

PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE

Consortium

Annual Review 2025

Partnership for Peace Consortium

OF DEFENSE ACADEMIES AND SECURITY STUDIES INSTITUTES

Annual Report 2025

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January 2026

1

An enduring commitment to cooperation among military allies and partners.

Formally established in 1999, the Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes is a high-impact, low-cost multinational program, which is sponsored and governed by nine nations and NATO. In 2025, the Consortium engaged stakeholders from more than 50 nations.

The Consortium builds intellectual interoperability, fosters security sector cooperation, and strengthens institutional capacity among allies and partners. At the heart of this work is a vibrant community of practice whose collaboration yields knowledge products ranging from policy white papers and research reports to foundational reference curricula for professional military education. The Consortium also publishes the peer-reviewed journal *Connections* and supports partner nations through the Defense Education Enhancement Program.



The PfPC generates a remarkable high-return investment for the U.S. within NATO's security cooperation toolkit. No other platform so effectively builds sustainable human capital and institutional resilience among allied and partner nations. It's a uniquely powerful instrument of cooperative security delivering real results at minimal cost...!

— Michael C. Ryan (2025), former U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Europe/NATO), 2019–2020



IN PURSUIT OF PARTNERSHIP AND INTEROPERABILITY

The PfP Consortium's mission is to “strengthen partner defense education and security sectors while fostering a trusted global network of defense educators, research professionals, and security sector practitioners.” Per its terms of reference, the Consortium pursues this mission through three distinct but mutually reinforcing focus areas.

First, **Intellectual Interoperability** involves strengthening collective deterrence and resilience among allies and partners. The Consortium advances this goal by growing knowledge and shaping defense policy through applied research, collaborative projects, and direct policy recommendations.

For example, building from lessons observed in Ukraine, the Consortium developed “Train While You Fight,” a concept for strengthening the resilience of training infrastructure during crisis and conflict. In 2025, this concept advanced to operational planning, and allied nations began committing resources toward implementation.

The second focus area, **Security Sector Cooperation**, concerns multinational solutions

and conflict prevention through strategic dialogues (Track 2 diplomacy). The Consortium's unique framework creates opportunities for influential security sector practitioners from different nations to develop the trust and cooperation necessary to de-escalate tensions and address shared challenges.

In 2025, for example, the Consortium hosted talks on deterring emerging hybrid threats in the South Caucasus, bringing together representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia to develop collaborative solutions.

Third, **Institutional Capacity Building** involves modernizing partners' professional military education (PME).

This is accomplished through targeted efforts, for example, the train-the-trainer course for the National Defence University of Ukraine developed under the Strategic Leadership Course for Ukraine project, and through the persistent Defense Education Enhancement Program (DEEP). DEEP helps partners develop contemporary curricula, improve their faculty development, and adopt modern teaching methods aligned with NATO standards.



Letter of Intent to Cooperate

Between

the Partnership for Peace Consortium
of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes

and

the Partnerships Directorate
of Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE)
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

1. Purpose

This Letter of Intent expresses the mutual interests of the Partnership for Peace Consortium (PiPC) and NATO's SHAPE Partnerships Directorate (PD), to strengthen collaboration in areas of shared strategic value, including but not limited to Professional Military Education (PME), faculty development, defense education reform, and support to NATO's partnership objectives as defined in doctrine and strategy, such as the *NATO Strategic Concept 2022* and the *NATO Warfighting Capstone Concept*.

Both parties affirm their desire to work closely to promote interoperability, develop educational content relevant to partner needs, and support transformation efforts across partner nations.

2. Background

The PiPC is an international government organization that manages a network of 800 defense academies and security studies institutes across 60 countries. Its mission is to strengthen partner defense education and security sectors while fostering a trusted global network of defense educators, research professionals, and security sector practitioners. The PiPC is governed by a senior advisory council that includes senior defense representatives from NATO International Staff and 9 nations (Austria, Canada, Bulgaria, Germany, France, Greece, Italy, Poland, and the United States). The PiPC Secretariat is based in Washington, D.C.

PD is the lead for coordinating NATO's Military Partnerships with partner nations. The Partnership



3. Scope of Cooperation

Areas of cooperation include:

- Communication:** Routine and recurring information sharing on current defense and security education Capacity Building (CB) initiatives with partner nations, associated lessons learned, and best practices.
- Events:** Mutual engagement in each organization's recurring events, where relevant.
- CB Participation:** Opportunity to participate in each other's education CB efforts, where aligned and appropriate, including the Defense Education Enhancement Program (DEEP).
- Working Group Participation:** Opportunity for PD to participate in PiPC working groups, where relevant.
- Ad-Hoc:** Other observer or co-sponsorship roles for select engagements, hosted by either party, may also be included where relevant.

4. Principles and Understandings

This Letter of Intent is not legally binding. It serves to reflect a shared vision of cooperation and mutual benefit. Both parties retain full autonomy and acknowledge that this arrangement is non-exclusive. All joint activities are contingent upon the availability of resources and shall be undertaken based on mutual agreement.

5. Duration and Review

This Letter of Intent is valid for an initial period of 2 years from the date of signature. It may be reviewed and updated upon mutual consent. Progress under this arrangement may be evaluated annually or during established coordination meetings.

