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# brief 26

## Becoming an Ex-military Man

*Demobilization and Reintegration  
of Military Professionals  
in Eastern Europe*



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# Zusammenfassung

## German Summary

Ende 2001 gab es in Osteuropa, einschließlich der Nachfolgestaaten der Sowjetunion, etwa 2,6 Millionen weniger Soldaten als Anfang der 1990er Jahre. Mit diesem für Friedenszeiten beispiellosen Truppenabbau wird die militärische Erblast des Sozialismus wenigstens teilweise bewältigt. Am stärksten von Demobilisierung und der Notwendigkeit zur Reintegration in das Zivilleben sind Berufsoffiziere betroffen. Wie die Erfahrung der Weimarer Republik belegt, birgt ein Misslingen der Demobilisierung erhebliche Gefahren für die Stabilität junger Demokratien. Der vorliegende BICC *brief 26* untersucht die Einstellungen und Verhaltensmuster von demobilisierten Offizieren sowie die staatlichen bzw. halbstaatlichen Maßnahmen zur Unterstützung der Reintegration. Betrachtet werden die Reintegrationsprozesse in der Ukraine, Russland, Polen und Ungarn. Welche Lehren lassen sich aus dem osteuropäischen Truppenabbau ziehen? Demobilisierung und Reintegration sind Teil einer umfassenden Restrukturierung, die die Lebensfähigkeit ganzer Regionen betrifft, etwa wenn Garnisonsstädte und andere militärische Liegenschaften freigezogen werden. Zudem verfügten die sozialistischen Armeen über einen umfangreichen Dienstleistungsapparat, dieser wird nun entweder privatisiert oder gänzlich aufgelöst. Das zivile Personal der Streitkräfte ist ebenfalls von Demobilisierung betroffen.

So hart Entscheidungen häufig sind, die künftige Struktur und die Aufgaben der Streitkräfte sollten so früh und klar wie möglich definiert werden. Berufsmilitärs bedürfen einer gesetzlichen Regelung ihres Karriereverlaufs und der postmilitärischen Leistungsansprüche. Diesbezügliche Unklarheit wirkt sich negativ auf die Loyalität von Berufsmilitärs aus.

Die Reintegration erfordert gemeinsame Anstrengungen der Verteidigungs-, Finanz-, Arbeits-, Sozial- und Bildungsministerien, für die eigene Koordinierungsgremien auf zentraler und regionaler Ebene geschaffen werden sollten. Die Umschulung von Berufsoffizieren erfolgt am besten auf regionaler und lokaler Ebene, orientiert am Bedarf des örtlichen Arbeitsmarktes. Die berufliche Umschulung sollte bemüht sein, übertragbare persönliche Qualifikationen und Fertigkeiten gezielt zu nutzen, darunter auch einige der militärischen Sekundärtugenden. Dabei gilt: Umschulung ist nur effektiv, wenn sie mit gezielter Arbeitsbeschaffung verbunden wird. Die Reintegration sollte so eng wie möglich mit regionalen Strukturprogrammen verknüpft werden, die die Konversion von militärischen Liegenschaften für die Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen einbezieht. Kommunen können einen Beitrag zur Reintegration leisten, indem sie Unternehmensgründungen von Ex-Militärs, etwa durch Steuervergünstigungen oder Mietnachlässe, erleichtern beziehungsweise fördern. Um einen missbräuchlichen oder wenig effektiven Einsatz von Reintegrationsmitteln zu vermeiden, bedarf es einer unabhängigen Evaluierung. Reintegrationsmittel sollten den Ex-Militärs dabei möglichst direkt zugute kommen, um den Aufbau kostenintensiver Bürokratien in Grenzen zu halten.

Die Verantwortung für Reintegration liegt allerdings nicht allein bei staatlichen Stellen. Berufsmilitärs müssen Abschied von der Vorstellung einer risikolosen Militärkarriere nehmen: Je früher sich Berufsmilitärs mental und durch Zusatzqualifikation auf eine zivile Berufstätigkeit einstellen, desto größer sind ihre Chancen auf dem späteren Arbeitsmarkt. Umschulung sollte nach Möglichkeit bereits im Militär selbst erfolgen. Um Offizieren eine stärkere Kontrolle über ihren postmilitärischen Lebensabschnitt zu geben, könnten Offiziersverbände eine aktive Rolle bei

der Planung und Durchführung von Reintegrationsmaßnahmen spielen. Teil der Reintegration sollte auch demokratischer Sozialkundeunterricht sein. Unter den interviewten Ex-Offizieren waren die Befürworter einer autoritären Herrschaft zwar in der Minderheit, trotzdem ist die Enttäuschung über die postsozialistischen Demokratien stark ausgeprägt. Vergleichsweise hohe Pensionsbezüge können die Passivität beziehungsweise Versorgungsmentalität von Berufsmilitärs verstärken, da sie nicht genügend Anreiz für berufliche Eigeninitiative schaffen. Die postmilitärischen Bezüge sollten deshalb flexibel nach Dienstalter und Fähigkeiten angepasst werden und auf das Ziel "Arbeitsbeschaffung" orientiert sein.

Ausländische Programme waren insbesondere für die Reintegration in der Ukraine und Russland entscheidend. Allerdings hat es bisher wenig Koordination und Erfahrungsaustausch gegeben – dies ist jedoch für mögliche Programme in den Balkanländern wünschenswert.

Truppenabbau und Reintegration haben zwölf Jahre nach dem Ende des Sozialismus an Dramatik verloren. An die Stelle der sozialistischen, für einen Krieg mit der NATO trainierten Massenarmeen mit hoher "Kopflastigkeit" treten sukzessive kleinere, mobile und für internationale Einsätze präparierte Streitkräfte. Die zivile Kontrolle über das Militär wurde gestärkt und die Rüstungsausgaben wurden bis Ende der 1990er Jahre erheblich reduziert. Die osteuropäischen Streitkräfte sind mit wenigen Ausnahmen nicht mehr an einem Feindbild ausgerichtet. Gleichzeitig besteht jedoch noch ein Defizit an ziviler Expertise in Sicherheitsfragen, an Transparenz und bei der Aufgabenteilung zwischen den verschiedenen Sicherheitsapparaten.

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*Andreas Heinemann-Grüder  
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**The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)** was established in October 2000 on the initiative of the Swiss government. The Centre encourages and supports states and non-state governed institutions in their efforts to strengthen democratic and civilian control of armed and security forces, and promotes international cooperation in this field, initially targeting the Euro-Atlantic regions. To implement these objectives, the Centre:

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- provides its expertise and support to all interested parties, in particular governments, parliaments, military authorities, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, academic circles.

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# Introduction

The military legacy of socialism put a heavy burden on the transition economies and their societies at large. When socialism came to an end, the armed forces became a part of the transition process—both objects and subjects at the same time. During transition, the military was affected by shifts in political, economic and financial priorities. Not only did its role in the political system alter from being a cornerstone of socialism to being merely one of the many competing bureaucratic and social interest groups, but most military functions that had emanated from this Cold War role were devalued. Thus, while the Central Eastern European countries have been forced to reduce their armed forces dramatically over the last decade, changes in the composition of armed forces must be seen as part of an overarching restructuring process.

## Goals

The following report concerns only one aspect of this transition however: Eastern Europe's management of reintegration of military servicemen into civilian life. It looks particularly at the experiences gathered in Ukraine, Russia, Poland and Hungary after the demise of socialism. The prime goal is to generalize experiences, identify shortcomings and to ascertain which aspects of integration policy are essential and should be recommended. The report is thus an attempt to evaluate the design and implementation of reintegration policies, analyzing the causes for failure or success in exiting military roles.

Demobilization and reintegration involve finding new social roles and networks, a new professional orientation and overcoming psychological stress. Thousands of officers have had to exit their former roles—a staged process, successful for some, for others not so. The shift from a military profession to a post-military

career often implies the loss of security and social prestige which affects self-esteem, one's sense of purpose and, last but not least, the position of the male head of the family. Demobilized officers are forced to adjust their secluded group norms and values to the prevailing patterns of civil society discourse.

The study did not aim to provide an empirically encompassing overview—either in terms of covering the whole of Eastern Europe or of presenting country studies which give full coverage over a set period of time. Due to highly heterogeneous data provided by the national Ministries of Defense as well as the national project partners, not all questions could be systematically dealt with and compared in a cross-country fashion. The country data nonetheless allow a list of indicators to be compiled which the initiators of future reintegration programs may wish to bear in mind. The study is exemplary in nature, focusing on the institutional prerequisites of demobilization and on the behavioral patterns of those making the transfer from military to civilian life.

## *The military and transition*

The downsizing and reintegration of military personnel is an under-researched aspect of post-socialist transition. Previously transition research has homed in on the replacement of old by new institutions but rarely on the adjustment of old institutions to a new environment. From the perspective of transition research, the story of the downsizing and reintegration of armed forces is interesting in two respects: 'How does the military as an institution cope with the task of downsizing?' and 'How do its actors adjust?' The transformation of the socialist mass armies is indicative of an underrated aspect of transition at large—the impact of institutional inertia. The military as an institution had first and foremost a vivid interest in self-preservation, often at the expense of the social costs incurred.

Under socialism, the military had represented an interest group with significant power over the allocation of resources, an institution isolated from incursions by the social environment, protected by its pivotal role in preserving the political system as a whole and bolstered by exceptional benefit packages. Not only did the military protect socialism, it embodied its key features: the command system; a cult of masses and leadership; uniformity and collectivism instead of individualism; secrecy and the absence of transparency; a disregard for human rights; a lack of respect for the environment; fixation on the Soviet center; and, ideological integration through images of the enemy. In short, the military was the nucleus of the socialist system.

At the same time the military as an institution symbolized statehood and state power. It therefore survived the collapse of socialism in contrast to the former state planning apparatus or the Communist Party. In other words, for the government elite, national armies turned into a symbol of statehood, national independence and power projection capacity.

There were a variety of factors which led to the restructuring of armed forces in Eastern Europe, important among them: cuts already initiated by the Warsaw Pact during the second half of the 1980s; the treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe; the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact; changed threat perceptions; the ensuing shift from mass armies to smaller, more mobile forces; the closure of military bases originally designed for attacks from the West; and, last but not least, financial restrictions. The capacities and the political will to sustain a permanent war economy were exhausted. Particularly the downsizing in the 1990s—one aspect of restructuring—was a logical conclusion following on from the closure of bases which had lost their

purpose, voluntary discharge from the forces, a shortening of the period of military service, and the emergence of more attractive positions for qualified young men on the civilian market.

