IPD | Institute for Peace and Dialogue

Trust, Act & Achieve

School of Peacebuilding, Conflict Transformation, Mediation, Security, Intercultural Dialogue, Leadership & Human Rights

16ᵗʰ International Summer Academy: 4 - 14 August, 2026

Basel, Switzerland

Trainers & Topics

IPD Academic Programs: Theory - Practice - Research - Exchange - Networking - Contribute

I LECTURER: Mr. Joe Gerada Class Days: 5 & 6 August, 2026

Joe Gerada holds a Master degree in Mediation from IUKB (Suisse), is a fellow of the Chartered Institute for People Management UK and a warranted Social Worker. He is the former President of the Social Cohesion Committee of the Council of Europe. He coordinated various groups at the Council of Europe to develop recommendations for the Committee of Ministers including a report on the transition to a carbon neutral economy and its implications to social policy. He held senior positions in several public institutions in Malta, as well as, in private and voluntary organizations. He is currently the Chairperson of the Employment Tribunal in the Maltese judicial system and Chairperson of the Children's Review Board for children in Care in Malta. Joe Gerada sits on several boards of directors and consults for private organizations in change management as well as engages in coaching and training for managers.
He lectures on public policy at the Faculty of Economics and Management at the University of Malta

The sessions in these two days of training build on each other and create a momentum of confidence for the participants to deal and manage successfully, challenging situations.
The sessions are meant to enable the participants practice these skills once they are back in their usual environments.

I Class Day Topic

Influencing and Persuading Skills - Gaining the ability to influence and persuade others to your point of view. The participants will be able to make the right choice of words and avoid inadvertent irritators. They shall be able to focus on what is important while putting an argument together in a coherent and logical manner which helps you bring people to what you want. This session shall also include practice exercises.

Conflict resolution - how conflict is built and evaluate whether the personality of the participants tends to avoid conflict or contribute to it. These sessions will help the participants to self-evaluate and while learning about the various elements that create conflict and how to resolve it, gives a better understanding of how each delegate reacts under such conditions. The sessions shall deal with conflict modes the sequences that a conflict may take, the barriers to communication and how to defuse anger as well as the effective use of assertiveness skills. The participants shall engage in practical exercises and learning from videos.

II Class Day Topic

Mediation - learn about what mediation is and how it works and the rules to follow when conducting mediation. The participants shall learn about the concepts of non-adversarial process of mediation which is impartial and honest with the aim of identifying a mutually acceptable solution. The session shall include a videoed mediation session to help the participants watch the skills of mediation in action. Negotiation skills - Learn about the difference between mediation and negotiation and learn about the important elements of successful negotiations. The participants shall learn about how to increase bargaining power and use the cost-value matrix to design your strategy before starting negotiations. The sessions on negotiation shall include videos of negotiation sessions in action. Moreover, the participants shall practice negotiation through practical exercises.
Leadership - the session shall focus entirely on the leadership characteristics of the participants and how these characteristics can help them succeed or hinder them when managing people or situations. Through practical exercises they will identify their strengths and weaknesses and be better prepared to work more effectively with others.

II LECTURER: Peter Aeberhard Class Days: 7 & 8 August, 2026

Peter Aeberhard brings over three decades of experience in strategic leadership, conflict transformation, and organizational consulting across government, international NGOs, and foundations. With expertise in high-level policy development and on-the-ground implementation, Peter has served as a political advisor to the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs, country director for SWISSAID in Tanzania and Niger, and consultant in fragile contexts, including Somalia, Kenya, and the Sahel region.

