



## **Modern leadership in the context of the law of armed conflict and open-source intelligence**

(ESDC Activity Number 26-27/78/1)

*5 - 9 October 2026, Thessaloniki, Greece*

### **Invitation**

The Hellenic Army War College (HAWC) and the Cyprus Security and Defence Academy (CSDA), under the aegis of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC), have the honour of organising the course **'Modern leadership in the context of the law of armed conflict and open-source intelligence'**, to be held from 5 to 9 October 2026, in Thessaloniki, Greece.

The course is designated to support participants in strengthening their leadership capabilities in the complex environment of contemporary armed conflict. It will also provide participants with a solid understanding of the fundamental principles of the law of armed conflict (LOAC) and the growing role of Open-Source intelligence (OSINT) in operational and strategic decision-making. Beyond the academic dimension, the course seeks to foster critical thinking, professional exchange, and meaningful networking opportunities among peers and experts from across Europe and partner countries.

The course is composed of both an e-learning phase and a residential phase. During the e-learning component, participants will be introduced to the core concepts that will be further explored during the residential week in Thessaloniki (5-9 October 2026). The programme focuses on three main thematic pillars: Leadership, LOAC, and OSINT.

Throughout the course, subject matter experts and experienced tutors will guide participants through lectures, mentoring sessions, discussions, and practical exercises. Participants will also work collaboratively in syndicates and workshops, applying their knowledge in interactive activities and a crisis management scenario.



The course is open to mid/senior-ranking military and law enforcement officers as well as civilian personnel from governmental institutions, including ministries of defence, foreign affairs, interior, and related agencies of EU Member States, EU institutions and partner countries.

Personnel involved in the planning or conduct of military operations, as well as staff deployed or expected to be deployed in civilian or military CSDP missions and operations are also warmly encouraged to apply.

**Brig. Gen. Dimitrios Xogiannis**

**Fergal Ó Regan**

**Col. Symeon ZAMBAS**

*Signed in the original*

*Signed in the original*

*Signed in the original*

Commandant of the HAWC

Head of the ESDC

Director of CSDA

### **Annexes**

**Annex A: Administrative information**

**Annex B: Summarised course topics**



## Annex A

### Administrative information

#### **Target audience:**

The course is open to both civilian and military personnel from EU Member States, EU institutions, bodies and agencies, as well as civilian and military CSDP missions and operations.

#### **Course language:**

The course will be conducted in English. Participants are, therefore, expected to have a sufficient command of English, to actively participate in discussions and fully benefit from the training activities.

#### **Attendance and certification:**

Attendance is mandatory throughout the entire residential phase. A certificate will be awarded to participants who successfully complete the full course, including the e-learning phase.

#### **Costs:**

All travel, accommodation and subsistence costs are to be covered either by the sending authorities or by the participants themselves. No course fee will be charged.

#### **Applications and nominations:**

Applications must be submitted through the ESDC secure internet system ENLIST (<https://esdc.europa.eu/enlist/login>) by the designated national or institutional nominators.

The list of ENLIST nominators is available on the ESDC website: <https://esdc.europa.eu/nominators/>.

#### **Deadline for nominations:**

The deadline for nominations is **11 September 2026**.



**Confirmation of participation:**

Registration will only be considered final upon confirmation by the ESDC Secretariat.

**Location:**

Hellenic Army War College (HAWC), “Ntalipi” Military Camp, Konstantinou Karamanli 13 Str. Kalamaria, Thessaloniki, Greece.

**Transportation:**

Transportation to and from Thessaloniki Airport may be arranged upon early request and subject to availability. Daily transportation between Thessaloniki city centre and the HAWC premises will be provided.

**Official dinner:**

An official dinner (hosted) will take place on Thursday, 8 October.

**Schedule:**

The e-learning phase will commence on 21 September. The residential phase will take place in Thessaloniki from 5 to 9 October 2026 (Monday 09:00 to Friday 15:00).

**Dress code:**

The dress code for all course activities and events is smart/business casual.

**Medical insurance:**

Any medical or emergency-related expenses must be covered by the participants’ own insurance provided by the sending authority or country. The organizers do not provide health or accident insurance coverage.