6. Signatories

Robt. Admiral-Giuseppe Brindola
Deputy Chief of Staff
Partnerships Directorate
NATO SHAPE

BG (Ret.) Rolf Wagner
Chair
Senior Advisory Council
Partnership for Peace Consortium

25 July 2025



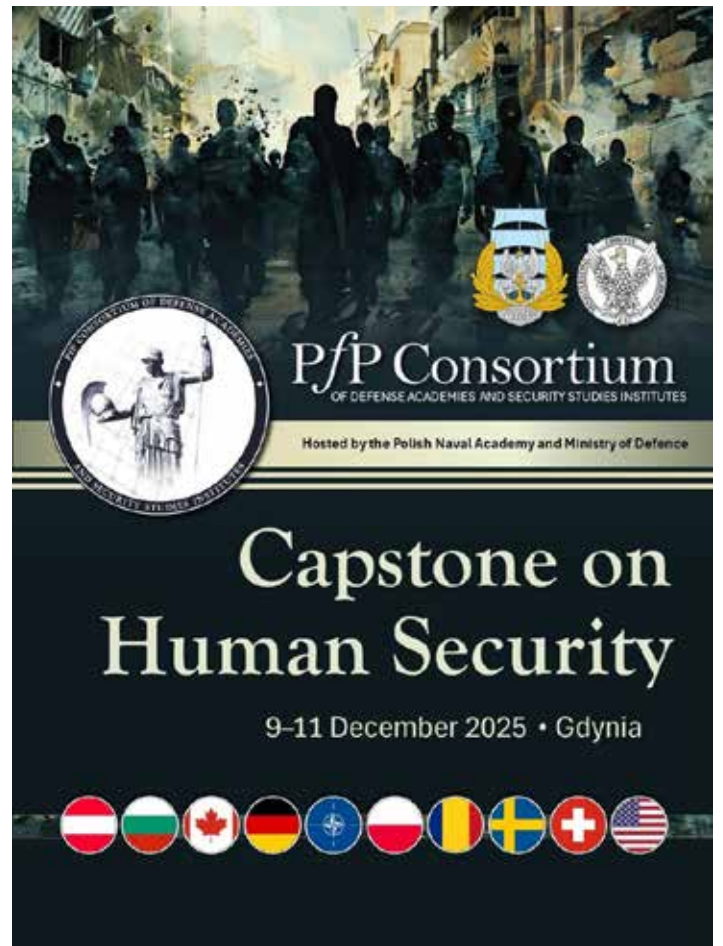
2

High-impact discussions among scholars and practitioners, allies and partners.

In 2025, the Consortium convened and supported several major events. The year began with the Consortium Conference on Balkan Security, hosted by the Austrian National Defence Academy. In February, the Consortium co-hosted a session titled, “The Pen is Mightier than the Sword,” in collaboration with the University of the Bundeswehr Munich at the Munich Security Conference.

In April, Consortium members also contributed to NATO’s Conference of Commandants and the SHAPE Military Strategic Partnership Conference. Following this, SHAPE and the Consortium signed a Letter of Intent to Cooperate on enhancing interoperability with partners (shown left). The year culminated with the Consortium Capstone, hosted by the Polish Naval Academy; it focused on the complex challenges of Human Security.





TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF BALKAN INTEGRATION?

VIENNA, Austria, 28–30 January 2025: The PfP Consortium convened a high-level conference at the Austrian National Defence Academy, bringing together military experts, policymakers, and scholars from 27 nations to mark a quarter-century of security cooperation.

Featured speakers included Austria’s Secretary General for the Federal Ministry of Defence **Dr. Arnold Kammel**, Moldova’s State Secretary for the Ministry of Defense **Ghenadie Cojocaru**, and Deputy Minister of Defence for Bosnia and Herzegovina **Slaven Galić**.

The first day focused on the Consortium’s evolution, serving as the culminating event of its 25th anniversary year. In the opening session, **Lisa Bronson**, former U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for European and NATO Affairs, who was instrumental in the Consortium’s creation, reflected on its early days.

Later, a special panel of long-standing members highlighted the Consortium’s successes, such as the Defense Education Enhancement Program’s role in strengthening Ukraine’s defense capabilities prior to the 2022 invasion and the modernization of military education in Kazakhstan. Participants advocated for

deeper cooperation among working groups and greater engagement with young professionals, reaffirming the Consortium’s commitment to shaping the future of Euro-Atlantic security.

The remainder of the conference focused on security challenges in the Western Balkans. Speakers described the region as a “strategic vulnerability” for Europe, warning that external actors—Russia in particular—are eager to exploit political stagnation and divert attention from other conflicts. For example, panelists discussed Russia’s efforts to target Serbia in the cognitive domain, using historical narratives to manipulate public perception.

The conference spotlighted the growing threat of cognitive warfare, defined not as an attack on territory, but on societal trust and perception. Experts warned of the dangers posed by AI-generated disinformation and deepfakes while presenting countermeasures, including the EU’s toolbox for countering foreign information manipulation and the critical need to equip youth with media literacy skills.

The event concluded with a marketplace session filled with publications, policy papers, and educational resources, including the newly launched *Resilience Reference Curriculum*.