Nevertheless, only after a decade of ‘muddling-through’ did the downsizing of armed forces begin to be steered by conscious design. The absence of sufficient conceptual and legal frameworks for the defense systems in general and the armed forces in particular had a negative impact on the process. The nationalization of armed forces after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union did not automatically lead to a new conceptualization of the role of the armed forces: the post-socialist mindset remained heavily influenced by prior socialization, while the military establishment—lacking proper political guidance in crucial years—displayed an interest in self-preservation.

It is hardly possible to provide exact figures on the structure of the downsizing of professional servicemen for each Eastern European country, partly because the figures provided for the 1990s by the Ministries of Defense vary to the extreme. Whereas modernization led to the reduction of many professional posts, new positions opened up in the wake of the restructuring programs, though the number of new positions was lower than that of those abolished. As the attractiveness of a life in uniform had largely dwindled and with the social prestige of the armed forces in decline, many professional officers—mainly the younger, more qualified and more ambitious—left the armies on their own volition. This even held true for countries with strong patriotic undercurrents such as Poland and the Baltic States. As a rule, the Ministries of Defense did not keep track of post-military employment of their former

servicemen making it impossible to ascertain exact figures on the success of former servicemen on the civilian job market. Hence figures in this *brief* indicating whether reintegration was successful or not mainly refer to direct job placements or to the direct creation of jobs by the agencies involved in reintegration measures.

Despite the fact that associations of professional soldiers exist in all Eastern European countries, servicemen are usually poorly organized. Professional soldiers have thus rarely contributed substantially to reintegration in a grassroots fashion. Obviously the long duration of service time reinforced hierarchical thinking patterns, paternalism, the idea that the government owed the officers something, an unrealistic sense of infinite security and expectations of privileged entitlements. Both the closed corporate nature of the military community and the frequent lack of civil qualifications often discouraged conscious role-exit strategies.

The effects of downsizing on the labor market or on the target group itself are not unequivocal. Reintegration success depends on qualification levels, age, goal-oriented retraining and, most of all, on the absorption capacity of the regional economy. Thus the urgency of reintegration measures and support depends above all on the varying absorption capacities of the labor markets, with Hungary at the upper and Ukraine and Russia at the lower end. Yet, the urgency of support programs in Ukraine and Russia was *de facto* only recognized by the national Ministries of Defense once EU TACIS funding or funding by NATO countries loomed on the horizon. Often the Ministries of Defense produced ‘moral noise’ around the demobilization issue without taking action.

After a decade of downsizing, the urgency for reintegration is now in decline, though this is not the case all over Eastern Europe. There are no consensual criteria defining what the

successful conclusion of reintegration amounts to. The absence of open revolt, organized social unrest or political instability due to demobilization could be taken as a minimal definition. Applying this minimal measure, reintegration in Eastern Europe would appear to have been successful. A medium yardstick might be a situation where former servicemen willing and capable of reintegration can enjoy civilian occupations without being discriminated against on the grounds of their former military profession, where post-military occupations correspond to qualifications, and where the ex-military employment-unemployment ratio reflects the average for society at large. Among the countries covered in this study, Hungary seems to come closest to such a definition. A maximalist position would entitle military professionals to lasting preferential treatment in terms of pension rights, housing support, retraining and other social advantages. This latter position does not appear to hold true, however: part of the transition agenda seems to be that the military must say goodbye to a self-image of above-average entitlements. Seen in this perspective, reintegration requires a reconceptualization of the military as one profession among many, implying similar demands, risks, insecurities and the need for life-long learning as in other professions. Such a departure from maximalist criteria requires public dialogue and must call political parties and the media into action.

## Figure 1: Strengths of the regular armed forces in former socialist countries (OSCE members), 1990–2001 In thousands

Source: Authors compilation of data from IISS, ACDA, Military Technology, National Ministries of Defense and BICC files

Notes: Officers, NCOs and recruits are included, civilian employees excluded. As a rule, the lowest figure provided by the respective Ministry of Defense was taken. Where figures from the Ministries of Defense were contradictory or otherwise unreliable, the lowest estimate by IISS, Military Technology or the ACDA was used. Official figures on troop strengths are highly unreliable, though the reporting culture improved slightly at the end of the 1990s. The computed figure (2,647,500) for the overall troop reductions in former socialist countries (OSCE members) between 1990–2001 is an approximate estimate. Most of the reductions were achieved through a shortening of service time and cuts in recruitment levels.

n.a. not available

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Total change 1990–2001
<b>Albania</b>	41	41	41	41	41	41	54	34	22	27	27	27	-14
<b>Armenia</b>	n.a.	n.a.	20	21	45	60	57	57	57	53	42	42	+22
<b>Azerbaijan</b>	n.a.	n.a.	43	43	56	87	70	67	72	70	65	60	+17
<b>Belarus</b>	n.a.	n.a.	102	102	92	90	85	82	83	81	78	65	-37
<b>Bosnia- Herzegovina</b>	n.a.	n.a.	60	60	70	50	92	40	40	40	38	34	-26
<b>Bulgaria</b>	107	106	99	52	80	86	95	102	102	81	80	78	-29
<b>Croatia</b>	n.a.	n.a.	103	103	80	60	64	58	56	53	53	58	-45
<b>Czechoslovakia/ Czech Republic</b>	175	150	146	98	93	73	70	62	59	54	52	48	-127
<b>Estonia</b>	n.a.	n.a.	2	2.5	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.5	4.3	5.4	5.4	5.4	+,4
<b>Georgia</b>	n.a.	n.a.	35	35	35	33	33.2	33.2	33	26	27	17	-18
<b>Hungary</b>	94	87	74	74	74	71	64	56	54	52	50	49	-45



<b>Kazakhstan</b>	n.a.	n.a.	44	44	40	40	40	40	35	55	65	64	64	+20
<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>	n.a.	n.a.	12	12	9	7	7	7	9	12	9	9	9	-3
<b>Latvia</b>	n.a.	n.a.	2.2	5	6.5	6.6	7	7	4.5	4.9	4.16	4.1	4.1	-1.9
<b>Lithuania</b>	n.a.	n.a.	10	10	10	9	9	9	10	11	12	13	12	+2
<b>Macedonia</b>	n.a.	n.a.	10	10	10	10	10	10	15	19	16	16	16	+6
<b>Moldova</b>	n.a.	n.a.	9	11	11	12	12	12	11	11	11	9	8	-1
<b>Poland</b>	314	305	270	270	270	263	221	242	242	228	187	191	178	-136
<b>Romania</b>	126	201	172	167	200	199	200	200	200	180	140	130	103	-23
<b>Russia</b>	n.a.	n.a.	2,600	2,300	1,900	1,685	1,430	1,200	1,200	1,159	1,004	1,004	977	-1,623
<b>Slovakia</b>	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	47	50	45	39	39	39	45	45	38	33	-14
<b>Slovenia</b>	n.a.	n.a.	15	12	8	8	10	10	10	10	10	9	8	-7
<b>Tajikistan</b>	n.a.	n.a.	3	3	3	5	7	8	8	8	8	10	12	+9
<b>Turkmenistan</b>	n.a.	n.a.	28	25	20	18	18	17	17	18	18	18	18	-10
<b>Ukraine</b>		780	600	510	517	453	400	387	387	346	311	303	303	-477
<b>Uzbekistan</b>	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	40	45	40	45	65	65	80	74	59	58	+18
<b>Yugoslavia</b>	180	169	137	137	140	127	114	114	114	114	109	98	70	-110
<b>Total reductions 1990–2001</b>														2,647.5

# Identity Patterns of Former Military Professionals

## Research questions

In order to establish how former officers and NCOs adjust to post-military life, we conducted standardized face-to-face interviews, promising the interviewees anonymity. In July 2000, 15 interviews were conducted with discharged officers in Latvia; in December 2000, 29 with former officers in Hungary, in February 2001, 34 with former officers in Poland, and in June/July 2001, 43 with former officers in Ukraine. We were mainly interested in officers who were younger than 55 years of age at the time of dismissal, preferably in the age group 35–50. The reason was simple—this was the age group which would be forced to find a post-military career and which was likely to have significant problems in reintegrating. The former officers came mostly, but not exclusively, from the capitals (Riga, Budapest, Warsaw, and Kiev) or the surrounding regions—a bias that may actually mean they were privileged in comparison to laid-off officers in economically depressed regions.

Each questionnaire contained 25 questions translated into the native language of the former officer (see Appendix). Naturally the answers can only give a rough picture of the behavioral factors affecting ‘success’ or ‘failure’ of reintegration, and it would be inappropriate to generalize these findings for the rest of Eastern Europe. However, it is nonetheless possible to discern certain patterns and to formulate linkages between socio-biographical models and the success or failure of post-military adjustment.

To be specific, we were interested above all in the following: reasons for demobilization; patterns of adjustment to civilian life; forms of assistance received from governmental agencies; and general political views. We linked these answers to personal data on age, duration of military service and military rank as well as to levels of professional skills. It was expected that certain links could be established between levels of success, protracted difficulties or failure to adjust to civilian life on the one hand and skills, behavioral patterns and political identities on the other hand.

## Behavioral patterns: general findings

The findings of the interviews allow for some cross-regional observations as well as tentative conclusions relating to implications for reintegration policy. Officers were often taken unawares by the sudden need to find a post-military job. As they often did not start looking for alternatives in time, they lost control over their own lives. A negative assessment of the transition period appeared to be linked to a sense of victimization that was at least partially self-inflicted. For most interviewees, the military represented an institution associated with job security, an attractive benefit package and a decent income, while ideational attachments or political motivations were comparatively weak. It was therefore more the long seclusion from the norms, habits and normal risks of civilian life rather than the military vocation itself that complicated post-military adjustment. Interestingly, those laid-off officers who voiced a strong attachment to the military as a provider of norms and values were the ones most frustrated with their post-military life.

Whereas some were able to make use of skills acquired in the military, especially those who took on jobs in security companies, very few individuals actually acquired additional qualifications after leaving the armed forces. Not surprisingly, age and the duration of the military service were the key factors in determining post-military job opportunities. But, next to age, whether the soldier had left the forces voluntarily, the related level of activity and the acquisition of dual-use qualifications during service time proved to exert the most significant impact on reintegration success. Not all those who left the armed forces voluntarily were successful and some even regretted their decision, but, all in all, control over one’s own life appeared to be essential if a sense of satisfaction was to be reached. Based on the interviews, a significant link between rank and reintegration success could not be established.

