and European Affairs.



Monika Psenner is Head of Capacity Development at ACP, providing strategic and operational oversight of the organisation's training pillar and EU training portfolio. She co-develops trainings on the nexus between climate, peace, and security, and regularly organises Security Sector Reform (SSR) trainings – among other topics – for international crisis management missions. She has chaired the ESDC Configuration on Climate Change, Environment, Security, and Defence since early 2024, and also chairs the Working Group on Evaluation, first under EUCTI and now under EUTI. Prior to joining ACP in 2021, she worked as a humanitarian and development professional focussing on Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. Monika holds a Master's in language studies from the University of Innsbruck, an MA in International Affairs from Tufts University, and a diploma in crisis and contingency management.



Guido Weber is a Senior Learning and Development Expert specialising in international police missions and adult education. After deployments in Kosovo and Afghanistan, he focused on mission-readiness training and advanced pedagogical development. He designs and delivers international Training of Trainers programmes for LAFP NRW, CEPOL, and the ESDC, where he authored the curricula for both the Training of Trainers and Training of e-Trainers. He also contributed as a Member States Expert to the UN CPTM and STM Police. Guido leads the 'Advanced Digitalisation' project at LAFP NRW and chairs the Innovation & Methodology Working Group of the European Union Training Initiative (EUTI). His training philosophy: "How we teach matters just as much as what we teach."



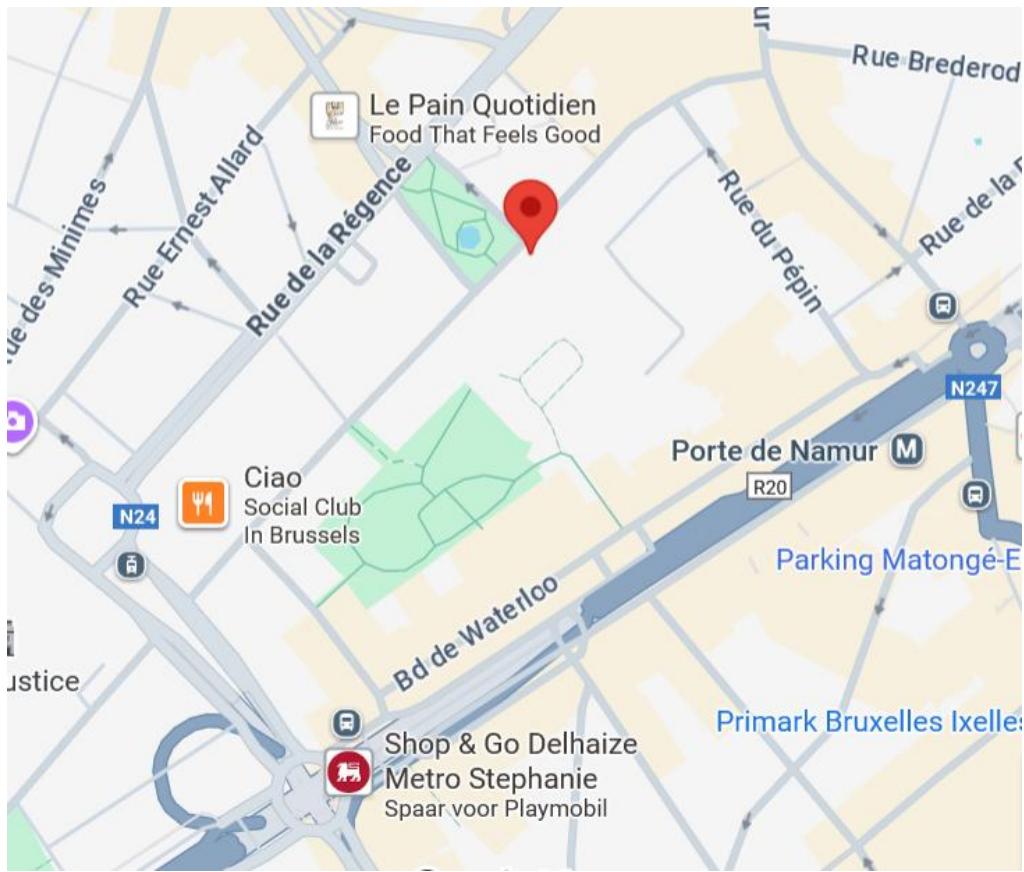
Jutta Weinmann is a Detective Chief Inspector with the German Police, currently seconded to the European External Action Service (EEAS) as Policy Officer for CSDP Training in the Directorate for Peace, Partnerships and Crisis Management (PCM.1). She was the penholder for the 2024 EU Policy on Training for CSDP and its Implementing Guidelines, shaping the EU's strategic approach to training and quality assurance. Before joining the EEAS, Jutta trained police personnel for international assignments at the Department for International Police Missions of the North Rhine-Westphalia State Police and worked on Security Sector Reform at the German Federal Foreign Office. Her international experience includes service with MINUSMA, Frontex, and several cross-border police cooperation missions.