Core Expertise

• Strategic Planning and Evaluation: A specialist in results-based management, Peter excels at developing measurable frameworks that ensure transparency and drive impactful outcomes. His experience spans complex, multilayered governance structures in diverse cultural and political environments.
• Mediation and Conflict Resolution: Peter is highly skilled in mediation and conflict prevention, with a focus on fostering long-term solutions in conflict-prone regions. His work has included coaching security and civil society leaders in trauma-informed approaches to security reform.
• Systemic Organizational Consulting: Experienced in enhancing organizational performance, Peter has facilitated capacity-building initiatives for senior officials and developed tools for strategic controlling and policy alignment in international and cross-cultural contexts.
• Training and Capacity Building: As a certified mediator and coach, he has led workshops on conflict mediation, leadership, and intercultural dialogue in settings ranging from national conferences to international summer academies.
Peter's recent publications include contributions on trauma as a critical component of security sector governance and reform, highlighting the importance of trauma-informed policing and governance frameworks.

I Class Day Topic: Strategic Leadership

This class focuses on strategic leadership in complex and fragile security environments. Participants examine how leadership decisions are shaped by power dynamics, institutional constraints and uncertainty, drawing on examples from fragile and post-conflict contexts such as the Horn of Africa, the Sahel and Eastern Africa, including state-building, governance reform and security-related coordination challenges.

Methodology

Short analytical inputs, systems-thinking tools, security-aware case studies from fragile and post-conflict contexts, group work and guided reflection.

II Class Day Topic: Strategic Project Management

This class addresses strategic project design and management in complex programmes operating in fragile and transitional security contexts. Participants analyse how strategy is translated into projects involving governance reform, peacebuilding, security-related programming and multi-actor coordination in Sub-Saharan Africa and comparable environments.

Methodology

Framework inputs, applied exercises, project simulations, peer exchange and individual action planning

III LECTURER: Dr. Roxana Andrei Class Days: 10 & 11 August, 2026

Roxana Andrei is an Integrated Researcher and Assistant Professor at the Centre for International Studies of the University Institute in Lisbon (CEI-ISCTE), specialising in hybrid warfare, energy security, and maritime resilience. She provides strategic and analytical expertise to EU institutions and national authorities on the security implications of hybrid and cognitive threats, information warfare, and critical energy infrastructure resilience. Her professional background spans over fifteen years across international organisations and European institutions, including the Council of Europe, the European Defence Agency and OSCE.

Core Expertise
• **Hybrid and Cognitive Warfare Analysis:** A specialist in the evolving spectrum of hybrid threats, Roxana examines how cognitive and narrative warfare shape strategic behaviour, societal resilience, and policy responses across Europe's security architecture.
• **Energy Security and Critical Infrastructure Protection:** She focuses on the protection of energy networks, offshore infrastructure, and subsea systems under hybrid threat conditions.
• **Conflict and Maritime Security:** Roxana's research and policy work bridge security studies and maritime governance, addressing how conflict dynamics and resource competition affect stability in the Baltic, Black Sea, and North Sea regions.
• **Strategic Policy and Capacity Building:** Experienced in translating research into actionable policy, she has trained civil and military professionals on hybrid warfare awareness, resilience planning, and the integration of energy and security strategies in complex operational environments.

I Class Day Topic: "Hybrid Warfare, Cognitive Security, and Narrative Battles"

This class examines hybrid warfare as a multidimensional challenge combining military, cyber, informational, and economic tools to achieve strategic advantage below the threshold of open conflict. Participants will explore the evolving European security landscape -from the Arctic and the Baltic to the Mediterranean- and analyse how hybrid tactics target decision-making systems, infrastructure, and social resilience. Special attention is given to the maritime domain, where grey-zone operations and undersea infrastructure vulnerabilities reveal the convergence between physical and cognitive warfare. In addition, the class explores how hybrid warfare reshapes modern security environments, focusing on the cognitive domain and the manipulation of information as tools of influence. It examines how disinformation, narrative warfare, and perception management are used to destabilize societies and erode institutional trust. Through real-life case studies, the participants will have the opportunity to analyses how states and non-state actors weaponise information, and how civilian and military stakeholders can strengthen resilience against cognitive and narrative threats. Through applied exercises and real-world case analysis, participants will develop practical skills to identify, assess, and respond to hybrid threats across sectors.

This session adopts an operational and practice-oriented approach, blending short analytical briefings (20%) with interactive exercises (30%), case-based group work (25%), and guided policy simulations (25%). The emphasis is on practical analysis, decision-making, and cross-sectoral coordination under hybrid threat conditions.

