

From the “outcome of iMAF 2014” to the “aim of iMAF 2015”

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International Military Academic Forum 2014 “- the outcomes -”

From the 23rd to 27th of June 2014, the international Military Academic Forum (iMAF) was conducted for the first time in Reichenau an der Rax (Austria) in a multinational cooperation between five Military Academies and/or Universities.

- General Tadeusz Kosciuszko Military Academy of the Land Forces, Wroclaw – Poland
- National University of Public Service, Budapest – Hungary
- Nicolae Balcescu Land Forces Academy, Sibiu – Romania
- Theresan Military Academy, Wiener Neustadt – Austria
- University of Defence, Brno – Czech Republic



iMAF 2014; Reichenau an der Rax, Foto: TMA

According to the aim and purpose of iMAF, written down in § 1 of the iMAF Agreement

...iMAF shall be focused on creating and deepening a “European Security and Defence Culture”, as well as assuring the best achievable level of education and training for officer cadets, young officers and officers for dealing with future challenges.

In doing so, iMAF therefore shall promote and support the “ERASMUS Lifelong learning circle” in officers` education and training as well as the "European initiative for the exchange of young officers inspired by Erasmus", - an efficient cooperation in education of our future elites, for the realisation and consolidation of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) regardless of their nationality or their armed forces.1)

With iMAF 2014 the idea of **common modules**, an idea that was first to be found in the “European Initiative for the exchange of young officers inspired by Erasmus”, was revived.

So far, the following common modules have been developed by the “Implementation Group” of the „European Initiative for the exchange of young officers inspired by Erasmus”:

	Name of the Module	Service	ECTS Credits
1	Basic Military English (BME)	All Services	2
2	Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)	All Services	2
3	CSDP Olympiad	All Services	2
4	How to meet the Media	All Services	2
5	Law of Armed Conflicts (LoAC)	All Services	2
6	Crises Management Operations (CMO) consisting of 4 Sub-Modules	Army	12
7	Maritime Leadership	Navy	2
	Total		24 ECTS

During the iMAF 2014 in Reichenau an der Rax 110 experts (dealing with officer education), from 17 countries, representing 29 different institutions, worked on elaborating which additional Modules (“knowledge, skills and competences”) might be relevant for an officer in Europe. 2)

At the end of the day in total nine new modules were agreed within the group and described in knowledge, skills and competences, according to the description that was elaborated within the "European initiative for the exchange of young officers inspired by Erasmus" and this is also covered by the Bologna Process. 3)

	Name of the Module	Service	ECTS Credits
1	Battle Physical, Mental and Survival Training	All-Services	3
2	Common Operating Environment	All-Services	3
3	Comprehensive Approach	All-Services	4
4	Cultural Awareness	All-Services	2
5	Defence and Security Economics	All-Services	4
6	Individual Personal Development and Meta-Communication	All-Services	2
7	Leadership & Agility in Complex Environments	All-Services	2
8	Military Instructor Training	All-Services	3
9	Small Unit Tactics	Army	4
	Total		27 ECTS

With those modules, in total with 51 ECTS, it should be possible, if they will be implemented in the officer education curricula in as many military academies as possible, even if not all can be accepted in each country as academic, to create a full semester for exchanges.

And, of course in times of shrinking budgets it is also important, that then such a semester can be supported by ERASMUS+ money.

The full description of all modules can be found in GELL, PAILE, iMAF 2014, Vienna/BMLVS 2014, ISBN 978-3-9503699-1-5 or as a download under http://www.maf-reichenau.at/iMAF2014/Album/Book/iMAF_Book-2014.pdf

Reaching the status as a common module

Mr. Paile stated in his conclusion to iMAF 2014:

After the iMAF... Action!

After this successful exercise of designing new common modules in Reichenau, ways forward can be suggested.

Some or all of these modules shall be proposed to the Implementation Group for further work with view to make them “common modules” under the Initiative. 4)

The Austrian representative to the implementation Group of the “European Initiative for the exchange of young officers inspired by Erasmus” presented all during iMAF 2014 developed modules on the 23rd IG meeting. After discussion of the nine modules’ curricula within the IG they were sent to all member states for additional notes and adoption under silence procedure. As there were no further notes, these modules reached the status as a common module with the 10th Oct. 2014.

It will now be up to the member states and the institutions to implement them into their national officer education curricula according the national regulations.

