

INVITATION FOR APPLICATIONS - Training Activity Number 25-26/21/1

A Comprehensive Approach to Gender in Operations

23-27 February 2026

Jable Castle, Loka pri Mengšu, Slovenia

Slovenia's interministerial Peace Operations Training Centre (POTC), supported by the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, and Ministry of Interior, under the aegis of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC), has the pleasure of inviting you to the ESDC Training Activity "**A Comprehensive Approach to Gender in Operations**", taking place in **Loka pri Mengšu, Slovenia** from 23 to 27 February 2026.

This training aims to increase operational effectiveness by equipping participants with the knowledge and skills to effectively operationalise a gender perspective in CSDP, as well as in international missions and operations, in line with the provisions of the EU's Strategic Compass, the Civilian CSDP Compact, and the Training Requirements Analysis on Gender Equality for Civilian CSDP.

The training activity consists of an e-learning module as well as a residential 5-day training activity, and constitutes a critical contribution to mainstreaming gender in CSDP missions and operations.

The ESDC and POTC are committed to ensuring an inclusive, gender-sensitive, anti-racist, and anti-discriminatory learning environment. Only in an inclusive environment can all people, and hence the ESDC and its partners, thrive and realise their true potential. The ESDC therefore particularly encourages applications from candidates who are likely to be under-represented in the training activity.

We invite you to nominate participants for the "**A Comprehensive Approach to Gender in Operations**" **training activity**, in order to successfully build a network of cross-cultural competent (civilian, police, diplomatic and military) personnel from Member States, EU institutions, bodies, and agencies, capable of participating in CSDP missions and operations.

Signature



Fergal O' Regan

Head of the

European Security and Defence College

Signature



Samo Selimović

POTC Coordinator

Annex

Annex I: Administrative Information

Annex II: Draft programme

Annex I: Administrative information (25-26/21/1)

This training activity will be delivered by the Peace Operations Training Centre (POTC) under the aegis of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC).

Application procedure

Applications are to be filed via the ESDC secure internet system ENLIST, by designated nominators, under <https://esdc.europa.eu/enlist/login> no later than **9 January 2026**. A list with relevant ENLIST nominators can be retrieved from the ESDC website at https://www.esdc.europa.eu/training-and-education/list-nominators_en. Registration will not be final until confirmed by the ESDC Secretariat and upon completion of the requested personal data in ENLIST by the confirmed participants.

Training Activity Description

The **5-day training programme** was developed based on the ESDC's Activity Number 21 curriculum titled "[A Comprehensive Approach to Gender in Operations](#)" and on POTC's training activity titled "Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming in Peace Operations and Missions".

The primary objective of the training is to enhance operational effectiveness by providing participants with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively incorporate a gender perspective in CSDP and international missions and operations.

Aim of the Training Activity

The outcomes of the training activity can be separated into three different categories: knowledge outcomes, skills outcomes and competence outcomes as detailed below:

Knowledge outcomes:

- Recognise the relevance of a gender perspective in peace operations;
- Identify challenges and dilemmas facing civilian and military decision-makers in the field by integrating a gender perspective in missions and operations;
- Define the main principles and the aim of the EU Global Strategy, its Integrated Approach to Conflicts and Crises and how this is linked to gender equality;
- Recognise the main international legal framework related to gender equality and Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in fragile areas and those affected by crisis or conflict;
- Identify the basic gender-related concepts and how attitudes and behaviour towards gender equality may impact one's own understanding, analysis and strategic leadership in missions and operations;
- Identify distinct and diverse security needs and perspectives of the local population (men, women, boys and girls) in an environment which is fragile or affected by crisis or conflict as an essential element of improving the overall security situation;
- Identify challenges and dilemmas with regard to planning for missions and operations, the protection of civilians, and sexual and gender-based violence, and what is required to prevent and address these matters from a gender perspective.