- **Morning session:** Participants begin with a rapid situational assessment exercise, analysing a simulated hybrid attack combining cyber disruption, infrastructure sabotage, and coordinated disinformation. Small teams identify indicators of hybrid escalation, assess vulnerabilities, apply credibility markers and draft preliminary response pathways.
- **Midday analytical segment:** Through rotating group work, participants examine European case studies involving hybrid interference -from infrastructure sabotage to influence operations- identifying lessons learned and gaps in institutional preparedness.
- **Afternoon simulation:** A multi-actor policy game replicates an unfolding hybrid crisis scenario affecting critical sectors of the civilian and military domain in a cascading effect. Participants play distinct roles (government, defence, media, private operators) to design and communicate an integrated crisis response.

The day concludes with a debrief linking tactical exercises to strategic lessons on deterrence, resilience, and inter-agency coordination across the hybrid warfare spectrum.

II Class Day Topic: "Energy Security, Infrastructure Resilience, and Geopolitics of Green Transition"

This class examines the evolving nexus between energy security, infrastructure resilience, and the geopolitics of the green transition. While decarbonisation reshapes Europe's energy landscape, traditional vulnerabilities - dependency, coercion, and critical infrastructure exposure- continue to define strategic risk. The session explores how energy a(in)security manifests through hybrid operations, resource competition, and technological asymmetries, and how resilience can be strengthened across interconnected domains such as cyber, maritime, and supply chains. Participants will assess real-world cases involving energy weaponisation, infrastructure sabotage, and renewable energy vulnerabilities, gaining insights into how governments and industry can cooperate to protect energy systems under stress. The cross-cutting dimension of maritime security will be used to connect terrestrial, offshore, and subsea energy infrastructures as shared critical assets essential to both national defence and civilian stability.

II Class Day Topic Methodology
This class is structured as an applied workshop focused on strategic foresight and crisis response. The training blends concise expert briefings (20%) with collaborative risk assessment exercises (30%), interactive scenario simulations (25%), and policy-oriented group discussions (25%).

- **Morning session:** Participants conduct a joint mapping exercise of Europe's critical energy networks -including terrestrial, maritime, and subsea assets- to identify interdependencies, strategic chokepoints, and vulnerabilities to hybrid or environmental disruptions.
- **Midday analytical segment:** Guided discussion on real-world case studies such as the Baltic Sea alleged acts of sabotage, Black Sea and North Sea energy corridors, and offshore wind expansion in sensitive zones, highlighting lessons for resilience and deterrence.
- **Afternoon simulation:** Participants respond to a multi-domain disruption scenario (cyberattack, disinformation and energy supply interruption -total blackout situation), developing coordinated response plans integrating governmental, defence, and private-sector actors.

The day concludes with a synthesis session where teams formulate actionable recommendations for enhancing energy and maritime security cooperation within regional and international frameworks.

IV LECTURER: Mr. Pascal Geperli Class Days: 12 & 13 August, 2026

Pascal Gemperli is a mediator, peacebuilding practitioner, and trainer with extensive experience in conflict transformation, dialogue processes, and governance reform. He has worked on peace and security issues in the Middle East and North Africa, including several years with the **Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)**, where he contributed to security sector governance and reform initiatives. As co-founder and co-director of **ae-Centre**, an NGO engaged in mediation, dialogue facilitation, and extremism-prevention projects in North Africa, he has supported local partners, civil society actors, and governmental stakeholders in strengthening peaceful and inclusive approaches to conflict.

A sworn mediator before multiple Swiss courts, Pascal leads a mediation and coaching practice in Switzerland and regularly trains practitioners in mediation, negotiation, and conflict-resolution techniques. He has also explored the intersection of peacebuilding and technology by developing getyourdeal.ai, an AI-supported negotiation tool, and by managing easydivorce.ch, one of Switzerland's pioneering LegalTech platforms.