EXPLORING HUMAN-CENTRIC SECURITY

GDYNIA, Poland, 9–12 December 2025: The PfP Consortium convened military leaders, educators, and security practitioners from 25 nations and NATO at the Polish Naval Academy for its 2025 Capstone.

This flagship event combined governance meetings with a scholarly exploration of human security. Against the backdrop of ongoing high-intensity and hybrid conflicts, participants examined how human-centric security enhances military effectiveness and resilience.

A recurring theme was that warfare targets entire societies physically, psychologically, and economically. In his opening remarks, RADM Professor Tomasz Szubrycht, Rector-Commandant of the Polish Naval Academy, called for “effective defense through knowledge,” and he argued that we must move beyond narrow definitions of military readiness toward broader societal resilience.

Keynote speaker **Dr. Jacek Siewiera**, former Polish Head of the National Security Bureau, reinforced this perspective, warning that Europe faces long-term vulnerabilities not only from external threats but from internal erosion of its human capital. “We are losing the most critical resource,” he noted, “and that

resource is the human.”

Subject-matter experts, including Dr. Sarah Jane Meharg (CAN), Virpi Levomaa (NATO), and Wg Cdr James Lambert (GBR), examined the operational implications of human security. They stressed that protecting populations, preserving dignity, and understanding local perceptions are operational necessities, not humanitarian luxuries.

Many military leaders contributed, including **RADM (Ret.) Piotr Stocki**, Head of the Rector’s Office at the Polish Naval Academy; **LTG (Ret.) Tomasz Piotrowski**, former Operational Commander of the Polish Armed Forces; **FADM (Ret.) Boyan Mednikarov**, former Rector of Bulgaria’s Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy; **VADM (Ret.) Stanisław Zarychta, PhD**, former Commander of Poland’s Maritime Operations Center; and **CAPT Jon von Weissenberg**, Finnish Defence Attaché to Poland.

The event also featured interactive sessions, such as lightning talks, breakout syndicates, and a marketplace for networking and knowledge exchange. Notably, young professionals comprised nearly 20 percent of attendees, reflecting the Consortium’s increased commitment to developing the next generation of security practitioners.



3

A year of productive workshops and cooperation across 50+ nations.

In 2025, the PfP Consortium delivered significant accomplishments through its vibrant community of 11 permanent working groups and various time-limited project groups, including the Reference Curricula writing groups (see page 17).

Working groups produced policy papers, research articles, and foundational Reference Curricula to enhance partner education and interoperability.

Operationally, the Consortium initiated a youth engagement initiative designed to provide better pathways into international security for emerging professionals (aged 35 and under). This effort represents a vital investment in the next generation of security leaders and the future of the Consortium's network.

2025 CONSORTIUM COMMUNITIES...

The **Advanced Distributed Learning** group focuses on technology-enhanced learning to ensure military training remains sustainable during crisis and conflict. In 2025, its “Train While You Fight” concept achieved significant impact, influencing major defense reform in Germany and transitioning formally to the Multinational Capability Development Campaign. The group also advanced its work on e-learning and AI literacy during meetings in Tbilisi (February) and Riga (May), and at a joint conference with NATO learning technology groups in Istanbul (September).

Chaired by the USA, NATO, and Germany

Playing an important supporting role for the Defense Education Enhancement Program, the **Education Development** group develops best practices for teaching, curriculum design, and institutional sustainment to professionalize faculty at partner defense institutions. In 2025, members focused on refining methods and measuring institutional impact, leading to approval of an updated *Faculty Development Curriculum Guide* and design of a new program to ensure the long-term sustainability of faculty development efforts.

Chaired by the USA

The **Conflict Studies** group examines current geopolitical challenges and conflict dynamics through a historical lens. In June, in collaboration with the Alexandru cel Bun Military Academy in Chişinău, the group held its 24th annual conference. Focused on “Perceptions of Enemy in Peace and War,” 35 military historians and strategic experts from 19 countries addressed topics including the ethical treatment of enemies, the strategic role of public perception in justifying the use of force, and the rising influence of digital technology in information warfare.

Chaired by Romania and the Netherlands

The **Emerging Security Challenges** group analyzes complex security developments to support foresight analysis for NATO and partner states. In June, the group convened at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy for a workshop on “Emerging Technologies and Their Impact on Leadership.” The event brought together experts from military, government, academia, and the private sector to discuss how technologies such as AI and quantum computing are shaping the future of civilian and military leadership and decision-making.

Chaired by Switzerland and Germany

...WORKING IN DIVERSE GROUPS

The **Human Security in Operations** group launched in 2025. It was officially announced during the final meeting of the Women, Peace, and Security in Professional Military Education working group in July 2025. This new group will develop educational resources that integrate human security concepts into professional military education. Already, members of the group were instrumental in supporting the Consortium Capstone on Human Security in Gdynia in December, and they plan to use outputs from that event to guide their work in 2026 and beyond.

Chaired by Canada

The **Irregular Warfare and Hybrid Threats** group analyzes aggressive actions below the threshold of armed conflict and develops methods to build resilience against them. In June 2025, members analyzed China's malign activities in Europe and developed strategies for monitoring them. In August, in collaboration with the Hybrid Centre of Excellence, the group examined the use of proxies, producing a framework for countering these threats. The group also contributed to the development and distribution of the *Resilience Reference Curriculum*, released in early 2025.