Skills outcomes:

- Analyse the different impacts of conflicts on men, women, boys and girls and identify opportunities for women to participate meaningfully and equally in the prevention of conflict, crisis management, conflict resolution and reconstruction, and the challenges preventing them from doing so;

- Demonstrate how to apply a gender perspective in a mission/operation context;
- Summarise the existing legal frameworks, policies and operational guidelines in the field;
- Identify entry points and arguments for gender equality, gender analysis and how to integrate a gender perspective in the mission or operation plan;
- Identify the security and safety needs and perspectives of the people in the host country, including men, women, boys and girls, linked to contexts which are fragile or affected by crisis or conflict;
- Recognise how to translate efforts towards the protection of civilians (PoC) and preventive measures against sexual violence into mission mandates and into leadership and decisive action;
- Summarise how UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 and related UNSC resolutions are part of the operational and mission mandates of the EU/CSDP, and of other international organisations such as the UN, AU, OSCE and NATO.

Competence outcomes:

- Assess how gender-related attitudes and behaviour, including unconscious bias, may impact one's own understanding, analysis and strategic leadership in missions and operations;
- Assess how to address the gender-specific security needs and perspectives of the local population in a mission area;
- Demonstrate the requirements to address gender aspects in missions and operations and stabilisation action;
- Apply relevant EU policy as part of the analysis, planning procedures and conduct of missions and operations.

Target Audience

Up to 20 civilian experts, police and military personnel, deployed or planning to be deployed to international missions or operations.

Participants should be middle management military officials, civilians, including police, and diplomats from EU Member States and EU institutions and relevant agencies who are assigned to or interested in participating in (future) CSDP, NATO, OSCE or UN missions or operations, or who are to be assigned to a position in a fragile state. The training activity is open to third countries.

Seats and Nominations

The total number of participants is limited to 20 persons.

Language of the Training

The working language of the training will be English, and no translation services will be provided. We expect all participants to be able to communicate in English fluently.

Residential Part of the Training

The residential part of the training will take place at Jable Castle in Loka pri Mengšu, near Ljubljana, Slovenia, from 23 to 27 February 2026, with travel expected on 22 February and 27 or 28 February (in case no eligible travel connections are available on the 27th).

E-learning Part of the Training

The training will be preceded by a mandatory e-Learning phase, set to start **on 16 January 2026** on the ESDC eLearning platform ILIAS, which must be finalised before the residential phase in Loka pri Mengšu, Slovenia, on Monday, 23 February 2026.

Attendance

Participants' attendance is mandatory on all days during the training (**5 full days** at Jable Castle with approximately **8 to 9 hours of programme per day**). On the last day, a certificate will be awarded to participants who have completed the full training, including the e-Learning modules.

Participants must also complete the **mandatory e-learning modules** prior to arriving in Slovenia. The online self-paced module takes up to 8 hours to complete, and the ESDC training manager will check progress on the ILIAS platform.

Costs and Financial Support

Attendance is free of charge for all selected participants (no tuition fee).

Sending authorities need to cover all costs for their participants' travel and accommodation (including breakfast) during the residential part of the training activity.

During the training, POTC will cover the costs for:

- **daily local transport (bus)** between the hotel and the training venue;
- **all costs** connected with attending any social/cultural event;
- **lunch, beverages and other refreshments** provided during the training at Jable Castle.

POTC will not pay per diems or any other allowances. POTC is not liable for any medical/healthcare costs that participants may incur in Slovenia. The POTC will also not be liable for any costs resulting from an unsuccessful visa application.

Accommodation and Local Transport

POTC will provide **organisational support to all selected participants travelling to Slovenia**. Organisational support includes advice on local accommodation* (including pre-booking to secure a lower rate) and travel to Slovenia. Participants who will need to apply for a visa will receive an official confirmation letter confirming their selection (to facilitate visa applications). Participants who do not wish to stay in the proposed accommodation are welcome to organise their own accommodation but should be aware that the daily transport between Ljubljana and the training venue (Jable Castle) will be to and from the designated hotel only.

***more information will be shared upon confirmation**

Dress Code

We recommend business casual attire for civilian participants and service uniform for uniformed personnel.

