

Learning and Training for EU CSDP

Expert Seminar – Brussels, 2-3 July 2015

CONCEPT NOTE

The importance of learning and training is often taken for granted. Yet the EU faces a continuous challenge: not only ensuring that the 7,000 personnel currently deployed to its 15 CSDP missions and operations receive the training they need to perform effectively, but also foreseeing training for those staff working on CSDP at their respective headquarters, or those who may be selected for deployment.

More broadly, the success of CSDP and CFSP partly depends on having the right people with the right skills in the right jobs, so that they are prepared to face the challenges of an ever-changing world. Learning and training are vital to this: without them, the advances of each generation are lost. Much depends, however, on the specifics of how learning is encouraged and training is implemented within a clear conceptual framework. This presents particular challenges for CSDP.

The existing training policy for CSDP dates from 2003, and has been largely overtaken by developments in our approach to training and the practice of CSDP, as well as changes in EU policy affecting both civilian and military activities. It is therefore natural to revisit the policy, to make it as effective as possible, and to make the best use of scarce resources. This is why work began last year on building a shared understanding for the EU and its member states, as to how organised learning and training may best serve the evolving needs of CSDP in all its facets. This expert seminar is part of that ongoing process.

The objective of the seminar is to help to inform future work on a new learning and training policy for CSDP. The seminar will bring together experts from across Europe and beyond, with a range of different backgrounds – governments, international organisations, civil society, academia, and trainers. The aim is to stimulate discussion through the free exchange of ideas, and avoid reciting institutional positions. The programme for the two days is organised in four working sessions, each designed to address a particular set of priorities.

As ever, ambition is to be tempered with realism. The priority over the two days is to share ideas to influence the broad shape and orientation of future policy, not to address every detail.

It is hoped that the seminar may contribute to promoting a continuous learning culture by:

- encouraging an attitude of healthy criticism towards the potential for learning and training;
- balancing the concerns of training providers with needs of individual learners;
- linking training with lessons identified from past activities;
- helping to anchor an open-minded, innovative approach to changing circumstances.

Following the seminar, a report will be produced to summarise proceedings.