

## **Comprehensive Underwater Intervention Information System (CUIIS) Project Kick-off meeting**

The official Comprehensive Underwater Intervention Information System (CUIIS) Project kick-off meeting took place on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at “Professor Tsvetan Lazarov” Defence Institute, Sofia, Bulgaria. The project is funded by the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP).

The Deputy Commander of the Navy Admiral Georgi Penev, the National Armaments Director and the Director of the Armaments Policy Directorate at the Ministry of Defence - Colonel Vladislav Shekerov, Colonel Assoc. Prof. DSc. Borislav Genov - Director of “Prof. Tsvetan Lazarov” Defence Institute declared that they firmly stand behind the CUIIS project and wished success and fruitful work to the participants in the meeting.

The project coordinator, Col. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nikolai Stoianov, Deputy Director of the Bulgarian Defence Institute, introduced the representatives of the international consortium and the representatives of the European Commission to the overview of the project, the agenda and the technical work to be done.

The purpose of the meeting was to acquaint all participants with the goals and methodology of work in the interest of effective collaboration, to present the obligations from the Grant Agreement with the European Commission, to detail the WP and activities roadmap for the first period of the project, to discuss the project organization, project management and decision making, to set up project procedures and common tools and to identify future workflow activities.

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The project proposal for the CUIIS project was initiated by the Navy of the Republic of Bulgaria in 2017 as a research and development activity related to the DIVEPACK project, under The Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) in the area of security and defence. At the end of last year, the role of project coordinator was assigned to “Prof. Tsvetan Lazarov” Defence Institute.

The aim of the CUIIS project is to fill the skills gap within the EU, including the existing technological solutions, to ensure comprehensive and sustainable command, situational awareness, communication, information and medical provision at the



tactical level in the implementation of underwater interventions, including the simultaneous use of a large number of divers and underwater unmanned systems. The project includes feasibility studies, design development and a partial prototype, for example of a comprehensive underwater intervention information system or a movable hyperbaric chamber as a final product.

An international consortium with the participation of six research institutes and universities and twelve private companies from a total of seven EU Member States (Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Italy, Romania, Finland and Poland) has been set up to implement the project within three years. In addition to the Defence Institute, the Bulgarian side is also represented by Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy, The Space Research and Technology Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the companies Technologica EAD, Bianor Services EOOD and Waverest EOOD. The Navy and the Military Medical Academy participate too with a team of experts.

