



EU HYBRID EXERCISE 2018

STRENGTHENING EUROPEAN CRISIS RESPONSE

The European Union is conducting a comprehensive and combined crisis management exercise, from **5 – 23 November 2018**, composed of a CSDP planning exercise and an 'event-driven' exercise. The focus of this exercise will be the management of a fast-paced transboundary crisis of a 'hybrid' nature, with internal and external dimensions.

The exercise is called "EU HEX-ML 18 (PACE)" referring to its three major features. The first dimension of the exercise is the simulation of a hybrid threat scenario affecting the EU and its Member States (**H**ybrid **E**xercise). Second, a **multi-layered** planning exercise prepares a CSDP action from the political to the operations level. Lastly, it will be conducted in parallel with a NATO staff command post exercise to further develop interaction between both organisations in situational awareness, cyber, crisis response and strategic communication in crisis situations (**P**arallel **A**nd **C**oordinated **E**xercise). This follows an exercise with a similar set-up in 2017.

WHAT IS THE EU HEX-ML 18 (PACE) EXERCISE ABOUT?



The aim of the exercise is to improve and enhance, in a safe-to-fail environment, the EU's ability to respond to a complex crisis of a hybrid nature with an internal and an external dimension, as well as to further develop its interaction with NATO in situational awareness, cyber, crisis response and strategic communication in crisis situations.

WHAT ARE HYBRID THREATS AND HOW DOES THE EU REACT TO THEM?



Hybrid threats combine conventional and unconventional, military and non-military activities that can be employed by state or non-state actors to achieve specific political objective and have become more frequent in recent years.



The EU is building up its capacity to respond to them, as reflected in the implementation plan of the EU Global Strategy in the areas of security and defence. A number of tools and mechanisms are in place to react to these threats, such as a centralised analytical capability, and crisis response mechanisms both at the EU and EU Member States level, in order to coordinate responses and identify possible gaps across all policy areas.

AREAS OF THE EXERCISE

OVERALL, THE EXERCISE WILL FOCUS ON 4 KEY AREAS:



1. Situational awareness: Quickly recognising when a hybrid campaign is targeting the EU



2. Cyber: Countering cyber threats at EU level



3. Crisis Response: Fast and appropriate consequence management



4. Stratcom: Timely and coordinated communication

Following the exercise, there will be a comprehensive evaluation where lessons will be identified. This process is meant to implement real-world improvements in the EU's crisis response mechanisms and arrangements.