Chaired by the USA

The **International Security Cooperation and Defense Engagements** group launched in 2025 to bridge the gap between security cooperation theory and practice. The group aims to improve collective understanding of best practices for international cooperation among allies and partners. In 2025, the group held three virtual meetings to build its core team and develop initial research plans. Its research agenda includes defining "security cooperation" across the multinational audience, developing a taxonomy of concepts, and producing concept notes and articles.

Chaired by the USA and Denmark

The **Regional Stability in the South Caucasus** group brings together experts from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and stakeholder nations to prevent conflict. In April, the group met in Istanbul to explore using "Peace Tech" for peacebuilding, which led to constructive dialogue between Armenian and Azerbaijani participants. A later meeting in Reichenau an der Rax examined how regional connectivity affects stability. The group published policy recommendations calling for regional regulatory frameworks and investment in tech education.

Chaired by Austria, Romania, and Greece



PfPC supports intellectual interoperability efforts to build enduring institutions and lasting regional stability.

– William S. Cohen, former U.S. Secretary of Defense

The **Regional Stability in South East Europe** group supports peace and reform processes in the Western Balkans by providing actionable policy advice. Its May workshop in Reichenau an der Rax analyzed diverging security perceptions, producing recommendations to counter disinformation and build regional trust through enhanced strategic communication. In September, the group met in Belgrade to assess the impact of demographic challenges, such as brain drain, on long-term stability and security sector readiness.

Chaired by Austria, Serbia, and Croatia

The **Security Sector Reform** group enhances good governance in the defense sector through research and outreach. In July, the group partnered with the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance to convene a tripartite forum in Chişinău, Moldova. Ministry officials, ombuds representatives, and civil society experts from seven partner nations considered how to strengthen democratic oversight and accountability in the armed forces, including recruitment reform, whistleblower protections, and defining the military's role in national emergencies.

Chaired by Switzerland

The **Strategic Leadership Course for the Security and Defence Sector in Ukraine** is a three-year project to develop a course for senior-level Ukrainian civilian, law enforcement, and military strategic leaders. This project builds PME capacity at the National Defence University of Ukraine (NDUU) on topics such as resilience, hybrid threats, Euro-Atlantic integration, and post-conflict contexts. In 2025, the project successfully piloted the full-length course, and in 2026 NDUU will run the course independently, with Swedish experts in an advisory support.

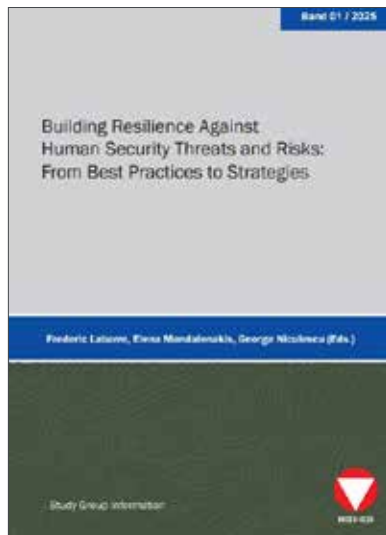
Chaired by Sweden

Women, Peace, and Security in Professional Military Education was a temporary project group that successfully concluded its three-year mandate in 2025. In its final year, the group completed a concept note, developed grade-aligned content for NCO and officer education as well as an active learning toolkit (*Integrating Women, Peace and Security in Professional Military Education: An Active Learning Toolkit*), and contributed to the *Teaching Gender in the Military* handbook. These products were showcased in Sofia in December before the group officially sunset.

Chaired by Canada

INSIGHTFUL PUBLICATIONS

Much of the PfP Consortium's work involves information and exchange and knowledge development, and the Consortium frequently publishes information papers and policy recommendations. Below are a few examples, and find more open-access publications at www.pfp-consortium.org.



From top left: Regional Stability in South Caucasus (1) *Building Resilience Against Human Security Threats and Risks* handbook and (2) a policy brief on emerging technologies and conflict prevention. (3) Regional Stability in South East Europe policy brief on regional cooperation. (4) Advanced Distributed Learning update on *Train While You Fight*. (5) Irregular Warfare and Hybrid Threats brief on proxies.

50+

DIFFERENT NATIONS

In 2025, Consortium participants represented 55 unique national territories in addition to NATO staff.

The Consortium's permanent governance stakeholders were well represented. Beyond those nine nations and NATO, the greatest number of participants came from Ukraine, Georgia, and the United Kingdom.



40+

WORKING EVENTS

The Consortium held over 40 working events in 2025, not counting the many DEEP engagements.

Nearly a dozen of the 2025 events were workshops during which participants contributed to the development of Reference Curricula.

Most events are in-person, often augmented by online coordination.



600+

DEEP EVENTS

In 2025, NATO and the PfP Consortium collectively delivered 600 DEEP activities, which took place online, in a hybrid (blended) format, or in-person.

These engagements were delivered by subject-matter experts drawn from a cadre of more than 1800 security and defense education professionals, and they supported over 5700 faculty and staff members at recipient institutions.



9%

EARLY CAREER

The majority (85%) of PfP Consortium participants are between the ages of 39 and 68.

In 2025, only 9% were 35 or younger. The new young professionals engagement initiative aims to improve this balance by including more early-career professionals and graduate students in working groups and through mentorship opportunities.