Entry into Slovenia

Slovenia is a member of the European Union and the Schengen Area, so EU citizens (and citizens from other countries with which Slovenia has bilateral agreements) do not need a visa to enter the country; please see the official entry conditions for your country at this address: <https://www.gov.si/en/topics/entry-and-residence/#e55033>. It is the sole responsibility of the participant to ensure the visa is requested and processed in time to secure a valid visa for the training activity.

Liabilities and (Health) Insurance

In case of medical emergencies, the costs should be covered by the participant's medical insurance provided by the sending country / organisations. The organiser does not provide health or accident insurances for participants taking part in the training.

EU citizens should have an EHIC card (European Health Insurance Card) that is valid for the entire duration of their stay in Slovenia. More information on the EHIC card can be found here: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=559&langId=en>. Third-country nationals should have full health insurance to cover their entire stay in Slovenia. The Slovenian visa application procedure requires applicants to have proof of health insurance covering costs of at least € 30 000.00 for the duration of their stay.

Application Procedure

Qualified candidates who match the above description are asked **to complete the online application form and submit it by 9 January 2026**.

All submissions will be reviewed by the POTC and ESDC. **The selected participants will be notified within 7 days following the application deadline**. In their final selection of participants, the training admission board will seek to ensure a balance of genders, nationalities and professional backgrounds.

Inclusivity

ESDC strives to create a gender-sensitive and inclusive environment in all its courses, training activities and day-to-day work. Only in an inclusive environment can all people, and therefore the ESDC and its partners, reach their true potential. We do not and will not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, religion, gender, gender expression, age, national origin, disability, marital status or sexual orientation in any of our activities or operations. The ESDC and the training institutions will not tolerate any conduct that violates these values.

Registration is not final until confirmed by the ESDC Secretariat. Please do not book flights and accommodation before receiving the confirmatory message and logistical recommendations.

Further Information

More information regarding POTC and its training activities can be found on [the POTC website](#). Training will be carried out under the supervision and support of the ESDC, using the approved ESDC Curriculum for A Comprehensive Approach to Gender in Operations, which can be accessed on the [ESDC website here](#). Additional information, such as the training programme, logistical directions, and other relevant details, will be provided to confirmed participants in due time.

Points of Contact

POTC (Slovenia) – **Dimitrij Pahor**, Course Director – email: dimitrij.pahor@cep.si

ESDC – **Fernando Angelo**, Training Manager – email: fernando.angelo@eeas.europa.eu

Annex II: Draft Programme

A Comprehensive Approach to Gender in Operations
23-27 February 2026

Jable Castle, Loka pri Mengšu
Slovenia

DRAFT TRAINING PROGRAMME OUTLINE
25-26/21/1

Monday – February 23

Time	Topic	Objectives	Method
8.30 – 9.00	Arrival & Coffee		
9.00 – 10.15	Welcome and Introduction to the Training Let's Meet Each Other	• to know POTC • to know ESDC • to understand the main objectives of the training • ground rules • to know each other • to set the informal tone of the training	Address Icebreaker Activity
10.15 – 10.30	Coffee Break		
10.30 – 12.00	Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming Introduction	• to understand the basic gender terminology • to understand why gender equality and gender mainstreaming are important	Presentation Discussion
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch		
13.00 – 14.30	Normative Framework = the UN Umbrella - Why Did It All Start	• to know the UN 1325 and other relevant documents • to understand prevention, protection, participation in WPS	Presentation Discussion
18:00 – 20:00	SOCIAL EVENT		

Tuesday – February 24

Time	Topic	Objectives	Method
9.00 – 9.15	Arrival & Coffee		
9.15 – 10.45	Gender Roles & Power Structures: Understanding the Local Context PART I.	- to familiarise with gender norms, roles and power structures that underpin gender inequality - to understand gender norms as social constructs that can be changed or reinforced by the environment - familiarise with gender norms and roles in various crisis contexts - to be able to detect gender-based violence	Presentation Discussion Experience sharing
10.45 – 11.00	Coffee Break		
11.00 – 12.15	Gender Roles & Power Structures: Understanding the Local Context PART II.	- to familiarise with gender norms, roles and power structures that underpin gender inequality - to understand gender norms as social constructs that can be changed or reinforced by the environment - familiarise with gender norms and roles in various crisis contexts - to be able to detect gender-based violence	Presentation Discussion Experience sharing
12.15 – 13.15	Lunch Break		
13.15 – 14.30	Different Impact of Conflict on Women and Girls, Men and Boys PART I.	- to be aware of the different vulnerabilities, needs, interests of men, women, boys, girls, and sexual minorities in conflict - to be aware of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)	Presentation Discussion Experience sharing
14.30 – 14.45	Coffee Break		
14.45 – 16.00	Different Impact of Conflict on Women and Girls, Men and Boys PART II.	- to be aware of the different vulnerabilities, needs, interests of men, women, boys, girls, and sexual minorities in conflict - to be aware of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)	Presentation Discussion Experience sharing