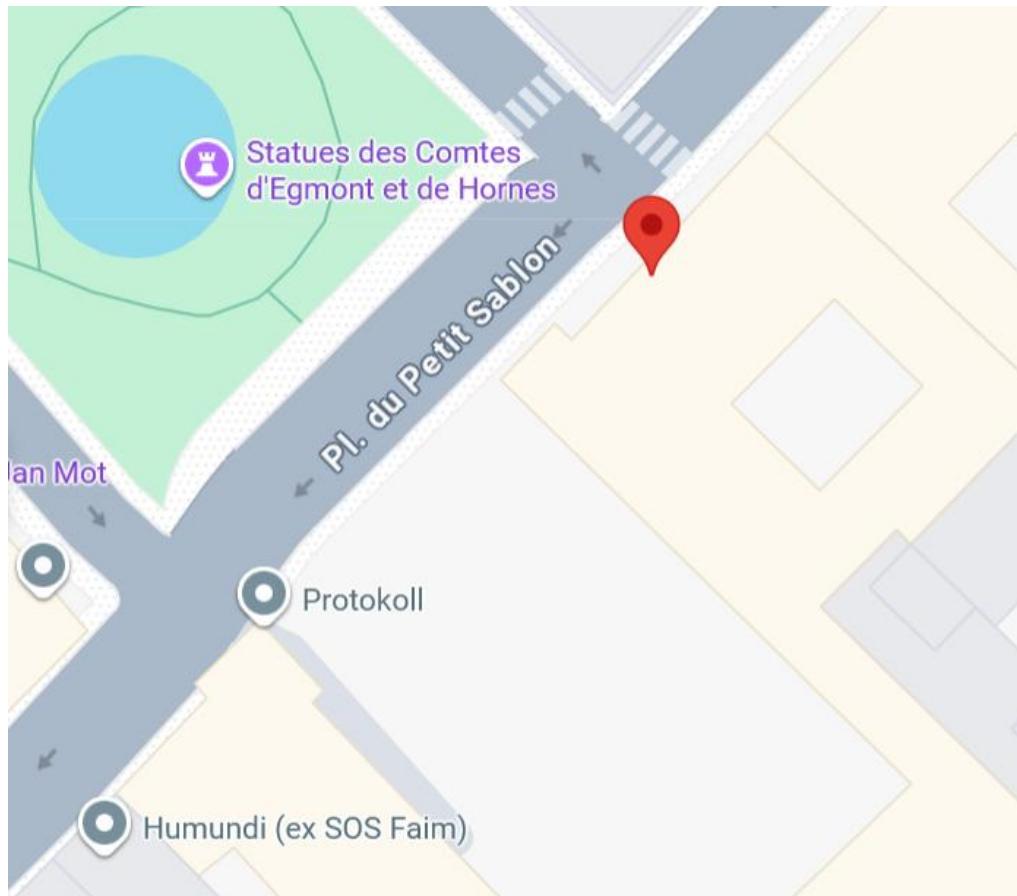


Dr Katie Woodward is a Chartered Psychologist, Senior Principal Analyst, and Fellow of the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defence's Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl). She recently completed a two-year secondment as Head of Research at NATO's Climate Change and Security Centre of Excellence (CCASCOE) and has led NATO's climate security research portfolio. Katie is an accomplished trainer and facilitator in government and academia, specialising in psychology, human security, terrorism, and the social and behavioural impacts of climate change. Her ability to bridge theory and practice makes her ideally placed to guide expert discussions, draw out practical insights, and ensure the session delivers actionable outcomes for participants.

Annexes

Annex 1 – Egmont Palace, Place du Petit Sablon 8b, 1000 Brussels





Annex 2 – The Loft, Rue de Namur 51, 1000 Brussels