15

PARTNERS DEVELOPED

DEEP currently operates tailored programmes with professional military education institutions in 15 partner nations:

- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Colombia
- Georgia
- Iraq
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Mauritania
- Mongolia
- Morocco
- Republic of Moldova
- Serbia
- Tunisia
- Ukraine

DEEP Ukraine remains the largest country program.



53

FACULTY WORK- SHOPS

In 2025, DEEP offered 53 faculty development workshops delivered across 30 schools in 13 partner countries

A milestone was reached in 2025: for the first time, partner institutions have begun integrating the Master Instructor Program (MIP) into their own internal faculty development systems. Two institutions have launched versions of the MIP, marking a transition from external support to institutional self-sufficiency.



600+

VOLUNTARY “FELLOWS”

The Consortium relies on individual experts who donate their time and knowledge as voluntary contributions on behalf of their home nations or organizations.

In 2025, the Consortium drew on a cadre of roughly 600 voluntary contributors who helped organize events, author information papers, develop policy briefings, and otherwise support efforts to foster intellectual interoperability among allies and partners. This is in addition to the 1800 subject-matter experts who support DEEP.

This extended network of “fellows” is the lifeblood of the PfP Consortium.



3x

FIVE-YEAR DEEP GROWTH

As reported to the NATO Partnerships and Cooperative Security Committee, DEEP’s work has expanded over the last five years, so that by 2025, its activities have grown by approximately 300%.

This “proves that the programme is scalable while remaining cost-efficient,” with “Delegation representatives expressing appreciation for the significant added value of DEEP in terms of practical support to the overall Alliance.”





4

Supporting professional military education through reference curricula.

In collaboration with the NATO International Staff, the PfP Consortium strengthens defense education by developing and freely distributing Reference Curricula. Authored by multinational teams of experts, these publications provide generalizable educational templates suitable for professional military education. Each includes structured course outlines, learning objectives, scholarly references, and recommended instructional methods that partner institutions use as foundations to build or modernize their own programs.

In 2025, NATO and the Consortium released a new *Resilience Reference Curriculum*. Significant progress was also made on curricula for *Operational and Tactical Planning* and *Implications for Leadership from Emerging and Disruptive Technologies* (I-LEAD Tech), with several other development and update projects initiated.



SIBIU, Romania, April 2025: The “Nicolae Bălcescu” Land Forces Academy in Sibiu hosted the international conference “Leadership and Ethics: Adapting Military Ethics to Modern Warfare,” where members of the ***Leadership and Ethics Reference Curriculum*** writing team presented the newly developed publication. The event convened military leaders, ethics experts, researchers, and young officers from more than 9 nations. Participants examined ethical leadership challenges, such as those posed by emerging technologies and complex operational environments. The conference strengthened multinational dialogue, advanced shared ethical frameworks, and supported Romania’s growing leadership role in military education.

#	Available and Forthcoming Reference Curricula	Published	Updated
1	Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building	2008	
2	Cybersecurity	2011	* In Process *
3	Generic Officer PME	2011	* In Process *
4	Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) PME	2013	* In Process *
5	Building Integrity	2017	
6	Counterinsurgency	2017	
7	DEEP Strategy for Distance Learning Support	2017	
8	NCO Corps Professional Development	2019	
9	Counter-Terrorism	2020	* In Process *
10	Faculty Development Curriculum Guide	2023	
11	Russia’s War Against Ukraine Lessons Learned	2023	
12	NCO School Instructor Development	2024	
13	Hybrid Threats and Hybrid Warfare	2024	
14	Leadership and Ethics	2024	
15	Resilience	2025	
16	Logistics	2026	
17	Operational and Tactical Planning	2026	
18	I-LEAD Tech	2026	
19	Artificial Intelligence PME Instructor Employment Guide	* In Process *	
20	Artificial Intelligence as Military Instrument of Power	* In Process *	

Published reference curricula are freely available at www.pfp-consortium.org

SHAPING MILITARY EDUCATION



The **Resilience Reference Curriculum**, released in January 2025, is a framework for developing courses that enhance national and collective security. Developed collaboratively with NATO's Resilience Section, the curriculum addresses resilience across five interconnected levels (individual, community, organizational, national, and multinational) and examines both physical elements, such as critical infrastructure, and psychological elements, such as social cohesion. The curriculum outlines structured approaches to building resilience against threats ranging from natural disasters to hybrid attacks, to help both allies and partners develop the skills and whole-of-government strategies needed to strengthen their societies.

Coming Soon

Implications for Leadership from Emerging & Disruptive Technologies (I-LEAD Tech)

will equip military leaders with enduring competencies to understand and employ new tech. Rather than focusing on specific systems, the curriculum enables leaders to ask the right questions and analyze possible impacts. The project will hold its final development meeting and pilot course in January 2026 at the Rakovski National Defence College in Sofia.

Now in the final review stage, the **Operational and Tactical Planning Reference Curriculum** describes a structured approach to military planning. The framework covers three themes: planning fundamentals, including operational design; the operational-level planning process; and military decision-making at the tactical level. The publication is expected to be released in autumn 2026.