Wednesday – February 25

Time	Topic	Objectives	Method
9.00 – 9.15	Arrival & Coffee		
9.15 – 10.30	Gender Mainstreaming in UN International Missions and Operations PART I.	- to be aware of the Code of Conduct and expectations from mission members - to know how gender mainstreaming can be translated into the mission environment - to be aware of the challenges and good practices	Presentation Discussion Experience Sharing
10.30 – 10.45	Coffee Break		
10.45 – 12:00	Gender Mainstreaming in UN International Missions and Operations PART II.	- to be aware of the Code of Conduct and expectations from mission members - to know how gender mainstreaming can be translated into the mission environment - to be aware of the challenges and good practices	Discussion Group Work Experience Sharing
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch		
13.00 – 14.15	Conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence (CRSV) and protection of civilians (PoC)	- to get to know the concepts of protection of civilians (PoC), conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence (CRSV), sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment - to understand CRSV in relation to the wider continuum of gender-based violence (GBV) - to get acquainted with trafficking in human beings	Presentation Discussion
14.15 – 14.30	Coffee Break		
14.30 – 15.45	Gender Dimensions in the Climate-Security Nexus	- to understand how climate and environmental change intersects with gender, conflict and security - to identify entry points to address the gender, climate and conflict/security nexus	Presentation Discussion

Thursday – February 26

Time	Topic	Objectives	Method
9.00 – 9.15	Arrival & Coffee		
9.15 – 10.30	Gender Mainstreaming in the EU CSDP Missions and Other International Missions and Operations	- to understand the relevant EU documents with a focus - on CSDP missions - to know what gender mainstreaming translates to in the CSDP mission environment	Presentation Group discussion
10.30 – 10.45	Coffee Break		
10.45 – 12:00	Gender Mainstreaming in the EU CSDP Missions and Other International Missions and Operations	- to understand the relevant EU documents with a focus - on CSDP missions - to know how gender mainstreaming can be translated into the CSDP mission environment	Presentation Group discussion
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch		
13.00 – 14.15	Handling Resistance and Individual Contribution to Gender Mainstreaming PART I.	- to know gender mainstreaming strategies for women - to know mainstreaming strategies for men - to use non-discriminatory language - to show leadership on gender mainstreaming	Presentation Group Work Discussion
14.15 – 14.30	Coffee Break		
14.30 – 15.45	Handling Resistance and Individual Contribution to Gender Mainstreaming PART II.	- to know gender mainstreaming strategies for women - to know mainstreaming strategies for men - to use non-discriminatory language - to show leadership on gender mainstreaming	Presentation Group Work Discussion

Friday – February 27

Time	Topic	Objectives	Method
9.00 – 9.15	Arrival & Coffee		
9.15 – 10.45	Experiences from International Missions and Operations	- to gain insight of gender topics in practice: views from the field - to be aware of the challenges, good practices, tools	Experience sharing Discussion
9.30 – 9.45	Coffee Break		
9.45 – 11.15	Gender Mainstreaming Closing Session	- to review where participants can apply the gender perspective in their work environment - to address gender issues not addressed during the training	Group work Discussion
11.15 – 12.00	Training Evaluation	to gain feedback on usefulness and reception of addressed topics	Evaluation
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch		
13:00 – 13.20	Closing Remarks & Certificate Ceremony	to award the participants that successfully concluded the training with a certificate	Facilitated Ceremony