**Points of Contact:**

**HAWC**

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**CSDA**

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## Annex B

Summarised course topics

Module	Lecture
<b>Module 1 Law of armed conflict</b>	Law of armed conflict - legal challenges in current conflict areas
	Rules of engagement (ROE) and operationalising the law
	International criminal justice; command responsibility and criminal liability; legal challenges
<b>Module 2 OSINT</b>	Information management (IM)
	Role of social media in hybrid strategies
	Information as a means of lawfare
	OSINT in the era of disinformation and fake news
	Workshop on assessing the reliability of OSINT: a validity analysis in military targeting
<b>Module 3 Modern lead- ership</b>	The model leader in the digital era
	AI and Leadership
	Modern Leadership in Practice
	Modern leadership workshop
<b>Workshop</b>	Tabletop exercise on decision-making
<b>Post-action re- view - gradua- tion</b>	Draft conclusions and final presentations from working groups
	Lecturers' feedback and summary







**European Security  
& Defence College**






**"MODERN  
LEADERSHIP IN  
THE CONTEXT  
OF LAW OF  
ARMED  
CONFLICT  
AND OPEN  
SOURCE  
INTELLIGENCE"**

**5 – 9 Oct  
2026  
Thessaloniki,  
Greece**

**HELLENIC  
ARMY WAR  
COLLEGE**

**COURSE AIM**

- The course is designated to support participants in strengthening their leadership capabilities in the complex environment of contemporary armed conflict.
- It will also provide participants with a solid understanding of the fundamental principles of the law of armed conflict (LOAC) and the growing role of Open-Source intelligence (OSINT) in operational and strategic decision-making.
- Beyond the academic dimension, the course seeks to foster critical thinking, professional exchange, and meaningful networking opportunities among peers and experts from across Europe and partner countries.

**CONTACT US**

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Greece  
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Scan for more info from  
the official webpage

### COURSE PARTICIPANTS

- Designed for **up to 40** participants.
- EU Member States and European institutions are **invited to nominate participants** (mid to senior-level rank).
- Participants (military and civilian) from different ministries (foreign affairs, defence and/or interior), as well as, EU institutions and agencies are welcome.
- **Working language is English** and no translation will be provided.

### COURSE STRUCTURE

- e-Learning: 21 Sep – 3 Oct 2026 (ESDC AKUs)
- Residential Phase: **5 – 9 Oct 2026**  
(Thessaloniki, Greece)
- 3 Modules: **Leadership, LoAC, OSINT**

### COURSE INFO

- ❖ The Hellenic Army War College (HAWC) is organizing and conducting since 2023 the “Modern Leadership in the Context of LoAC and OSINT” Course, under the auspices of ESDC and in close cooperation with the Cyprus Security & Defence Academy (CSDA).
- ❖ The next course is scheduled for October 2026 and international participation is open to EU Members and third States.
- ❖ Registration deadline is the 11th of September 2026.

### COURSE TOPICS

- Legal challenges of LoAC
- Operationalizing the law
- International criminal justice
- Information management
- Social media’s role in “hybrid strategies”
- OSINT in the era of disinformation
- Assessing the reliability of OSINT
- Information as a means of lawfare
- Impact of OSINT on decision making
- The model of leader in digital era
- Crisis management; the EU approach
- New age leadership skills
- Soft skills of military commanders
- Decision making game

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **KNOWLEDGE:**
  - Legal framework of CSDP missions and operations according to LoAC.
  - Introductory knowledge of EU structures and mechanisms.
  - The impact of OSINT on operations.
- **SKILLS:**
  - Operating in the international environment.
  - Evaluate the impact of EU actions operations, on capacity-building operations.
  - Be sensitive to the civ-mil coordination challenges.
  - Communicate effectively and exchange information with stakeholders.
- **COMPETENCES:**
  - Dealing with peacekeeping operations as mid-level EU official.
  - Apply a critical view on EU approaches, with the capacity to overcome problems.