The way to the aim of iMAF 2015

At the end of iMAF 2014 a date and venue of iMAF 2015 was announced to the participants.

iMAF 2015 will take place in Romania from the 9th to 13th of June, 2015 and will be hosted by the Nicolae Balcescu Land Forces Academy, Sibiu.

A first planning conference therefore took place during the LoD 7 meeting at the 30th of September 2014 at the University of Defence in Brno – Czech Republic.



LoD 7 meeting BRNO, Foto: UoD

The common decision was taken that the general goal for iMAF 2015 shall be the development of an “international semester” for students’/cadets’ exchanges with the additional benefit, that such a semester in the future can be also supported and covered by the ERASMUS+ programme.

It was also agreed that iMAF 2016 will be conducted in Poland and will be hosted by the General Tadeusz Kosciuszko Military Academy of the Land Forces, Wroclaw.

A working plan for iMAF 2015 was established and as the main conference for detailed planning a meeting from 28th to 30th of January, 2015 hosted by National University of Public Service, Budapest – Hungary was fixed.

The aim of iMAF 2015

The planning conference of the iMAF cooperation partners at the National University of Public Service in Budapest was chaired by COL 1st SR Vasile CARUTASU, PhD, VICE-RECTOR, Deputy Commandant for Scientific Research, "Nicolae Balcescu" Land Forces Academy who is in charge of the organisation of iMAF 2015.

After a discussion within the iMAF cooperation partners following aims for iMAF 2015 as a guideline for the hosting organisation were decided.

The main goal **development of an “international semester” for students’/cadets’ exchanges** as it was fixed in Brno on 30th of September 2014, remains.

Therefore, in a first step during iMAF 2015, the participants shall work out in syndicate

groups what the institutions (military academies and universities) expect as learning outcomes from the participants whom they send to an international semester abroad. The description shall be done according to the Bologna criteria in knowledge, skills and competences.

To ensure that the participants will be familiar with the subject and for the iMAF 2015 publication the participating institutions shall be invited to write an article about the subject in advance.

The outcome of the syndicate work will be summarized by the scientific committee for the next working step.

Out of the result of step one, again in a syndicate work, there is to elaborate which knowledge, skills and competences are pre-conditions to participate in an international semester, to ensure that the learning outcomes of the semester can be reached successfully by the participants, let`s say finding the definition of the “collection point”.

In a third step, the expectation of the learning outcome of an international semester shall be overlapped with the learning outcome of the existing common modules. As a result of that step we will either see that there are some shortfalls and there will be the necessity of creating additional common modules, or that only one or the other adaption in the learning outcome of an existing common module has to be done.

As a last step during iMAF 2015, the participants shall work out which period would fit best for such a developed international semester according to their existing study programmes.

With the answers to all four steps, each institution will be able to take these aspects into consideration when the next national accreditation circle will take place. Those who are willing in fully acknowledged semester exchanges, without losing time or wasting money, moreover can be supported for those exchanges by the ERASMUS+ programme; can adapt their national curricula for officer education.

The more institutions dealing with officer education do so, the more exchange opportunities we can offer to students and cadets and a further step to a harmonised officer education is done.



iMAF 2014, Foto: TMA

Just remind that this is fully in line with the aim why iMAF was founded:

.... iMAF shall be focused on creating and deepening a “European Security and Defence Culture”, as well as assuring the best achievable level of education and training for officer cadets, young officers and officers for dealing with future challenges...

....an efficient cooperation in education of our future elites, for the realisation and consolidation of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) regardless of their nationality or their armed forces....

Endnote:

- 1) Agreement about planning, organising and conducting the future “International Military Academic Forum (iMAF)”;
published on <http://www.maf-reichenau.at/iMAF2014/Sites/Agreement.php>
[23.02.2015]
- 2) Ref.: GELL, PAILE: iMAF 2014, Vienna/BMLVS 2014, P. 128
- 3) Ref.: GELL, PAILE: iMAF 2014, Vienna/BMLVS 2014, P. 34
- 4) Silvan PAILE, Conclusion... For Now, in: iMAF 2014, Vienna/BMLVS 2014, P. 124
- 5) Agreement about planning, organising and conducting the future “International Military Academic Forum (iMAF)”;
published on <http://www.maf-reichenau.at/iMAF2014/Sites/Agreement.php>
[23.02.2015]