

The Advisory Board for Defence Information (ABDI)

ACTION PLAN 2022

Approved by the Plenum on 17 March 2022.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Advisory Board for Defence Information (ABDI) acts as a parliamentary forum that organises and promotes dialogue on security policy, national defence and preparedness for crisis situations and emergencies among NGOs, decision-makers, authorities, the media and experts. The ABDI monitors general preparedness for crisis situations and emergencies in society and studies the related needs with a special focus on communications, while helping NGOs and the media to develop their expertise and competences in security policy, national defence and preparedness. The ABDI commissions and publishes surveys on the views of citizens in areas of security policy, national defence and crisis awareness and assists the authorities in preparing to conduct research on crisis situations and emergencies. It is also active in Nordic cooperation especially with Sweden and Norway.

By bringing together a broad spectrum of actors, the ABDI sees its role and activities as a security policy forum as highly important. To serve as the basis for its seminars, education and training, the ABDI is active in following the current discussion on security policy and crisis communications.

Appointed by the Government on 22 August 2019, the present Advisory Board for Defence Information started its work on 1 September 2019 and will continue until the term of the next Advisory Board for Defence Information starts after the next parliamentary elections. The planning board is chaired by Communications Manager *Harri Järvinen* (SDP) and vice-chaired by student *Asseri Kinnunen* (Finns Party) and Member of Parliament *Sofia Vikman* (Coalition Party).

Besides the Work Branch, the ABDI consists of the Organisation Branch, Education Branch, Media Branch and Research Branch.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic will have an impact on the work of the ABDI also in 2022, and the coronavirus situation and the potentially rapidly changing situation and its effects on meetings, for example, will be taken into account.

RESEARCH

Based on a decree, the task of the ABDI is to commission and publish surveys regarding public opinions on security policy and national defence and the psychological crisis resilience of the citizens. The ABDI will commission a survey in 2022, too.

It follows opinion polls carried out in Sweden, Norway and Finland in the areas of security and defence policy and national defence. A further goal is to build closer cooperation with Sweden and Norway.

SEMINARS

The ABDI organises thematic seminars meant for decision-makers and representatives of the media, civil society organisations and administration to provide background information about current topics, in particular in the areas of security policy, national defence and preparedness for crises.

Later this spring, on 23 May, the ABDI is planning to organise a seminar for journalists and an open public event in Pori. A second seminar for journalists is to be held in Helsinki by the end of this year.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The ABDI will continue to cooperate with the organisers of the national defence courses and it will propose media representatives and researchers who could be invited to attend. The ABDI's Chair is a full member on the Advisory Board for National Defence Education (MONK) while the Secretary General is a deputy member.

To organise basic courses in communications, the ABDI will continue to cooperate with the Defence Command's Public Information Division. A basic course is organised once a year; the next one is likely to take place in the autumn. The Defence Command is in charge of this training while the ABDI proposes participants who have not completed conscript training. The reservists taking part in a course are recruited by the Defence Command, as considered necessary.

The ABDI's Work Branch plans to carry out a visit to familiarise with an activity in autumn 2022.

NORDIC COOPERATION

The ABDI continues to cooperate closely especially with the Folk och Försvar organisations in Sweden and Norway.

The next Nordic conference will be held in Helsinki on 4 to 6 May 2022, if the pandemic situation so permits. A meeting to prepare for the Nordic conference in 2023 will be organised in Oslo next autumn, if possible.

FINANCES

The appropriation allocated for 2022 is EUR 127 000. The Work Branch decides on the allocation of the appropriation between different functions.

OFFICE OF THE ABDI

The office of the Advisory Board for Defence Information is at the Ministry of Defence, Eteläinen Makasiinikatu 8, Helsinki, second floor. They have worked in connection with the Media and Communications Units since 2017.

MSocSc *Heli Santala* acts as Secretary General while MPolSc *Markus Kinkku* acts as General Secretary in the ABDI.

Payment transactions are managed by Communications Secretary *Jaana Riihimaa*.