I Class Day Topic: Process Architecture in Mediation and Complex Conflict Settings

Mediation today is a strategic method for managing and transforming complex conflicts involving multiple actors, organisational systems, and high-stake environments. This class provides a structured introduction to mediation as a *process-management discipline*, with an emphasis on designing and steering multi-party, multi-level, and cross-sector conflict-resolution processes.

Participants learn to understand conflicts as dynamic systems shaped by diverging interests, institutional constraints, power asymmetries, and organisational cultures. The focus lies on process architecture: analysis of stakeholder constellations, mandate clarification, managing expectations, sequencing interventions, and guiding parties toward constructive outcomes in both public and private-sector contexts.

Case studies from organisational disputes, public-policy conflicts, workplace crises, multi-stakeholder negotiations, and international/sectoral cooperation provide a practical, systemic understanding of the mediator's role as a *neutral process designer* rather than merely a communication coach. By the end of the day, participants will be able to analyse conflicts as systems, define appropriate mandates and governance structures, and design structured phases of intervention in complex settings.

I Class Day Topic Methodology

This class is highly practice-oriented and combines short theoretical inputs with applied exercises:
- **Expert inputs (20–25%)** – Short lectures introduce key concepts of conflict systems, stakeholder mapping, mandate clarification and process sequencing.
- **Case-based group work (30%)** – Small groups work on real-world case studies (organisational conflicts, public-policy disputes, multi-stakeholder processes), mapping actors, interests and power dynamics and proposing a process architecture.
- **Process-design exercises (25%)** – Participants design step-by-step mediation or dialogue processes (from intake to agreement), including phases, roles, ground rules and decision-making formats.
- **Plenary reflection & peer feedback (20%)** – Groups present their process designs and receive feedback, linking lessons learned to participants' own professional contexts.

Throughout the day, participants are encouraged to translate concepts directly into their own work environments, ensuring that the tools and models presented can be applied once they return to their institutions.

II Class Day Topic: New Technologies, AI and Conflict Resolution

The second class day explores how digital technologies and artificial intelligence are reshaping the design and conduct of conflict-resolution processes at institutional and organisational levels. Participants examine digital platforms for multi-actor dialogue and online dispute resolution (ODR), and how AI tools can support conflict mapping, scenario analysis, option generation, and the preparation of negotiation sequences.

The session highlights both **opportunities and risks** of using AI to assist mediators and facilitators in large or data-rich environments. Particular attention is given to ethical implications regarding neutrality, accountability, transparency and data governance, as well as to emerging hybrid models that combine human facilitation with automated support tools for decision-making and consensus-building.

By the end of the day, participants will understand the main technological trends relevant to mediation and peacebuilding, be able to identify where digital tools can realistically add value, and critically assess the limitations and ethical boundaries of AI-supported conflict-resolution practice.

II Class Day Topic Methodology

This class is structured as an applied workshop combining conceptual input with hands-on exploration of technologies:
- **Conceptual briefings (20–25%)** – Short presentations introduce key notions of digital conflict platforms, ODR, AI-supported analysis, and ethical frameworks (neutrality, bias, data protection).
- **Technology mapping & use-case analysis (25–30%)** – In small groups, participants map existing or emerging tools (platforms, apps, AI systems) relevant to their context and discuss realistic use cases in mediation, dialogue or organisational decision-making.

- **Scenario-based exercises and demos (25–30%)** – Participants work through concrete scenarios (e.g., multi-stakeholder negotiation, internal organisational crisis, public consultation) and design a "hybrid" process that combines human facilitation with selected digital/AI tools. Where possible, simple demo tools or mock-ups are shown to make implications tangible.
- **Ethics & governance dialogue (15–20%)** – Guided plenary discussion on risks, safeguards and governance needs when integrating AI into conflict-resolution processes, encouraging participants to formulate principles and "red lines" for their own work.

The methodology emphasises critical reflection, peer learning and practical transfer, enabling participants to leave with a clearer idea of *how* and *when* to integrate technology and AI into their mediation and conflict-management practice.

We are looking forward to seeing you in our Summer Programs 2026