There are certain qualifications whose acquisition during service increases the chances of successful post-military adjustment, namely learning of foreign languages, especially English; computer skills; administrative and management skills. On the positive side, it should be noted that most former officers were able to integrate their past military experiences into their new life (for a psychological statement on biographical synthesis, see Erikson, 1973, esp. p. 106 ff.). It is assumed that a collective sense of radical estrangement would have led to more hostile expressions of disappointment and to the development of hatred and aggression. Instead of collective and organized fora of demobilized officers with common

interests, we were met with individualization, often even social ‘atomization’, adding to a widely spread sense of disempowerment *vis-à-vis* governmental agencies.

The interviews did not lend any support to the fear that disappointment had translated into some form of extreme nationalism or active promotion of authoritarianism. The likelihood of repeating the Weimar Republic scenario appeared almost nonexistent. The dangers of authoritarianism originating from the military seemed to be small, though some interviewees may have hidden more explicit authoritarian views. They were not, however, comparable to the threats against weak democracies that had emanated from an enfeebled or marginalized military in Weimar Germany (1920s), that had arisen in Latin American countries (mostly during the 1960s and 1970s) or which might have been expected from a military which plays a decisive role in deciding domestic conflicts. Authoritarian attitudes were not spread equally among the counties covered: pre-democratic or authoritarian patterns were the most prevalent in Ukraine and the least discernable in Latvia. Furthermore, there did not seem to be a danger of praetorianism by officers facing demobilization due to the shaky corporate identity and inefficiency of the military itself.

### **Identity patterns among former Ukrainian officers**

Of the 43 former officers interviewed in Ukraine, 4 were younger than 30, 14 between 30 and 40, 14 between 40 and 50, and 11 older than 50 years of age. In terms of rank, 3 were warrant officers, 11 lieutenant-colonels, 7 colonels, 7 majors, 10 captains, 4 senior lieutenants and finally one was a female soldier with the rank of ‘servicewoman’. In terms of the duration of military service, 9 had served up to 10 years, 5 up to 15 years, 8

up to 20 years, 9 up to 25 years, and 12 more than 25 years. During their military career, 29 had received training: 25 as engineers, 4 in another technical orientation and the rest as economists, psychologists, administrators, managers or sociologists.

We asked all laid-off officers about what had prompted them to join the armed forces. Obviously, motives were mixed, and it was possible that answers might be biased because the interviewees give reasons only with hindsight. However, keeping this in mind, it is nonetheless revealing that personal gain dominated the decision to become a professional soldier. Only 4 of the interviewees claimed patriotic reasons like ‘defense of the fatherland’, while almost half cited ‘high reputation’, ‘stability of payment’ or ‘the living conditions’ as being decisive. Roughly one-quarter of those interviewed (12) mentioned a family tradition of joining the armed forces. 4 held that “military romanticism” was one of the reasons but very few additionally mentioned military discipline as a motivation. It was notable that expectations associated with the military as a profession or institution outweighed idealistic reasons. 15 out of 43 were explicitly disappointed with their experiences in the military compared to their original expectations.

The average duration of military service of those officers who experienced frustration was 16.7 years. There were some younger officers among the disappointed, but those with 15 years of service or more clearly dominated the group of the frustrated. Most of these disappointed individuals had mentioned ‘high reputation’ or ‘service for the fatherland’ as the main reason for originally choosing a military career. Some added that their disappointment occurred only after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Slightly less than half (20) nevertheless maintained that their original expectations had been met by

actual experience. Of the 43 interviewees, 20 had left the armed forces voluntarily, while the rest had left due to health reasons (5), according to schedule (8) or as a result of early dismissal.

Asked what they had expected from civilian life, only 18 were able to give reasons at all—clearly a sign of passiveness on the part of those not answering. Those who *did* give an answer said they reckoned with an improvement in their living conditions or financial situation, but only one mentioned ‘self-fulfillment’. Among the post-military occupations found, a variety of jobs were mentioned: most frequently administrative or managerial jobs, work for security services or as a trainer or teacher in areas related to former military skills, for example emergency relief. Those who had worked as propagandists or economists in the military or who had not acquired any additional qualifications, either during or after service, clearly fared worse on the job market than others.

Among the skills acquired during service time which proved useful for civilian life, skills in engineering, technical subjects, leadership and planning were cited most along with discipline, thoroughness and a sense of responsibility. Compared to the advantages of these transferable skills and habits, very few thought that coming from a military background was disadvantageous. Several mentioned ‘honesty’ or the fact they had ‘too much respect for the law’ as being disadvantageous in civilian life. Very few discerned within themselves an ‘inability to make decisions on their own’ or ‘difficulties in choosing an activity without assistance’.

It is striking that, in their self-assessment, the overwhelming majority thought that they had acquired advantages and transferable skills during service time. Despite this, one-third (14) of the interviewees were unemployed, with this unemployment spread quite

evenly across ranks. Unemployment appeared to affect all ranks and professional backgrounds, not only warrant officers without any particular dual-use qualification. On the basis of our limited sample, the only factor significantly correlating positively with unemployment was the duration of military service: the longer a person stayed in the military, the greater the likelihood of post-military unemployment.

Among other things, we were interested in establishing to what extent the decision to leave the armed forces had been influenced by discussions with colleagues in the military or whether it had been taken individually. Only one-third (14 out of 43) answered positively, saying their decision had resulted from collective discussions. If this result reflects the larger picture, then officers who left the Ukrainian armed forces did so in isolation: of those who left voluntarily, only a few claim to have discussed their decision with their colleagues—possibly because of the unfavorable climate in the armed forces for deliberation and discussion. Slightly less than one-third of the interviewees (13) were members of an officer association—mostly associations for those with housing problems—while only 3 reported tangible advantages from this membership.

Officer organizations evidently played no significant role in focusing the interests of laid-off officers. Possible reasons for the lack of collective action may lie in extremely poor resources, the diversity of post-military career goals, and passivity among the officers. Asked how they solved these problems, very few could answer at all; those that did mentioned retraining, hard work and help from friends. A significant finding was the lack of problem-solving abilities on the part of individual officers, not to mention the lack of collective capacities.

Taking all these facets together one can conclude that the ‘corporate identity’ of former officers is weak.

Asked what problems proved most pressing after dismissal, the interviewees gave various answers. ‘Lack of accommodation’, ‘financial problems’, ‘looking for a job’, ‘lack of money to start one’s own business’, ‘lack of knowledge of legal and economic matters’, and ‘loss of friends and colleagues’ were the problems most often mentioned. Almost all interviewees claimed that ‘the government’ should have assisted them more. Asked what concrete kind of support they had applied for, one-third explicitly stated that they had not approached any agency at all. Slightly less than one-third had encountered ‘indifference’ and ‘empty promises’ whereas those who received assistance mentioned ‘provision of a job’, ‘retraining’, and ‘help with accommodation’. Asked about the assistance they would like to have received in the transitional period, only 3 out of 43 gave an answer at all. They referred to ‘mental rehabilitation’—whatever that may mean, ‘solving accommodation problems’ and ‘more information’. The inability to verbalize expectations in the face of a generally high degree of disappointment is evident—it mirrors a passive, paternalistic attitude. The problem singled out by almost all interviewees was ‘lack of money’. Half of the interviewees did not acquire any additional qualification at all after dismissal. Those who did underwent management, administrative, foreign language, computer, or handicraft training.

Does leaving the armed forces lead to a retrospective reassessment of the military as an institution? Approximately one-quarter (11) regretted leaving the armed forces, more than half did not regret their choice while the rest were indifferent or undecided. Asked whether they would recommend that their sons embark on a military career, 19 answered ‘no’, 10 ‘not

at the present time’, only 9 answered ‘yes’ and the rest were undecided. It seems, therefore, that the military as an institution to identify with has clearly lost its attraction for the overwhelming majority of the former officers. Moreover, as far as the interviewees were concerned, the almost unanimous feeling was that the military had lost its former reputation and influence in politics and society.

We inquired finally about the general outlook adopted by former officers. Slightly less than half (18) maintained their living standards had dropped since demobilization, whereas somewhat more than one-quarter (12) thought that their situation had explicitly improved. The rest were undecided. Slightly less than half of the interviewees thought that the impact of system change had been negative. But, asked about their expectations (‘five years from now’), 26 hoped for or expected improvement, 7 were explicitly pessimistic and the rest found it difficult to assess the prospects.

Was the military seen as a savior or as an institution better suited to govern the country? Only 5 out of 43 explicitly would have preferred an autocratic leader instead of a democratic one, though another 5 qualified their general support of a democratic leader by noting that ‘elements of autocratic style’ or a ‘tough’ politician would be needed. Although three-quarters may be counted as being generally supportive of democracy, among the former officers there was a rampant disappointment with the political system in Ukraine—corruption, lawlessness, chaos, absence of control and of responsible government, disorder, demagoguery, and populism were the features most often mentioned. One additionally criticized that ‘freedom of speech’ allowed a negative image of the country to be created. However the highly critical image of the present system in Ukraine was not tantamount to a negative image of the West—criticism of the transition results was

not identical to criticism of the West in general. We took the image of NATO as an indicator of the general imagery of the West—31 had a positive image of NATO, 7 negative, and the rest were indifferent.

Certain conclusions about the exit from military roles can be drawn from the Ukrainian interviews. The most pressing reintegration problem for laid-off officers in Ukraine was to find housing outside military garrisons. In Ukraine, officers were not sufficiently prepared for a post-military career during their service time while the length of the military service evidently had a negative impact on reintegration prospects. Furthermore, there was a discernable mismatch between how most of the former officers assessed their acquired skills and the demand for qualifications on the job market. Regardless of the concrete requirements of the Ukrainian labor market, officers to be laid-off need to be empowered in such a way that they are capable of finding a job. The overwhelming impression of the officers is negligence on the part of the governmental agencies. This is all the more striking because the interviews were conducted by a counterpart from the National Coordination Center for the Social Adaptation of Former Military Servicemen in Ukraine, the agency tasked by the Cabinet of Ministers with reintegration policy.

### ***Identity patterns among former Polish officers***

The group of 34 former Polish officers interviewed consisted of 14 lieutenant-colonels, 5 colonels, 5 majors, 4 navy captains, 3 lieutenants, 2 squad leaders, and 1 contract soldier. The average service time of the interviewees was 25.6 years, with 3 having served 12–16 years and only 1 having served 3 years. In other words, most of the interviewees had served 20 years or more. Their average age was 46.2 years, with no one older than 55 years and the youngest 29 years of age. Similar to the picture in Ukraine, the Polish officers

gave a variety of reasons for originally having joined the armed forces. Among those who were able to identify specific reasons at all, 10 claimed romantic or emotional reasons, 8 mentioned the social prestige or high levels of payment, 4 mentioned personal reasons such as ‘self-development’, and only 3 mentioned ‘patriotic reasons’. More than half of the interviewees (23) were satisfied with their experience in the military. In retrospect, their expectations appeared to coincide with their actual experiences and they had left the armed forces with a certain sense of fulfillment. Only 4 out of 34 were explicitly disappointed while the rest were undecided or gave no answer at all (7). The group of those who were disappointed or who refrained from giving a positive answer was dominated by officers who had been dismissed—their negative assessment of the service time was obviously related to the fact that they had not left the forces voluntarily. In terms of formal qualifications, almost half of the cohort had acquired dual-use skills such as degrees as engineers, in economics, or technical capabilities. After dismissal from the armed forces, most had been unemployed for a certain period of time which had lasted from a few months to up to two years.

