

European Intelligence Academy: a Greek Approach

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Intelligence Studies, as a distinct field, is a recent development going back to the first tentative steps of the 1950's as the Cold War took hold of superpower strategies. Nowadays, intelligence is no longer the sole domain of the state's security apparatus. Research think-tanks, universities, international organizations, law enforcement agencies, and private security companies deal with the fluidity and complexity of intelligence and security threats.

The increasing development of research in intelligence studies has cultivated widespread awareness of the need to strengthen the collaboration between academia and the intelligence community. (1)

On November 19, 2018, the European Union foreign and defense ministers approved the project of a joint intelligence training school (Joint European Union Intelligence School – JEIS), led by Greece with Cyprus. This project is part of a list of 17 joint projects signed within the PESCO framework. (2) The purpose of the Joint European Union Intelligence School – which would be based in Cyprus – is to “provide education and training in intelligence disciplines and other specific fields to European Union member states intelligence personnel in cooperation with national agencies and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). (3)

In Greece (2013), the Research Institute for European and American Studies (**RIEAS**) founded **the European Intelligence Academy (EIA)** – a specialized network of academia and former practitioners – in order to promote intelligence studies from an academic point of view; design and introduce intelligence courses for decision-makers in the public and private sector; and establish a database of international intelligence literature. (4)

In 2017, **French President Macron** in his speech on Europe at La Sorbonne University announced the **idea of a “European Intelligence Academy” (EIA)** as a key policy initiative since France did not step to cooperate with Greece and Cyprus in the PESCO project.

The Intelligence College in Europe (ICE) was launched on 5th March 2019 in **Paris, France**. **ICE** brings together 23 member states, which signed a letter of intent on 26th February 2020 in Zagreb, Croatia. **ICE** is a platform for reflection and outreach. Intelligence communities, academia, European decision-makers, citizens, and executives work together in order to raise awareness about intelligence-related challenges and issues via publications and the implementation of an academic program dedicated to intelligence professionals. (5)

Intelligence is a national prerogative above all, and the sharing of information is not always the most effective way to counter-threats. As John M Nomikos, RIEAS director, points out, “trust is far more important than institutions for intelligence sharing” and Lelia Rousselet, RIEAS senior analyst, states “a joint intelligence school to share best training practices will definitely assist to create a more inclusive intelligence community at the European level and could be seen as a first step towards a more operational intelligence cooperation. A common intelligence culture would certainly be beneficial for European security.” (6)

Today’s realities – political, social, medical (Covid 19), international, economic – impose limitations upon governments never seen before in democratic societies. Therefore, academic curricula for intelligence studies should put special emphasis on how to develop policy “mindsets.”

As Prof Anestis Symeonides, RIEAS academic advisor, points out, “intelligence studies fill the vital need for trained, capable individuals ready to take up the challenge of observing, understanding and explaining an increasingly chaotic and dangerous international environment. Building an “intelligence culture” is the ultimate goal. It is also important that governments, academic institutions, research institutes, dedicated international bodies and individual scholars continue to build collaborative ventures.” (7)

In the end, understanding intelligence and security enable European citizens to make enlightened judgement in the field. The development of European networks (8) has paved the way for future transnational cooperation. Greece faces major threats (illicit networks, drugs and trafficking smuggling, organized crime, and Turkey’s hostility).

As a result, Greece must restructure its intelligence community. It must promote intelligence education and encourage synergies of the public and private sectors. Such initiatives will enhance and promote a stable and secure for the whole of Greek society.

References:

- 1) “Intelligence Studies in Greece: A Light at the End of the Tunnel?”
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- 2) The Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) in the areas of security and defense policy was established by a Council decision on 11 December 2017, with 25 European Union member states. It offers a legal framework to jointly plan, develop and invest in shared capability projects, and enhance the operational readiness and continuation of armed forces.
- 3) Leila Rousselet, “ A European Intelligence School led by Greece and Cyprus”

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- 4) Look at European Intelligence Academy (EIA)
Link: <http://www.euintelligenceacademy.eu>
- 5) Look at Intelligence College of Europe (ICE)
Link: <https://www.intelligence-college-europe.org>
- 6) Ibid, Leila Rousselet, "A European Intelligence School led by Greece and Cyprus."
- 7) Anestis Symeonides, "National Security and Intelligence Studies"
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- 8) Wladyslaw Bulhak and Thomas Wegner Friis, "Shaping the European School of Intelligence Studies", The International Journal of Intelligence, Security, and Public Affairs, Vol. 22, Issue 3, 2020, pp: 139-158.