Understanding the Russian Military Today

CSIS EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

CSIS CENTER FOR STRATEGIC & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

RUSSIA AND EURASIA PROGRAM  EUROPE PROGRAM  INTERNATIONAL SECURITY PROGRAM
Russia is back. Moscow’s military intervention in Georgia in 2008, annexation of Crimea and intervention in Eastern Ukraine, intervention in Syria, deployment of military contractors and advisors in Venezuela, Africa, and elsewhere, as well as newly developed hypersonic weapons and growing military cooperation with China have all led Western analysts to pay urgent and renewed attention to the modernization of the Russian armed forces.

Understanding the Russian Military Today is a five-day, professional development program that explores the elements of Russian military power, including their composition and future prospects, social and historical foundations, doctrine, and current operations. Participants will build on classroom knowledge with hands-on analytical training and exercises. Offered by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, D.C., the course is led by defense and security experts from CSIS, other think tanks, and the academic community. All course information will be presented in an educational, bipartisan, and analytic manner, consistent with CSIS’s mission.

Course Details

DATES: July 20-24, 2020

LOCATION: CSIS Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

COST: Free to successful applicants. Participants are responsible for covering their own travel and lodging.*


QUESTIONS: Contact Roksana Gabidullina at rgabidullina@csis.org or 202-775-3162

NOTE: This program is planned as an on-site event. If COVID-19 health conditions or travel restrictions preclude an on-site gathering, this course will be taught online.

*If the program is conducted on-site, a limited amount of financial support will be available for participants who require assistance covering travel and lodging expenses. Requests for support should be included in the application and will be examined on a case-by-case basis.
Participants will engage in a series of seminars, site visits, and interactive exercises throughout the course of this program. To complete the course, each participant will also be required to write a short independent research paper on a topic of their choosing. The curriculum will cover four major themes:

1. Russian society, strategy, and history
2. Elements of Russian military power
3. Recent uses of Russian military power
4. Resources behind Russian military power: budgets and industry

**SEMINARS**

**The Foundations of Russian Power**
A foundational overview of the current status of and issues related to Russian economics, demographics, and politics.

**Russian Military Strategy in the 21st Century**
An examination of Russia's threat perception and the role of deterrence; restoring great power status; Russia's approach to the post-Soviet strategic environment; defense of the homeland; and their regional and global ambitions.

**The Russian Military Since 1917**
The creation of the Red Army; the trauma and triumph in The Great Patriotic War; their experience as a superpower; collapse in the 1990s; and revival in the 2000s-2010s.

**U.S. and NATO Responses to Russia**
U.S./NATO posture pre- and post-Crimea; U.S./NATO view of the Russian military challenge; U.S./NATO actions and Russian reactions.

**The Structure of Military Forces**
Macro decisions in building a military structure. Examining tradeoffs between ground/air/maritime/homeland; tradeoffs between readiness/force structure/modernization; and tradeoffs between active/reserve, conscript/volunteer; as well as global versus regional capabilities.

**The Russian Army**
Size and current structure; recent changes; doctrinal foundations; and prospects for the future.

**The Russian Navy**
Size and current structure; recent changes; doctrinal foundations; and prospects for the future.

**The Russian Air Force**
Size and current structure; recent changes; doctrinal foundations; and prospects for the future.

**Russian Nuclear Forces and Arms Control**
Size and current structure; recent changes; modernization plans; doctrinal foundations; bilateral and multilateral negotiation processes; impact of arms control and prospects for future agreement.

**Russian Paramilitary and Internal Security Forces**
Size and current structure; new organizations and recent changes; purpose and doctrinal foundations; and prospects for the future.

**Wagner Group and other Private Military Contractors**
Creation of a new industry, who and why; size and current structure; current operations; linkage to global industry; and prospects for future use – is this a permanent element of Russian force structure?

**Russian Disinformation Campaigns and Cyber Attacks**
Purpose, goals, and links to military operations; level of sophistication; target audiences; organizations involved; and future prospects.

**Russian Intervention in Syria**
Purpose and goals; forces involved; tactics and operations; and level of success.

**Russian Intervention in Ukraine**
Purpose and goals; forces involved; tactics and operations; fusion of regular and irregular operations; and measuring level of success.

**Russian Military on the World Stage**
Purpose and goals; countries involved; type and level of involvement; cooperation and coordination with China; and future prospects.

**Russian Military Exercises and Partner Militaries**
Type, purpose, and scale of military exercises; training cycles; trends over time; motivation of partner militaries to participate.

**The Russian Military Budget**
How much do they spend and where does it go? Market exchange rates v. purchasing power parity; drivers of the military budget; recent budget trends.

**The Russian Defense Industry**
Restructuring after the Cold War; export markets and arms sales as a tool of Russian influence; current capabilities and challenges.
EXERCISES
The first exercise will examine the future of air and maritime dynamics in the Arctic and consider implications for U.S. national security.

A capstone exercise at the end of the course will allow teams of participants to use their own expertise and the knowledge gained in the program to build their own version of the Russian military. Each team will develop a Russian military strategy and then, using a CSIS-developed budget tool, specify inputs consistent with that strategy to calculate a budget and personnel requirements.

In addition to the exercises, the program will include a visit to Capitol Hill to receive a congressional perspective on Russian military actions and the U.S. response.

INDEPENDENT STUDY
After completing the week-long curriculum, participants will be required to write a short paper (5-7 pages) on a topic of their choosing. CSIS experts will lay out parameters and help participants refine their topics during the program. A selection of these papers will then be published in a volume on the CSIS website and will contribute to on-going discussions about the Russian military.

Eligibility
Twenty to twenty-four participants will be selected to join this course. Applicants must:

1. Be a current employee of the U.S. Department of Defense, or currently affiliated with an academic institution or think tank.
2. Have demonstrated familiarity researching or working on Russia-related issues, but do not need to be Russian military experts or have Russian language skills.

How to Apply
To apply, please submit a resume or CV (Curriculum Vitae) and a brief statement of interest (one page or less) to Roksana Gabidullina, coordinator for the CSIS Russia and Eurasia Program, at rgabidullina@csis.org. The statement of interest should include a short description (one paragraph) of the proposed research topic on the Russian military that the participant intends to write about as part of this program. Applications due no later than June 1.

About CSIS
The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) is a bipartisan, nonprofit policy research organization dedicated to advancing practical ideas to address the world’s greatest challenges. Ranked the number one think tank in the United States by the University of Pennsylvania’s annual think tank report, CSIS is one of the preeminent international policy institutions focused on defense and security, regional stability, and transnational challenges ranging from energy and climate to global development and economic integration.

Understanding the Russian Military Today is a joint effort by three CSIS programs: the Russia and Eurasia Program, the Europe Program, and the International Security Program. Further information on these programs is available at the following links:

https://www.csis.org/programs/russia-and-eurasia-program
https://www.csis.org/programs/europe-program
https://www.csis.org/programs/international-security-program

This program is funded by the Russia Strategic Initiative U.S. European Command.
Stuttgart, Germany
https://community.apan.org/wg/rsi/

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