The reasons for leaving the armed forces were equally divided between voluntary discharge or early retirement (15) on the one hand and dismissal (15) on the other, while 4 had left for reasons of health. If we take ‘voluntary discharge’ as an indicator of an active pursuit of a post-military career, are there any biographical patterns discernable which are conducive to such behavior? In terms of age, voluntary discharge was quite evenly spread over the whole cohort. A positive correlation, though only a weak one, is discernable with regard to rank—the higher the rank, the more likely voluntary discharge was. Though our sample was too small to give a representative survey, the prospect of post-military employment was not

significantly increased by voluntary discharge alone—dual-use qualifications were evidently also a key factor. Similar to the findings in Ukraine, former ‘polit-officers’ usually fared worst on the job market.

Among skills acquired in the armed forces which proved advantageous for civil life, a variety were cited—self-discipline and persistence, human resource management, punctuality, a sense of duty, leadership skills, proficiency and additional training such as degrees in economics, engineering, foreign languages, legal knowledge and computer skills. Few mentioned skills that proved disadvantageous such as the ability to handle weapons or those resulting from the different way of life in the military. Generally speaking, a sense of undue disadvantage on the labor market was not observed. 14 out of 34 reported having had discussions with colleagues before leaving the armed forces, but only 3 thought that these deliberations with colleagues had had an impact on their decision or on the way they adjusted to post-military life. Once again, the absence of a process of collective discussion and deliberation is surprising. Asked what kind of problems they faced after leaving the armed forces, only 12 out of 34 mentioned any at all and these 12 were evenly spread among those who had chosen to leave and those who had been dismissed. The difficulties reported were: ‘hypocrisy’, ‘lack of accountability’, ‘intolerance of different worldviews’, ‘lack of acknowledgement’, ‘lack of English language skills’, ‘lack of a civilian profession’, ‘the bad image of former soldiers’, and ‘lack of assistance in finding a job’. Similar to the findings in Ukraine, we could—with few exceptions—discern no strategies to overcome the reported difficulties. Nobody, for example, mentioned further training or requalification as a job-search strategy.

As for expectations that the government might assist them with reintegration, only 10 out of 34 expressed any hope at all. When they did, it was directed towards the military, the center for

conversion at the Ministry of Defense and, in one single case, ‘local administration’. Such expectations were mostly related to education or training in the armed forces, financial support or assistance from the local government in looking for a job. If we take these answers as being representative, not all laid-off officers needed assistance but those who did articulate such needs overwhelmingly pinpointed better training and education in the armed forces as being what was required. Generally the impression of how governmental agencies reacted to those who were seeking help was positive which is very different to the negligence reported in the case of Ukraine. 9 out of 34 former officers acquired additional qualifications after having left the service, including English language courses, studies in economics, and training for private security services.

All in all, having left the armed forces, ex-soldiers did not appear to have a negative perception of the military. Asked whether they ever regretted having left the armed forces, 16 (out of 34) answered ‘no’, 4 answered ‘yes’, while the rest were undecided or did not answer at all. Asked whether they would encourage male relatives to embark on a military career, 13 answered ‘yes’, 17 ‘no’ and the rest remained undecided or declared they would not influence any decision. However affinity to the military as an institution has clearly weakened. With few exceptions, former officers felt that the prestige and influence of the armed forces had diminished during transition. Questioned whether their political worldviews or party preferences had changed during transition, only 2 answered in the affirmative: both reported that they now tended to lean towards the socialist party (PZPR); 6 took a decidedly apolitical stance and the rest stressed that their world view had not changed. It was not that we were interested in the kind of worldviews prevalent among former officers as such; we were merely interested in learning

whether a decline in the status of the military translated into shifts in attitude in favor of authoritarian or nationalist ideologies. However no such shifts were indicated by the interviews. In Poland, even less servicemen than in Ukraine seemed to be members of an officer association: only one of those interviewed reported membership, though most said they kept in contact with former colleagues on an individual basis.

Compared to former living standards in the military, only 5 maintained that their situation had worsened, 8 reported improvement, whereas most were either undecided or thought their living standard had basically remained the same. If this reflects reality, then only a minor segment of the group chosen in the overall assessment was dissatisfied. Asked whether five years from now an improvement or deterioration was to be expected, only 6 reckoned with a deterioration, compared to 14 expecting an improvement; the rest were undecided. Among the positive experiences of system change, democracy, freedom of speech and the free market were mentioned most often, whereas negative experiences were associated with ‘hopelessness’, ‘corruption’, ‘too many political parties’, ‘slow privatization’, ‘loss of services and pensions’, ‘lack of stability’, ‘criminality’, and ‘loss of discipline and morale’. Given the mix of answers it is impossible to say whether positive or negative images prevail. When asked more specifically whether an authoritarian leader, for example a general, would be better suited to solve the country’s problems, 6 out of 34 explicitly supported such a solution, compared to 19 who openly rejected such authoritarianism; 9 remained undecided. If one takes the silent cohort into account—those who are obviously unsure in the question of democracy versus authoritarianism—the result can hardly be interpreted as overwhelming support for democracy. Asked what they disliked most about democracy, the ex-servicemen most often cited the following: ‘anarchy’, ‘nepotism of the parties’, ‘arbitrariness’, ‘stupidity of the government’, ‘lack of professionalism’, ‘bureaucracy’, and ‘slow decision-

making’. Disappointment with the concrete experience of Polish post-socialist governments is widespread among former officers.

In respect to Poland’s cooperation with NATO—at the time of questioning Poland had already been a member for two years—most interviewees had noticed and were pleased about the improvement in defense administration, standards, military technology and order as well as the increase in regional stability. Yet, caution and skepticism were voiced as well. The expectation that NATO would actually defend Poland was wrong, one interviewee said. Another even expressed the hope that Poland would not repeat the fate of the year 1939 (Hitler-Stalin Pact). While, as a NATO member, Poland would again become dependent, NATO membership in itself would prove very expensive. It was additionally suggested that Poland should not accept everything NATO did without criticism. Regardless of these reservations, 23 out of 34 expressed a positive attitude towards NATO, only 1 an explicitly negative view, and 10 could think at the same time of both positive and negative aspects of cooperation with NATO or were simply undecided.

### ***Identity patterns among former Hungarian officers***

The 29 Hungarian interviewees had an average age of 41.3 years, with none younger than 30 and only 1 older than 52 (namely 57); in other words, 28 of the former officers interviewed were likely to embark on a post-military career. On average, the officers had been in service for 16.5 years. Almost all had attended the military academy. Among the original motives for joining the armed forces, half of the group cited expected benefits such as further education and stable living conditions. One-third mentioned romantic reasons such as ‘a wish to fly’ or ‘love of

weaponry' and 3 referred to the influence of their families, but nobody mentioned patriotic or political reasons.

Compared to the Ukrainian or Polish cases, only 2 were unemployed at the time of being interviewed, although another 6 had been unemployed from a few to 12 months. It thus transpires that the social urgency of reintegration was far less obvious in Hungary than in Ukraine or Poland. Three of the interviewees had retired, only occasionally taking up new jobs. Among those with a distinct post-military occupation, some patterns were evident: 8 worked either for the police or the security services, 9 worked as managers in retail sales, wholesales or in the service sector, 4 were teachers or journalists, and 2 had opened up their own small businesses (bakery and transport). Our limited sample seemed to suggest that the absorption capacity of the Hungarian labor market was higher than in Poland or Ukraine.

Asked whether their original motivations for joining the armed forces were matched by actual experience, 12 answered 'no', 7 'yes' and 10 thought their expectations had at least in part been met. While these answers suggested that roughly 41 percent had been frustrated by their military experiences, the assessment of affinities to the armed forces became even more critical when we looked at the reasons for leaving the armed forces. 19 had left voluntarily, 5 had chosen early retirement; the rest had left due to health reasons or was simply dismissed. The reasons for leaving the armed forces were often mixed. Some officers left the armed forces after their units had been dissolved and they were offered lower positions which they were not willing to accept. Most were very outspoken about the reasons for quitting—'lack of perspective', 'lack of money', 'permanent reorganization' and 'lack of stability' were frequently mentioned; one added his 'inability to fulfill orders of stupid people'. If one compares reasons to quit with those for original enrollment, it becomes clear that those entering the forces for reasons of self-interest gradually lost their illusions

during the 1990s: idealistic or intrinsic attachments to the military proved no compensation for concrete individual disadvantages.

Among the so-called transferable qualifications, the former officers mentioned 'team-leadership' and 'planning skills', 'knowledge of human nature', 'analytical skills', 'technical skills', 'organizational skills', 'accuracy', 'reliability', 'punctuality', 'consistency', 'self-discipline', and the acquisition of degrees with a civil application such as engineering degrees.

Former Hungarian officers voiced their opinions on the disadvantages of a military career in a comparatively strong form. 'Schematic thinking', 'stereotypes and prejudices', 'having been in the armed forces at all', 'lack of professional skills for civil occupations', 'starchiness', 'lack of connection to civilian life', 'the low reputation of former officers' and 'inadequate personal (social) skills' were identified as unhelpful. The shared experience of disadvantages on the civil market was not however identical with regretting having left military service. Only 5 out of 29 actually regretted their decision to quit. Asked whether they would recommend that their sons or male relatives should embark on a military career, only 7 give a positive answer.

On being asked whether they had discussed their decision to quit the armed forces with colleagues, 11 answered negatively and 18 positively, though only 7 of the latter recalled any positive influence of these deliberations. Compared to the Ukrainian or Polish interviews, it seems that the Hungarian officers were less isolated in their decision to quit the armed forces. It would nonetheless be an exaggeration to suggest there was a pattern of organized decision-making. 6 out of 29 interviewees declared that they had experienced no problems in adjusting to civilian life. 23 reported a variety of

difficulties, most prominent among them financial problems, lack of professional skills, lack of knowledge of foreign languages, general difficulties in adapting to civilian life, lack of work experience, prejudices towards soldiers, a lack of personal networks. Some vividly articulated psychological hardships—nervousness, decreased self-esteem and a sense of hopelessness but only one expressed 'lack of support' as a problem. Given the fact that they were aware of the difficulties on the civilian job market, it is surprising that only 13 out of 29 former officers acquired additional professional skills after demobilization—predominantly in management, private security services, foreign languages, consulting or marketing.