The new **Logistics Reference Curriculum** will provide a foundational guide to modern military logistics. Its five themes cover the fundamentals of logistics history and principles; supply, including supply chain management; movement and transportation systems; maintenance and recovery operations; and essential services such as health support and military engineering. The publication is expected to be released in late 2026.



5

Advancing institutions through the Defense Education Enhancement Program.

The PfP Consortium supports the NATO International Staff with execution of the Defense Education Enhancement Program. DEEP helps partner nations modernize their professional military education systems to align with NATO standards and practices. In 2025, the program's impact was extensive, conducting over 600 activities across 15 nations. These engagements involved an estimated 1,800 allied and partner subject-matter experts reaching a total audience of 5,700 faculty and staff.

The program operates on a peer-to-peer model focused on curriculum development, faculty training, and institutional sustainment. In addition to country-specific support, DEEP convened two major coordination events in 2025: the Functional Clearing House in Garmisch in June and the Conference of NCO Academies and Schools in Vyškov in September.

DEEP was the only organization that proactively engaged to meet Policy priorities and use available funds to achieve tangible results. Even our partners recognized the value of DEEP. It has the right leadership and structure to make a positive impact.

– Davis Florick, U.S. Director for Eurasia, 2024–2025



DEEP Ukraine remained the largest country program. In 2025, the Minister of Defence signed a new Education Quality Assurance Policy, which was developed with DEEP support, and Quality Assurance Units were established across all military education institutions. DEEP also supported PfP Consortium's Strategic Leadership Course for the Security and Defence Sector in Ukraine project, and in 2025, Ukraine achieved internal sustainability on its Master Instructor Program, meaning that all in-country faculty development programs are now delivered by Ukrainian instructors.

The **Defense Education Enhancement Program** conducts institutional capacity building of partner nations' military education enterprises. DEEP delivers sustained reform aligned to transatlantic standards to support long-term interoperability for as little as \$45,000 (USD) annually per partner nation, making it one of the most cost-effective security cooperation tools. Leveraging volunteer experts and multi-national burden-sharing, DEEP achieves systemic, warfighter-relevant outcomes unmatched by comparable programs.

MAKING A DEEP IMPACT

GARMISCH, Germany, 23–25 June 2025:

The 14th DEEP Clearing House, hosted by the George C. Marshall Center, brought together 133 representatives from 74 military education institutions across 24 nations to review active programs, identify requirements, and match commitments to partner needs.

BG (Ret.) Rolf Wagner, Chairman of the Consortium’s Senior Advisory Council, opened by emphasizing that, “While funding for equipment continues to increase, education and training will be critical to ingrain a warrior ethos across NATO and its partners.”

Each of the 15 partner country programs was reviewed. Allied institutions registered specific commitments, from Romania’s operational planning workshops and Bulgaria’s curriculum development support to Canada’s human resources management expertise.

Functional working groups also convened: the Faculty Development Group reported on 53 workshops delivered across 30 schools in 13 partner countries; the Bureau for International Language Coordination outlined its testing and instructor development support; and the DEEP eAcademy confirmed its expanded reach to 170,000 online participants.

The next Clearing House is planned for 22–24 June 2026 in Brno, Czech Republic, hosted by the Czech University of Defence.

VYŠKOV, Czechia, 22–23 September 2025:

The 4th Annual Conference of Non-Commissioned Officers Academies and Schools, hosted by the Czech Armed Forces Training Command at the Military Academy, drew 116 participants from 39 countries, including representatives from allied NCO academies and partner institutions across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and the Indo-Pacific.

Czech President Petr Pavel opened the conference, noting that modern NCOs must be “not only trained but also well-educated in order to lead and cooperate effectively.” This year’s themes focused on soft skills for effective leadership and mentoring at all levels.

Ukrainian instructors from the 204th and 197th NCO Training Centres presented lessons learned from delivering courses under combat conditions.

The conference also previewed several initiatives: establishment of a NATO NCO Development Council to incorporate lessons from Ukraine; Switzerland’s International NCO Academy, which aims to become Europe’s leading hub for NCO corps development by 2028; and Czechia’s offer of a free Basic Instructor Development Course to the international community beginning May 2026.

Switzerland will host the 5th Annual Conference in Lucerne, 13–14 October 2026.



Upcoming issues of *Connections* will consider the Trans-Atlantic Defense Industrial Base, Integrated Deterrence, Hybrid Operations, and the transformative effect of AI and other Emerging Technologies on global security



The 2025 Athena Award for best paper went to Dr. Valeria Chelaru for her article, "Kremlin's 'war on terrorism' in the Northeastern Caucasus: how Chechnya still 'saves' Russia"

<https://doi.org/10.11610/Connections.23.12>



Dr. Mikael Weissmann and Dr. Peter Kent Forster received 2025 Athena Award honorable mentions for their respective articles on foreign influence in the Western Balkans and the global terrorism implications of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

6

Analysis of global security issues shared through *Connections*.

In 2025, *Connections: The Quarterly Journal*, cleared its publication backlog—releasing seven issues—and it launched a redesigned website. The journal has been published for over 24 years and is indexed in databases such as Scopus and JSTOR.

Issue 24(1), published in January 2025, reflected on the PfP Consortium’s 25th anniversary, with articles examining its contributions to regional stability and global security cooperation. Other issues published in 2025 addressed topics such as regional security in the Black Sea and Balkans, as well as Russia’s approach to warfare.