**“Modern Leadership in the Context of the LoAC & OSINT” 5 - 9 October 2026, Thessaloniki - Greece**

<b>Day 1 - Monday 5 October 2026</b>			
<b>Module</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Lecture</b>	<b>Lecturer</b>
<b>Module 1</b> <b>Law of Armed Conflict</b>	08:15 - 09:00	Participants registration - Welcome coffee	
	09:00 - 10:00	Course Family Photo	
		Commandant's welcome	Dimitrios Xogiannis Brigadier General
		Opening message from the Consul of Cyprus (TBD)	POLYKARPOU Konstantinos
		ESDC Presentation	Maria PENEDOS ESDC Training Manager
		Course Overview - Hellenic Army War College (HAWC) - Cyprus Security and Defense Academy (CSDA)	Course Director
	10:00 - 10:20	Coffee Break	
	10:20 - 12:00	International law of conflict - legal challenges in current conflict areas	Dr. Marios EFTHYMIOPOULOS Assoc. Professor of International Security & Strategy
	12:00 - 12:20	Coffee Break	
	12:20 - 14:00	Operationalizing the law - Command responsibility and criminal liability - Legal challenges	Dr. Vasilios ZALIDIS University of Macedonia



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	14:00 - 14:10	Day 1 activities conclusion and Day 2 look-ahead	Course Director
	14:10 - 15:00	Ice-Break Event	
<b>Day 2 - Tuesday 6 October 2026</b>			
Module	Hours	Lecture	Lecturer
<b>Module 2 OSINT</b>	09:00 - 09:15	Arrival and welcome coffee	
	09:15 - 11:05	Introduction to OSINT Principles/Sources OSINT by Level of Command	Nikolaos PAPACHRISTOPOULOS Lt. Colonel/OSINT Expert
	11:00 - 11:20	Coffee break	
	11:20 - 13:20	OSINT Methodology/Techniques	
	13:20 - 13:40	Coffee break	



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	13:40 - 14:45	Information as means of lawfare	Panagiotis VASILEIADIS Captain/NRDC-GR/LEGAD Directorate
	14:45-15:00	Day 2 activities conclusion and day 3 look-ahead	
<b>Day 3 - Wednesday 7 October 2026</b>			
Module	Hours	Lecture	Lecturer
<b>Module 3 Modern Leadership</b>	09:00 - 09:15	Arrival and Welcome coffee	
	09:15 - 11:00	Modern Leadership Theories	Dr. Panagiotis GKOREZIS Aristotle University
	11:00 - 11:20	Coffee Break	
	11:20 - 13:20	Introduction to Neuro-Leadership (Theory & Workshop)	Dimitrios TOLIS Human Asset CEO
	13:20 - 13:40	Coffee break	



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	13:40 - 14:45	Leader as a Trainer and Coach (Workshop)	
	14:45 - 15:00	Day 3 activities conclusion and Day 4 look-ahead	
<b>Day 4 - Thursday 8 October 2026</b>			
Module	Hours	Lecture	Lecturer
<b>Syndicates’ Workshop</b>	09:00 - 09:15	Arrival and welcome coffee	
	09:15 - 09:40	Decision-making game in-brief	Dr. Vasilios ZALIDIS Cpt Panagiotis VASILEIADIS
	09:40 - 13:45	Top-table exercise on decision-making game (Syndicate work on given incidents, with coffee break intervals)	
	13:45 - 14:45	Leadership Challenges in an EU Mission	
	14:45 - 15:00	Day 4 activities conclusion and Day 5 look-ahead	
	20:00 - 22:00	Farewell Dinner at Thessaloniki Officers’ Club	
<b>Day 5 - Friday 9 October 2026</b>			
<b>Action Review - Gradua-</b>	08:00 - 08:15	Arrival and Welcome coffee	
	08:15 - 10:40	Syndicates’ Presentations with Lecturers’ feedback	Dr. Vasilios ZALIDIS Cpt. Panagiotis VASILEIADIS



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	10:40 - 10:55	Coffee break	
	10:55 - 11:45	Modern Leadership in Practice	Bart LAURENT B. Gen (ret)/EU CRC Director
	11:45 - 12:10	Closing Remarks	
	12:10 - 12:40	Graduation Ceremony	