When specifically asked about what assistance they expected, one mentioned 'powerful military friends', while all the others had either no particular idea about whom they could rely on or mentioned friends and their family (12 out of 29). In the Hungarian case it is worth mentioning that almost no paternalistic mindsets existed—friends, family and self-help were seen as the means to overcome the reported difficulties while the government or the military itself was rarely expected to assist. Most simply answered: 'I did not ask for help'. Those who did receive material benefits upon quitting the armed forces, mostly reported an offer to buy their service apartment along with financial compensations. Only one of our interviewees was offered a job in the regional administration.

With the exception of one former officer, it was the view of all interviewees that the prestige and standing of the army had declined during transition. Above all the feeling that the reputation of the army within society had decreased was strongly voiced, together with the opinion that the army no longer played an important role in the support of politicians. One interviewee expressed the hope that the status of the army would increase with NATO membership. Asked whether

their political worldviews or party preferences had changed during transition, 14 answered ‘no change’, 6 said they were apolitical; 4 indicated a change (2 in a more liberal direction, 1 to the right) and 1 maintained he had become more interested in politics in general than he had been in the past.

Most discharged officers kept in contact with former colleagues, though only 4 had joined an officers’ association. There is clearly no pattern of collective interest aggregation or representation. In the Hungarian case, the motivation for joining might be missing because 18 out of 29 were of the opinion that their life had improved since leaving the armed forces, while only 6 maintained their life had deteriorated and the rest were hesitant to give an assessment. Only 4 expected a worsening of their situation in the coming five years; all others were optimistic. As for the overall assessment of system change, attitudes were mixed, with those seeing the more positive aspects (17) prevailing over those with predominantly negative impressions (12).

Lastly, we were interested in the democratic or authoritarian mindset of former officers. Only 2 out of 29 explicitly opted for authoritarianism. Asked what they disliked most about democracy, these two individuals mentioned ‘corruption’, ‘venality’, ‘lies’, ‘the greed of politicians’, ‘permissiveness of authorities’, ‘disinterest in people’, ‘nonsensical talk’, ‘a culture of shifting blame among politicians’, and ‘wild capitalism’. Not only did the answers reveal disappointment with the post-socialist experience, but in certain cases also an underlying misunderstanding of democracy. The more or less clear absence of support for open authoritarianism is therefore not identical with an unwavering pro-democratic stand.

With respect to NATO membership, the interviewees were overwhelmingly in favor (21 out of 29), giving a variety of reasons: it would ease the way into the

EU, provide more stability for the region, allow for the modernization of the army, and guarantee security. Not a single interviewee was openly critical of NATO, though 3 expressed reservations—2 preferred neutrality, especially under the impression of the Kosovo war, and 1 questioned whether NATO would defend Hungary if the latter could not defend itself.

### ***Identity patterns among former officers in Latvia***

The 15 interviews in Latvia were conducted with 14 Latvians and 1 Russian officer who had served in the post-independence armed forces of Latvia. All interviewees had left the Latvian armed forces some time after 1997, that is, not as a result of the downsizing or dissolution of Soviet troops. The average age of the interviewees was 48; half of the group consisted of former Soviet officers, the other half of officers who had joined the armed forces or the National Guard of Latvia after independence, namely from 1992 onwards.

Compared to former Soviet officers, all those who joined the Latvian armed forces after independence claimed that ‘patriotism’ was the main reason. Given the advanced age of this group, we may safely assume that these allegedly purely ‘patriotic’ officers had originally served in the Soviet army as well and had simply cut this part out of their biographical account. Furthermore, had the duration of service only consisted of the years after independence, officers who claimed they had enrolled after independence could not have reached the ranks they gave (colonel, lieutenant-colonel, captain, and so on). One of the first observations thus pertains to the split identity of Latvian officers with a record in the Soviet armed forces—on the one hand a ‘patriotic’, ‘Latvian’ identity was stressed in order to distance oneself from the Soviet past, on the other hand the Soviet ranking was retained. Though the limited number of the sample group must be borne in mind, it is nevertheless conspicuous

that a significant number of those who had joined the National Guard (*Zemessardze*) or the regular armed forces in 1991/92 left the Latvian armed forces voluntarily in 1999/2000. Among those who left voluntarily, ‘stagnation’, ‘intrigues’, ‘lack of promotion’ or ‘promotion not based on merits and performance’ and ‘low competence’ of military leadership are the reasons reported for disappointment. Further reasons for voluntarily discharge included financial problems (including the need to support a family), health reasons, reaching the military pension age and early retirement. As for the Russian officer who had been discharged, it seemed as if his ethnic origin was a disadvantage even after 8 years of service in the Latvian armed forces. Latvian officers with a lengthy period of service in the Soviet armed forces expressed a similar sense of discrimination.

Among the abilities deemed useful in post-military adjustment, organizational skills, leadership, a sense of order, punctuality, fast decision-making, decisiveness, and—for those in security services—the command of weapons were mentioned. Half of the interviewees declared that they discussed their decision to leave the armed forces with colleagues. Whether the decision to leave the forces is discussed or not is indicative of two issues: the degree of individual versus collective decision-making and the openness of the climate in the military for discussion at all. In the case of Latvia, it seems that the collective had a comparatively stronger effect on decisions—even if most maintained that their ultimate decision was taken alone—and that the inner-military climate was more open for discussions.

One of the prime difficulties in post-military adjustment in Latvia is the system of military pensions which does not allow ex-soldiers to take up a new job if they want to continue receiving their military pension. Hence, as nobody



wants to lose his pension, there is no incentive to look for a job, even if age and ability make this possible. As in the other case studies, a significant portion of the former officers who took up jobs did so in areas closely related to the military—either in private security companies, as guards or as civilians working for the Ministry of Defense. It is once again noteworthy that only 1 out of 15 acquired any additional qualifications after leaving the military. If one compares the case of Latvia with Poland, Hungary, and Ukraine, the provision of pensions is the only measure reintegration policy covers—at least from the perspective of the former officers. Until 2000, there existed neither a system for preparing officers during service time for a post-military career, nor administrative structures to support the reintegration process. As a matter of fact, looking for a job was actually discouraged once an officer had become entitled to a pension. Only 2 of the 15 officers interviewed expected to receive government help after leaving the forces, while the rest thought of their friends and families as their support groups.

Among the Latvian interviewees we found a high degree of identification with the military as an institution—only 3 dismissed the idea of recommending a military career to their sons or male relatives and all kept in contact, at least at irregular intervals, with former colleagues. Only 2 out of 15 were organized in an officer association (the Union of Latvian Officers or the Association of Reservists). In contrast to this emotional—rather than organizational—affinity with the military, most former officers were critical of the Latvian armed forces, maintaining that the current army did not differ much from the old Soviet prototype and society had a negative attitude towards the armed forces. It was nonetheless mentioned that, in comparison to Soviet times, not only nutrition but also motivation and discipline had improved.

As for their overall assessment of post-military life, the group was split equally between those who had experienced a material improvement, those whose living conditions had deteriorated and those who either thought conditions had stayed the same or merely had difficulty in answering. A slight majority nonetheless thought that the transition period had brought positive rather than negative results. Not a single interviewee stated that his worldviews had changed under the impact of transition or leaving the armed forces. With the exception of one former officer who maintained that for a short period of time an authoritarian leader could solve Latvia's problems, all other interviewees ruled out a military or authoritarian leader as a solution. Criticism of the post-independence democracy was very similar to that in the other case studies. 'Corruption', 'anarchy', 'disregard for ordinary people', 'bureaucracy' and 'hypocrisy' were the deficits most often mentioned. Asked about their relationship to NATO, all expressed a positive attitude with only two suggesting that the 'Partnership for Peace' would be sufficient instead of full NATO membership.

# Administrating Demobilization: Experiences in Ukraine, Russia, Poland and Hungary

## Ukraine

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991, Ukraine inherited one of the largest armies in Europe. In 1991 there were some 780,000 soldiers on the territory of Ukraine, plus an estimated number of 130,000 troops under the Ukrainian Ministry of the Interior, Border Troops, Special Forces, and KGB men (Shikalov, 2001). On 24 August 1991—immediately after the failed August putsch in Moscow, but still four months before the dissolution of the Soviet Union—the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine took the Soviet troops on its territory formally under its own jurisdiction. The post-independence troops consisted of almost all those nationalities of which the Soviet Union had been comprised. About 12,000 officers or NCOs of non-Ukrainian origin returned to their home republics in the years 1991–1994, while 33,000 soldiers came back to Ukraine from other Soviet successor states (Shikalov, 2001).

Ukraine then began the formation of its own armed forces, based on ex-Soviet units located on its territory. According to Ukraine's military doctrine adopted by Parliament on 14 October 1993, the armed forces, which had numbered approximately 780,000 in January 1992 (Shikalov, 2001), were to be reduced by 450,000 men by the end of 1995. The National Coordinating Center for the

Social Adaptation of Servicemen under the Cabinet of Ministers (NCC) has since stated that the overall number of military servicemen was in reality reduced between 1991 and 1996 by 410,000, that is, 40,000 less than originally planned. Between 1997 and 1999 the size of the Ukrainian armed forces was cut back even further: 127,000 persons were discharged, among them 60,000 military servicemen and 67,000 civilian personnel (Shikalov, 2001). This would imply an overall reduction in the 1990s of 470,000 military servicemen (officers, contract soldiers and recruits), civil employees of the Ministry of Defense not included. More than 80 percent of the servicemen laid-off were reportedly less than 45 years of age.

Unfortunately these figures on troop reductions contrast with those provided in the “Law on the Number of Troops in Ukraine” (7 December 2000) which estimated troop strength for the year 2000 at 400,000, including 310,000 military servicemen (*Zakon Ukrainy O chislennosti Vooruzhennykh Sil Ukrainy na 2000-2005 roky*, N 2128-111, 7 December 2000). As for future downsizing until 2015, forecasts foresee a further reduction by 2005 (the end of the first stage of restructuring) to 295,000 servicemen, plus 80,000 civilian employees. In the second stage, 2006–2010, the number of military servicemen is expected to decrease to 275,000, plus 70,000 civil employees, and in the third stage, 2011–2015, yet another reduction to 240,000 military servicemen, plus 60,000 civil employees is foreseen (Polyakov, 2001).