Connections is led by editor-in-chief Dr. Sean Costigan and guided by an esteemed panel of subject-matter experts and experienced international leaders. All issues are open-access and available at connections-qj.org.



UNSER HEER

Austria
Federal Ministry
of Defence



Austria
National Defence
Academy



Bulgaria
Bulgarian National
Defence College



Canada
Canadian Defence
Academy



Germany
Bundeswehr Command
and Staff College

Nine nations and NATO currently serve as the permanent governance stakeholders of the PfP Consortium. The organizations on this page support the Consortium's two governance bodies on behalf of those nations and NATO.



Germany
Federal Ministry
of Defence



NATO
International Staff



Poland
Polish Naval
Academy



Romania
Carol I National
Defense University



Romania
Institute for Political
Studies of Defense
and Military History



Sweden
Swedish Defence
University



Switzerland
Geneva Centre
for Security Sector
Governance



Switzerland
Geneva Centre for
Security Policy



United States
George C. Marshall
European Center for
Security Studies

7

The Consortium's work is guided by two governance bodies.

The **Senior Advisory Council** provides strategic-level guidance on Consortium priorities, resources, and structure. The Council includes one delegate from each governance stakeholder nation and NATO as well as from the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies—the host organization for the PfP Consortium's Secretariat. Currently, the Marshall Center delegate serves as the Council chairperson.

The **Consortium Steering Committee** translates the strategic guidance into actionable programs, projects, and tasks. The Steering Committee includes representatives from each governance stakeholder nation and NATO as well as the chairs of all permanent and ad-hoc working groups. The PfP Consortium's executive director serves as the Steering Committee chairperson.

End Notes – Photo details and citations, where captions are not already provided

Page 2

- Top (left): MajGen (Ret.) Barre Seguin (USA) and Dr. David Emelifeonwu (CAN) at the 2024 Consortium Conference, January 2025, Vienna
- Top (middle): BG (Ret.) Rolf Wagner (DEU) and Mr. Christophe Lhomme (NATO) at the Munich Security Conference
- Top (right): Mr. Christoph Bilban (AUT) and Dr. Sandro Knezovic (HRV) at the 2024 Consortium Conference, Vienna
- Middle: Dr. Carmen Rijnoveau (ROU) and Dr. Katarzyna Wardin (POL) at 2025 Consortium Conference, December 2025, Gdynia
- Middle: Dr. Jean-Marc Rickli (CHE) at the 2024 Consortium Conference, Vienna
- Bottom (right): Annual Consortium Joint Governance Meeting, including all Senior Advisory Council and Steering Committee members, December 2025, Gdynia
- Bottom (left): BG Klaus Klingenschmid (AUT), Commandant, NCO Academy, with COL Juergen Wimmer (AUT) and Mag. Andreas Wannemacher (AUT) at the DEEP Clearing House, June 2025, Garmisch

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- Top: PfP Consortium session at the Munich Security Conference, including Dr. Todor Tagarev (BGR), BG (Ret.) Rolf Wagner (DEU), and Professor Manuela Pietrass (DEU), February 2025
- Middle: Image courtesy of NATO, from the 2025 Conference of Commandants
- Middle (right): PfP Consortium and NATO SHAPE Partnerships Directorate Letter of Intent, signed July 2025
- Bottom: Attendees at the NATO Military Strategic Partnership Conference, April 2025, Doha (photo by SHAPE Public Affairs Office)

Page 6, January 2025 Conference, Vienna

- Top (left): Ms. Lisa Bronson (USA), former U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for European and NATO Affairs
- Top (middle): LTG Erich Csitkovits (AUT), Commandant, National Defence Academy and event host
- Top (right): Dr. Arnold Kammel (AUT) Secretary General for the Federal Ministry of Defence
- Middle: Event participants
- Middle (left): CSM Alex Varga (SLO), Command Senior Enlisted Leader (CSEL) NCO College (left) and Dr. Predrag Jurekovic (AUT)
- Bottom (left): Dr. Carmen Rijnoveau (ROU), Dr. Al Stolberg (USA), and Dr. Sae Schatz (USA)

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- Top (left): Participants of the Security Sector Reform workshop, July 2025, Chişinău, Moldova, including the State Secretary for the Ministry of Defense Ghenadie Cojocaru (MDA), shown center front
- Top (middle): CSM Johannes Haans, then-Director, Non-Commissioned Officer Programmes Department at the NATO School Oberammergau, and in the background, Dr. Alan Stolberg (USA), at the DEEP Clearing House, June 2025, Garmisch
- Top (right): Dr. Nelly Lahoud (USA), U.S. Army War College, at the DEEP Clearing House, June 2025, Garmisch
- Middle (larger photo): SGM Ludek Kolesa (CZE) at the DEEP Clearing House, June 2025, Garmisch
- Lower-middle (left): I-LEAD Tech writing workshop, featuring Dr. Tim Dreifke (USA), September 2025, Garmisch
- Lower-middle (right): Dr. David Emelifeonwu (CAN) at the DEEP Clearing House, June 2025, Garmisch
- Bottom (left): Romanian military personnel at the Leadership and Ethics Conference, April 2025, Sibiu
- Bottom (middle): LTC Olaf Garlich (DEU) and Dr. Jean-Marc Rickli (CHE) showcase the Geneva Centre for Security Policy anniversary flag, celebrating GCSP's 30th anniversary
- Bottom (right): Dr. Sae Schatz (USA) and two cadet consultants to the PfP Consortium Secretariat, Sylas Sisson (USA) and Melani Sotelo-Leon (USA) from the University of North Georgia at an Artificial Intelligence and Security Salon, June 2025, Garmisch