Before 2002 it was impossible to officially obtain exact figures on Ukrainian troop strengths which would clarify the *de facto* strength of personnel in the various military branches and their ranks as well as those of troops under the supervision of ministries other than the Ministry of Defense. Budgeted troops often do not coincide with actual troop strengths. In 2001 a Ukrainian expert estimated that the difference between the reported and the actual troop strengths amounted to 40,000 soldiers, without taking troops under the Ministry of Interior, Border Troops and Special Forces into account (*Interview*, L. Polyakov, February 2001). Requests submitted to the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense asking for the respective information were declined on grounds of “state security”. It is therefore hard to confirm or qualify such figures on the actual dimensions and nature of downsizing of the Ukrainian armed forces. The figures on downsizing only match the reported troop strength if one assumes that substantial new recruitment has taken place to fill the gap. Apart from the Soviet legacy of disinformation and the possibility that the Ministry of Defense itself does not know actual troop strengths, the purpose of misrepresenting or over-representing figures could be to receive more budgetary means or to impress potential adversaries.

**Figure 2: Ukrainian troops other than regular armed forces, 1998–2000**

Source: Polyakov, 2001

<sup>a</sup> Planned number of personnel according to law

<sup>b</sup> Number of personnel according to the presentation of the Head of General Staff before the Ukrainian Parliament on 22 December 1998

<sup>c</sup> Approximate estimate of the total number of troops other than regular Armed Forces (Ministry of Defense)

( ) Reported strength of the National Guard before its dissolution

Troop name	Category of military personnel	1998	1999	2000
Border Troops	Military servicemen (total)	43,500 <sup>b</sup>	42,000	42,000
	Of whom draftees	15,000	14,000	14,000
	Of whom civil servants	n.a.	3,000	3,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>45,000<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>45,000<sup>b</sup></b>
Troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs	Military servicemen (total)	39,700 <sup>b</sup>	n.a.	n.a.
	Of whom draftees	15,000	15,000	15,000
	Of whom civil servants	1,000	1,000	1,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>49,414<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>49,414<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>49,414<sup>a</sup></b>
Civil Defense Troops	Military servicemen (total)	9,550 <sup>a</sup>	9,550 <sup>a</sup>	9,550 <sup>a</sup>
	Of whom draftees	5,500	5,500	5,500
	Of whom civil servants	668 <sup>a</sup>	668 <sup>a</sup>	668 <sup>a</sup>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10,218</b>	<b>10,218</b>	<b>10,218</b>
National Guard	Military servicemen (total)	25,500 <sup>b</sup>	25,500 <sup>b</sup> (19,000)	Dissolution in 2000
	Of whom draftees	7,000	7,000	
	Of whom civil servants	2,000	2,000	
<b>Total</b>		<b>128,632<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>127,732<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>104,632<sup>c</sup></b>

In Ukraine, the downsizing of the armed forces mainly resulted from the need to reduce the burden inherited from the Soviet Union and the intention to restructure the armed forces. As in other Eastern European countries, the Ukrainian army was a mass army, top-heavy and short on contract soldiers as well as non-commissioned officers. If one compares the absolute figures at the beginning of the 1990s with those at the end of the decade, the most significant shortages pertain to the air force or the air defense forces.

In Ukraine, discharged professional servicemen face four main hurdles in adapting to civilian life:

- Retraining
- Finding employment
- Social problems
- Medical or psychological difficulties.

During the period of transition to civilian life, the death rate among

recently released servicemen has reportedly risen significantly ([www.inf.lviv.ua/military.html](http://www.inf.lviv.ua/military.html)). Social problems—the main one being the lack of housing—increase levels of stress and uncertainty. The large numbers of discharged servicemen are being released into an environment characterized by high unemployment and economic crisis, caused to a major extent by transition to a market economy. In addition, most servicemen have families, which adds to the already overwhelming numbers of people requiring assistance.

### **Retraining and reintegration programs**

The reintegration of military servicemen in Ukraine has been conducted within the framework of four major programs:

- The German-financed reintegration program for officers originally stationed in East Germany
- The EU-TACIS program
- NATO's language training courses.
- The program of the Renaissance Foundation, a subsidiary of the George Soros' Open Society Foundation

Additionally, the International Association for the Rehabilitation of Military Servicemen, based in Israel and headed by the former Russian citizen, Evgeniy Shpits, has offered retraining courses in Israel with stipends of US \$600 per month. The association originally announced its willingness to retrain some 2,500 to 3,000 former officers but no information could be obtained on how many officers actually participated in courses in Israel.

The administrative setup and the scope of the reintegration measures in Ukraine have resulted almost exclusively from impulses given by foreign aid. The incentive to design and build up administrative structures for reintegration thus came from outside—the offer of money from Western countries or organizations. During the 1990s, the fear that laid-off military professionals could turn into mercenaries, threaten the democratization process, or cause social unrest reinforced this benevolent behavior of Western donors.

### **The German-financed reintegration project**

The first program for reintegration in Ukraine was financed by the German government as a means to facilitate the return of soldiers originally stationed in the former GDR (German Democratic Republic). The German approach was

motivated by the desire to speed up the withdrawal of former Soviet troops from East Germany. The program foresaw the retraining of reservists as well as of their wives and children. It was financed by the German government and was administered financially by the *Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau* (KfW). Between 1993 and 1995, three interregional 'model' retraining centers were set up: one in the city of Kiev, one in Krivoy Rog and one in Khorol. The program's partner on the Ukrainian side was the Ministry of Education, while the German consulting company GOPA Consultants, together with BC Berlin Consult and ABU Consult, functioned as the general contractors of the retraining program. The total amount offered to CIS countries (Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine) by the German government was approximately DM 200 million with an Ukrainian share of DM 22.98 million.

The money provided by the German government was mainly used for the acquisition and refurbishing of teaching facilities (c. DM 20 million) as well as the setting-up of administrative structures for the interregional training centers. Two training centers were particularly built for teaching company management. Altogether courses were available for sixteen different professions. Additionally, ABU Consult offered enterprise managers, those starting up businesses and young entrepreneurs training in privatization, restructuring, business management, planning, controlling, marketing, distribution, accounting, investment, financing, and the reform of public administration.

Topics for the original 10-month courses were, for example, 'The Small Business Specialist', 'The Car Mechanic', 'The Specialist for the Repair of Personal Computers' and 'The Specialist for the Repair of VCRs and TV Sets'. Course participants were delegated by their respective district military commander. When the German-

financed program came to an end in 1997, the three Interregional Training Centers (ITC) came under the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian Ministry of Education. The courses offered at the ITCs since then are mainly 5-month courses with a symbolic fee of 150 Hryvnas (29 euros) to be paid by the former officers. The ITCs do not engage in job placement, and no records are kept on the success of their students on the job market. It is nonetheless assumed that those who passed the original 10-month courses were usually successful on the job market.

In some subjects, Ukrainian trainers first had to be trained. For instance, German teachers offered trainer courses in market economy for 8 Ukrainian teachers while 28 teachers were sent to Germany for training courses in car servicing, radio, TV and PC repair and the management of construction companies or small enterprises. The first training courses in April 1993 concentrated on teaching small business management and the use of personal computers. By the end of June 1994, altogether 116 former officers or their family members had successfully completed professional courses. The number grew by the fall of 1994 to 350 course participants in Kiev, 164 in Krivoy Rog, and 65 in Khorol.

However, due to nontransparent accounting procedures, the overall number trained under the German program is not known, nor is it firmly established what happened to parts of the costly office equipment once the program came to its conclusion in 1997. Against the backdrop of the numbers of dismissed officers, the German contribution to actual retraining was of more of a symbolic nature, though the apparent high job-placement rate bespeaks success. The very creation of ITCs helped to sustain retraining capacities even after the German project came to an end. The shortcomings of the German-financed project were a result of the institutional setup: as governmental bodies, the ITCs were exclusively subordinated to the Ukrainian Ministry of Education, excluding the Ministry of Defense. By

and large, they acted independently of each other and without any tangible contribution from the National Coordinating Center at the Cabinet of Ministers in Kiev (NCC) (more below), leading to a lack of exchange of information, coordination and monitoring.

**The EU TACIS Project**

The German project for reintegration of former Soviet officers originally stationed in East Germany was followed by the European Union's TACIS project (EDUK 9301) which lasted from 2 March 1995 to 31 December 1998. It was carried out by GOPA Consultants, the company which had won the international tender. The main long-term expert was Dr Frank Jacobi. Parallel to the EU project, the Ukrainian government developed a 'Complex Program for the Social Readaptation and Reemployment of Military Officers Laid Off or Transferred to the Reserve, and their Families' (called hereafter 'Complex Program') which became the basis for implementing the TACIS project. TACIS supported this 'Complex Program' for 46 months through a project entitled 'Support to the Retraining and Reemployment of Ex-Military Officers in the Ukraine'.

The immediate objectives were identified as

- Support in the establishment of institutional capacities at the national and regional levels to implement and monitor the national 'Complex Program'
- The establishment of institutional capacities for job counseling and career advice
- The provision of different kinds of retraining and requalification programs for laid-off officers.

The essential goal of the TACIS project was to reintegrate discharged officers of the Ukrainian armed forces by means of forming central and regional centers for retraining and job placement. Successful job placement was the ultimate aim and retraining was intended to contribute to this. The TACIS project encompassed five elements: support for the 'Complex Program'; labor market analysis; upgrading of teachers' qualifications; development of general and specialized training programs for officers; and, support for civilian reemployment. Reemployment soon emerged as the core concern of the project.

Setting the retraining of some 8,000 military service men as its goal, the TACIS project offered standardized courses: a 640-hour course on management; a 200-hour basic course on 'Forming an Enterprise and Management of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)'; as well as specialized 640-hour courses on 'Management of Public Administration', 'Financial Management', 'Production Management', 'Management of Accounting and Auditing', 'Personnel Management', 'Management of SMEs', 'Information Management', 'Banking Management', 'Tourism Management', 'Marketing', and 'Food Processing'. Before the retraining could start, teachers themselves had to be trained. In 1997, 250 teachers for the retraining of officers were selected on a competitive basis; all underwent preparatory courses in computer literacy, 138 took English lessons, and 60 attended the 1-month 'General Management Training' course in an EU-country.