Page 14, December 2025 Conference, Gdynia

- Top (left): Dr. Elena Mandalenakis (GRC) on the left, with Dimitar Drinkov and Yanitsa Petkova (BGR) from the Rakovski National Defense University
- Mid-upper (left): Dr. Jacek Siewiera (POL) former head of National Security Bureau & Dr. Katarzyna Wardin, Poland, PfPC Senior Polish Representative
- Middle: Event participants
- Bottom (left): RADM Professor Tomasz Szubrycht, PhD, DSc (POL), Rector-Commandant, Polish Naval Academy and event host
- Bottom (middle): From left to right, Dr. Iryna Lysychkina (UKR), Ms. Nathalie Gendreau (CHE) and Ms. Rebecca Mikova (CHE)
- Bottom (left): Col Ernst Stach, Defense Attaché, Swedish Embassy, Warsaw

End Notes – Photo details and citations, where captions are not already provided (cont.)

Pages 16–17, small images

- Under 40+ Working Events: Photo of participants at the 2025 Consortium Conference in Gdynia, including Maj. Gen. Eugen Mavriş (ROU)
 - Under 600+ DEEP Events: Dr. Iryna Lysychkina (UKR) delivers Master Instructor Program training at the Military Institute named after Heydar Aliyev, October 2025, Baku (photo courtesy of the Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan)
 - Under 9% Early Career: Wing Commander James Lambert (GBR), HQ Cyber and Specialist Operations Command, and LTC Isabel Borkstett (DEU) at the Consortium Conference, December 2025, Gdynia
 - Under 53 Faculty Workshops: Ukrainian personnel participate in a 2025 DEEP event
 - Under 600+ Voluntary “Fellows”: CAPT Andrew Ledford (USA), U.S. Naval Academy, leading an I-Lead Tech reference curriculum writing workshop, September 2025, Garmisch
 - Under 3x Five-Year Growth: Faculty from the Ukrainian Military Institute of Telecommunications and IT participate in the DEEP Master Instructor Program, 2025
- For the quotation in the text, see NATO Document: AC/340-D(2025)0079 (R)

Page 18, topmost images from left to right

- LTC Olaf Garlich (DEU), CAPT Andrew Ledford (USA), U.S. Naval Academy, and 2nd Lt Cameron Colavito (USA) at an I-Lead Tech reference curriculum writing workshop, September 2025, Garmisch
- I-LEAD Tech writing team, September 2025
- Additional members of the I-LEAD Tech writing team, including Mr. Sebastian Schwartz (DEU)

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- Photos from the Leadership and Ethics Conference, April 2025, Sibiu (Photos courtesy of the Romanian Land Forces Academy)

Page 22, DEEP activities

- Top (left): Participants at the 4th Annual DEEP Conference of Non-Commissioned Officer Academies and Schools, September 2025, Vyškov (Photo courtesy of the Czech Armed Forces Training Command)
- Top (right): Dr. Mariusz Solis (NATO) at the DEEP Clearing House, June 2025, Garmisch
- Top-middle (left): Mr. Pavel Anastasov (NATO) at the DEEP Clearing House, June 2025, Garmisch

Page 22, DEEP activities (cont.)

- Top-middle (right): DEEP Clearing House participants, June 2025, Garmisch
- Lower-middle (left): DEEP Clearing House participants, June 2025, Garmisch
- Lower-middle (middle): Ukrainian personnel participate in DEEP activities
- Lower-middle (right): Ms. Branka Petek (NATO) and Dr. Sven Gareis (DEU), German Armed Forces Command and Staff College, at the DEEP Clearing House, June 2025, Garmisch
- Bottom (left): Colombian Navy graduates of the Master Instructor Program, 2025
- Bottom (right): DEEP annual review meeting, Georgia

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- Left: *NATO DEEP Master Instructor Training Course* developed for Ukraine, courtesy of the Military Institute of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv
- Middle: Ukrainian personnel participate in DEEP Functional Faculty Development training at the Kyiv Institute of the National Guard
- Right: Ukrainian personnel use virtual reality to learn, image courtesy of the *NATO DEEP Master Instructor Training Course*

Page 26, Connections

- Dr. Marina Caparini (CAN), Dr. Namrata Goswami (USA), and Dr. Laura Thurston-Goodroe (USA) at the editorial board meeting, August 2025, Garmisch
- BG (Ret.) Rolf Wagner (DEU) at the editorial board meeting, August 2025, Garmisch
- Dr. Aida Alymbaeva (KGZ) at the editorial board meeting, August 2025, Garmisch
- Mr. Andrew Borene (USA) and Todor Tagarev (BGR) at the editorial board meeting, August 2025, Garmisch
- AMB (Ret.) Eric Nelson (USA) at the editorial board meeting, August 2025, Garmisch

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