**Administrating reintegration: The National Coordinating Center (NCC) and Regional Centers for Employment**

At the beginning, the Ukrainian government, and in particular the Ministry of Defense, did not feel a sense of urgency. Presented with an offer by the EU, the Ukrainian government seems to have taken its time before accepting it. The protracted build-up of a sustainable structure reflects institutional infighting among the

ministries in charge. A certain 'mania' for secrecy inherited from Soviet days also contributed to delays. It was not until 5 August 1996 that, based on an order of the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers, a National Supervisory Board was created to coordinate activities related to the reintegration of military servicemen. The Supervisory Board was formed by the heads of departments in several ministries, among them the Ministries of Defense, of Labor and Social Policy, and of Education. The Supervisory Board was to provide the National Coordinating Center (NCC, see more below) with the necessary information. The Ministry of Labor, for example, was supposed to provide the NCC with information on regional labor markets and to assist former officers in finding jobs. At the level of regional governments, additional Supervisory Boards were formed in order to assist in the implementation of the governmental 'Complex Program', mainly in the field of local housing policy and job placement for former officers. The launch of the 'Complex Program' actually began in May/June 1997.

It is safe to assume that no governmental reintegration program would have taken place in Ukraine if the EU program had not been initiated. Out of US \$13.16 million foreseen for reintegration measures for the period 1996–1998, 10.6 million came from the EU. The Ukrainian share in financing mainly consisted of renting administrative buildings free-of-charge, taking on running costs, providing community services, taking over personnel on the governmental pay-roll, and assisting former officers in building up their businesses.

Before the TACIS project could commence, it was necessary to create a counterpart organization in the Ukraine. It took 21 months after the official launching of the TACIS project for the Ukrainian government to form a basic working unit—the National Coordinating Center for the Social Adaptation of Military Servicemen under the Cabinet of Ministers (NCC),

headed by Colonel Aleksander Stepanovich Shikalov. The NCC currently has 46 staff members, including 19 regional representatives for local coordination. In Kiev, the NCC is divided into four departments: Training, Reemployment, Utilization of Military Assets, and Housing for Discharged Officers. In September 2001, reflecting its new role in the conversion of military bases, the NCC was renamed the 'National Coordinating Center for Adaptation of Servicemen, transferred to Reserve or Retirement, and for the Conversion of Military Assets'.

The NCC, though formally a special body of the executive branch, remained closely linked to the Ministry of Defense, though it lacked sound financial backing from this ministry. Cooperation between the NCC and both the Main Administration of the Cadres Politics and the Main Administration for Military Education of the Ministry of Defense is practically nonexistent (*Narodnaya Armiya*, 14 April 2001, p. 5). Another illustration of the lack of coordination between the NCC and the Ministry of Defense is the 'Program for Social and Professional Adaptation of Laid-off Officers up to the year 2004', signed by the President in May 2000: the Ministry of Defense did not incorporate the expenses for this program into its planning for annual budgets, obviously hoping that the NCC would attract finances from abroad. It would seem that, for the Ministry of Defense, the NCC represented an 'agency' to which it could transfer its own responsibilities. Understandably, the NCC then strove for several years to achieve the upgrading of its status and for more independence from the Ministry of Defense—up to the present, however, with no avail.

### **Regional Centers for Employment (RCE)**

With TACIS help, 12 regional centers for job placement (*Regional'nye Tsentry Perepodgotovki i Trudoustroistva*—Regional Center for Retraining and Employment) were created. The RCEs represent the regional agencies responsible for implementing the TACIS project. They

signed and implemented temporary, though renewable, contracts with the NCC in Kiev. Apart from assisting in job placements, one additional task of the RCEs consisted in elaborating and assessing projects for small businesses with the support of the NCC, often based on former military infrastructure or using ex-garrisons. In short, the RCEs were active in three fields: assistance in job placement for those who had undergone retraining; counseling former officers on professional retraining; and helping to build-up new businesses. Altogether some 5,000 people found new jobs in small businesses formed with the help of the RCEs and the NCC. The most successful small businesses were usually in the field of food processing for the local market, such as bakeries or noodle production. During the first TACIS project (until end of 1998), the results of the actual creation of new jobs were modest: NCC and GOPA Consultants reported that 306 jobs had been newly established.

The NCC controls the finances of the RCEs used for retraining and reemployment. The RCEs have to account for their work to the NCC and the TACIS administration. The regional representatives of NCC, who are responsible for establishing contact with regional and local administrations, are often located on the premises of the RCEs. Their actual function—apart from oversight—nevertheless remains vague.

With time, most of the RCEs channeled their activities in new directions. As the retraining of former officers lost importance, they turned either to the professional training of the general public, to professional job-placement activities, or transformed themselves into developers of former military sites. Cooperation among the individual RCEs is one of the weakest elements in the whole system. Some have signed bilateral agreements among themselves or with state enterprises founded by the NCC. In contrast to the ITCs, which remained state institutions, the RCEs are private.

### **Box 1: Training and job procurement through the RCEs**

RCEs provide services in three main areas: retraining, job procurement, and promotion of small businesses. The RCEs regularly function as the liaison between those undergoing training and the subsidiary centers (*Regional'nye Uchebnye Tsentry*) which carry out some of the courses. Each RCE consists of a director, a training manager, a manager for the promotion of SMEs, a manager for job placement and, in some cases, a manager for distant learning as well. The RCEs mostly assist in job searches and job placement, even if they cannot perform the task of an unemployment office.

The training courses at the RCEs are divided into short-term courses (1–3 days at US \$30), medium-term courses (6 months at US \$600) and long-term courses (1–2 1/2 years). Most courses which take place are short- or medium-term courses. Retraining encompasses courses in 30 different disciplines, including distance learning for small business management, career planning, and business planning. Whereas at the beginning the courses had concentrated on basic administrative or computer skills, over time they have become more specialized.

Former officers were able to choose between training in 32 different professions. The average duration of the courses was four months—one usually spent on basic market economy and computer skills and three on the chosen specialization. One task of the RCEs was to assist former officers to acquire basic knowledge and skills for jobs in the newly emerging market economy or to facilitate the build-up of their own enterprises. In order to promote the formation of small businesses by former officers—particularly in order to assess the viability of business plans—the NCC signed an agreement with the Ukrainian Foundation for the Promotion of Entrepreneurs. In the city of Kharkov, a special Social Center for the Promotion

of Private Initiatives was formed (*Khar'kovskii Obshestvennyi Tsent Sodeistvia Chastnym Initsiativam*) whose purpose was to legally advise and technically support discharged officers in building-up their businesses.

A major part of the work of the NCC and the RCEs consisted in regular labor market analysis. By the end of 1998, the RCEs had reportedly assisted in the career planning of 3,701 laid-off officers while 412 new work places had been created in 103 new small businesses. Furthermore, 2,882 individual career plans and 773 business plans had been developed. How much of this consulting resulted in actual job placement was not recorded.

Job procurement includes the creation of new work places, job placement without or after retraining, pre-selection of candidates for enterprises, consulting on job procurement, and preparation of candidates for job interviews. Constant labor-market monitoring by the RCEs and their cooperation with the State Employment Service was supported through RCE staff training and coaching. Finally, the promotion of small businesses encompasses consulting, equipping with telecommunication equipment, business planning, the build-up of networks, accounting services, the selection of candidates, advertisement and help in registering small businesses.

### **Practical work of the NCC**

In February 1998, the NCC formed a 'Methodological Center' in Kiev whose main task became the preparation of materials for a Distance Learning System. Financed through TACIS, the Methodological Center helped the regional centers to acquire and exchange teaching experience, mostly by holding seminars and creating and distributing handbooks as well as functioning as a consulting organization. Based on the agreements between the NCC, 12 RCEs and the 3 ITCs, 9,356 people underwent some form of retraining in the years up to 2001. This figure probably relates to short-term counseling as well as the retraining of family members.

The NCC claims that by 2001 120 businesses had been set up with its help, providing new jobs for 4,400 people, among them 3,321 discharged servicemen. In areas where the unemployment figures for former officers were high, the NCC established some state enterprises of its own, altogether eight. It is not possible to assess the effectiveness of these enterprises, though the NCC claims that money generated by these state enterprises has been used for the creation of new jobs.

With the assistance of TACIS, the NCC built up eight 'project groups' in order to formulate long-term government programs for the reintegration of ex-servicemen. These included, among others, groups on telecommunications, construction work, tourism, agriculture and the conversion of military sites. One of the instruments used to promote job procurement by former officers was job fairs. In December 1998, in the city of Donetsk, a job fair was conducted with 502 representatives from seven garrisons, among them 343 reserve officers. Representatives of 68 enterprises and firms (59 Ukrainian and 9 Western) offered 369 open positions which resulted in 68 job contracts. From 1998 onwards, the NCC additionally organized a series of international conferences on the Crimean Peninsula on demobilization and reintegration

policies, mostly with participants from Eastern Europe and the CIS but also with representatives from Austria, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Israel.

The NCC has furthermore developed a housing policy in conjunction with the All-Ukrainian Union of Reserve Officers and the Union of Homeless Officers (*Soyuz bezdomnykh ofitserov*). The Union of Homeless Officers has a reported membership of 30,000. On the other hand, however, the second half of the 1990s saw constant reductions in special financing from the national budget for the housing of discharged officers— from 6 million hryvnas in 1996 to 2 million in 1997. In 1998 and 1999, all budgetary allocations for the construction of houses for laid-off officers were cancelled. After public pressure from the homeless officers, the Ukrainian government resumed its budgeted support in 2000 by equalizing the housing entitlement of former officers to that of other needy groups. In the years 2000–2001, the NCC reportedly provided former officers with some 1,000 apartments, financed by a special tax on enterprise profits. Given that reports in 2001 indicated that 13,300 former officers did not have proper apartments, it seems that drawing the Ukrainian President and parliament's attention to the urgency of the housing situation and a slight improvement in the situation was all the NCC had achieved.

## **Box 2: The focus shifts from reintegration to site conversion**

If the NCC had initially concentrated on the reintegration of servicemen into the job market, from May 1998 onwards it increasingly became responsible for administrating closed garrison towns and converting them into training centers, business incubators or techno-parks. The procedure was as follows: The Ministry of Defense usually informed the NCC about its intention to close a certain military base. The NCC then took the initiative to form a trusteeship-takeover in order to set up state enterprises on the premises. The business incubators were supposed to help small businesses by providing information technology, consulting facilities and professional training. In some of these garrison towns, the NCC opened up consulting bureaus (*konsultatsionnye punkty*) where former officers could participate in distant learning programs (covering some 2,866 officers or their family members up to the end of 2001).

Lack of affordable accommodation was the reason many laid-off officers could not move to a civilian city in search of a job. As a rule, ex-officers in garrison towns only had limited capital with which to start a business and lacked professional skills. About 500 garrison towns in Ukraine are slated for conversion in conjunction with the restructuring of the Ukrainian armed forces. From 2000 onwards, the NCC began to take charge of entire military towns such as in Uzin, Belaya Tserkov, Svidnitsa, Alchevsk, Lugansk, L'viv, on the Crimean peninsula and in the Zhitomir region. Whenever garrison towns were handed over to municipalities, they were usually stripped of all their assets by the local populace and thus became useless for future investment. The NCC is keen to preserve such facilities and to attract

extra-budgetary funds as well as investment for these military cities, though the NCC itself does not have specific expertise in promoting economic policy on a regional scale.

The two most ambitious site conversion projects are the transformation of the military airport Uzin (70km south of Kiev) into a cargo airport and the conversion of the former rocket base in Novye Belokorovichi, 200km east of Kiev, into a company for refining oil and gas. At the time of writing, it was still unclear to what extent the NCC would be successful in attracting the vast investments required. In the case of Novye Belokorovichi, which was still inhabited by 2,5000 persons of whom 1,000 were laid-off servicemen, it was expected that the necessary impulses for domestic and foreign investment in civilian production could be created by freeing enterprises from import custom duties, from paying value-added-tax on imported machinery, profit tax and land tax for three years, and by reducing the regular tax load by 50 percent for the following three years. Similar tax breaks are offered by regional administrations at a number of other military sites as well.

The authorities assigned a variety of tasks to the NCC which proved difficult to coordinate in practice: retraining and career-planning belong to a very different area from transforming garrison towns or finding a civilian use for military infrastructure. Given both the type of expertise of its staff and its structure, it is difficult to imagine that the NCC is the appropriate institution to deal with site conversion. There is a distinct difference between creating business plans for self-employed former officers and the development of huge military areas such as the Uzin airfield or entire garrison-towns. Quite apart from the fact that they are isolated from major cities and regional markets, military sites slated for conversion regularly represent ecological disasters or require expensive cleaning from explosives before investors would take an interest.

Despite this, the Ukrainian government places high hopes on getting the support of the Economic Department of NATO for site conversion.

According to plans, the Uzin military airport is to become a pilot project in Ukrainian cooperation with NATO. Interests differ however: whereas NATO may have an interest in the future use of the airfield, the primary concern of the NCC is the fate of the roughly 16,000 people living in the garrison town, among them 2,500 military persons with military pensions who are mostly unemployed.

In April 2001 and April 2002, in order to attract additional investments particularly in garrison towns or at military sites to be converted, the NCC conducted conferences on the Crimean Peninsula, "The Crimean Spring of Conversion". Neither the list of participants nor individual reports by participants given to the author after the conference indicate that significant investment can be expected.



**Outcomes of the first EU TACIS project**

It is reported that, by December 1998, 8,013 people of the so-called ‘target group’ had been trained in one way or another through the joint TACIS/NCC program. If one adds those trained by the Interregional Training Centers, a total of 9,356 people (compared to the 8,000 planned) reportedly underwent some form of retraining. Out of these, 2,866 officers or their family members had participated in distance learning courses, mostly officers in garrison towns who would not otherwise have had the chance to commute to the training centers. 61.5 percent of the course participants were officers laid-off shortly before retraining, the rest were reserve officers. A high proportion of the personnel retrained were family members—39.5 percent of the total amount. The figures on the actual results of the first TACIS project nonetheless vary: according to a report by the NCC, 6,895 ‘people’ had finished retraining by 1 December 1998, 1,768 were still undergoing training at that time, and 1,043 were planning to do so in the future. The accounting for the first EU TACIS program thus seems to be ambiguous.

Within the framework of the first TACIS program, it is reported that 103 (according to the report from RAG Bildung GmbH: 122) new businesses were set up, resulting in 412 (or 466, according to the RAG report) new jobs. Career services helped to place 3,701 (or 4401, according to RAG) of the ‘target group’ in new jobs (Shikalov, 2001; Körver-Buschhaus, 2000). Although the differences in the reports may in part be due to the use of slightly different timeframes, ‘elastic’ accounting criteria also played its part. According to the figures given by the NCC, 4,400 people successfully found jobs after retraining, of whom 3,321 were former military servicemen.

**The second EU TACIS project and future directions**

In July 2000, a second EU project (SCRE1/No. 42) on assisting job creation for ex-members of the military was launched with a duration of 24 months and a budget of 2 million euros. The group targeted by this project was 5,000 discharged military servicemen and the staff of both the NCC and the RCEs. Partners of the new EU project were the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Economics, the Ministry of the Interior, the Security Service of Ukraine, and the Border Guards.

One of the goals of the new TACIS project was the formation of so-called ‘project groups’ with the aim of creating jobs in the area of new technologies, for example IT-technologies, energy-saving technologies or ecologically-clean energies. The hope is that profits incurred from these technologically advanced endeavors could, at least partially, be used to solve some of the housing problems experienced by former officers. However, in the years leading up to 2005, it is becoming apparent that retraining is gradually losing importance within the overall framework of reintegration. This echoes the decline in importance within Ukraine of demobilization itself, as confirmed by the planned structure of the budget for reintegration measures.

**Assessment of the ‘Complex Program’ and the TACIS projects**

Over the years, some 12,000 people, both officers and their family members, have been retrained by the NCC, of whom an estimated 8,000 later found employment. It is impossible to give an exact figure because not all who undergo retraining by the NCC or its subcontractors report back to the organization once they have found employment. Reemployment—not just retraining—tended to be most successful when skills acquired during the military service could be transferred.

It is estimated, for example, that more than 50 percent of former officers ended up in private security firms. Former polit-officers were as a rule hard to re-employ. With few exceptions, officers who turned to trading or commercial business ran the risk of unemployment, mainly due to the shaky nature of commercial business itself. Moreover, such officers needed a *kyrysha*—a ‘roof’ or protection from the Mafia. One of the most critical groups was that of laid-off officers and their families who continued to live in former garrison towns.

On the basis of the author’s interviews with TACIS staff, the NCC and trainers at the RCEs, certain qualifications and skills proved advantageous in the attempt to find a new job: discipline, accuracy, persistence, a structured manner of decision-making, trustworthiness, communication skills, the ability to delegate tasks and—for those subsequently employed in security services—the ability to handle weapons. Many former officers simply moved from the regular armed forces to the ‘Security Service’ (the successor of the KGB, with approximately 40,000 members) or the Border Guards (approximately 40,000 servicemen); in fact, neither agency has reduced its numbers over the last decade. Traits which proved to be a disadvantage for reemployment were: relying on entitlements instead of self-reliance, a ‘wait-and-see’ approach, an unwillingness to leave the military community, and—frequently mentioned—drinking problems. As the entitlements which ex-officers are due are still above the social average, they are usually far better off than the other unemployed. Seen in a European context, the entitlement of an officer to an apartment is quite an unusual privilege; obviously the Soviet mentality is still strong.

The NCC and the RCEs built up a reintegration capacity that was at the same time both regionalized and centrally coordinated. The regional

approach by the RCEs proved to be particularly constructive. Nonetheless, retraining and job placement was largely dependent upon physical access to the regional centers although officers who did not reside in the vicinity of RCEs could benefit either from more flexible distant learning courses or from the offer of training modules on military premises before actual discharge. Competition among the RCEs during the tendering process, the auditing of income and expenses by the NCC and annual reports on outcomes were salient instruments to maintain a stimulus for good performance. Some of the RCEs clearly fared better than others in terms of employment results or job procurement resulting from the creation of new businesses. Leaders were the centers in Dnepropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kiev and Nikolaev. Their success is only partially attributable to more favorable structural conditions. A better performance in administration, management, strategy development and innovation evidently made a difference. However not only are all of the RCEs originally formed still in existence, but, over the last two years, two more RCEs (in Zaporozhe and Lutsk) have even been created.

The main Ukrainian agencies that received money from foreign donors for reintegration viewed each other as competitors in the tight market of sponsors. The NCC and the Renaissance Foundation project (details below) did not exchange information on retraining methods, for instance. Cooperation between the Interregional Training Centers, originally equipped with money from Germany, and the NCC remained similarly weak. Despite the impressive setting up of reintegration agencies, their work will not become an integral part of the state program for the development of the armed forces until 2005: in short, restructuring, downsizing and reintegration have not been integrated into one single effort. Neither did post-military career planning become an integral part of military career planning

itself, nor did the armed forces development plan guarantee the requisite financial backing for the social and professional reintegration of ex-officers: there is simply no provision for this in the Ukrainian budget. This situation is exacerbated by a further critical weakness of the reintegration policy: the lack of an adequate legal basis for planning military, and post-military, careers.

Yet another shortcoming of the 'Complex Program' relates to the exchange of information. Officers are rarely informed about their dismissal in due time while regional commanders do not usually pay any attention to the post-military careers of their subordinates. More than 90 percent of the officers discharged claimed that no preparation for a civil career had taken place during their time in service (*Narodnaya Armiya*, 25 May 1999, pp. 4–5). Nor do regional military commands for the reserve fare better in this respect. For the years 1996–1999 it was reported in several cases that regional military commands were not able to provide laid-off officers with information on the ITCs or the RCEs, simply because they did not know anything at all about such retraining opportunities. Officers slated for discharge were not systematically informed about their rights and opportunities, though the information policy improved slightly with the build-up of a NCC website.

One of the flaws of the Ukrainian program consisted in weak linkages between retraining programs and actual job placement. While the cooperation of the RCEs and the Interregional Training Centers with the Ministry of Labor left much room for improvement, the Ministry of Defense merely transferred its own responsibilities to the NCC. In short, the Ministry of Defense or its substructures did not cooperate constructively with the various different organizations engaged in the reintegration measures. As the capacities of the NCC were not evenly strong in all areas, the management of military assets, especially the attraction of foreign

investment and the raising of extra-budgetary funds for new businesses, proved difficult. The NCC particularly lacks expertise in assessing the assets of huge military sites.

Difficulties in implementation of the Ukrainian 'Complex Program' result furthermore from institutional mismanagement. Continuing delays in releasing budgeted funds by the Ukrainian government inhibited the NCC's work during the first TACIS project. Having said that, the distribution of budgeted means to the NCC was nonetheless far better than on average in Ukraine: the NCC received at least 93 percent of the budgeted means in 1997 in contrast to other governmental agencies which received only 63 percent.

Certain services under the TACIS program were at times criticized for being just a job procurement measure for Western consultants who would be otherwise unemployed. As is often the case with international aid organizations, the Ukrainian counterparts questioned the cost-benefit ratio of short-term consultants or of standardized Western 'business plans' which did not take the local market into account.

### **General conclusions**

The Ukrainian experiences allow for some general conclusions. It would be better if retraining started during a preparatory stage in the military, the earlier the better. Family members, especially wives, need to be regularly included in reintegration measures. Yet retraining should not be seen as having a value in itself but must be linked to employment. Especially at the beginning of the Ukrainian reintegration programs, training was of a too general nature and was not sufficiently market-oriented. In order to link retraining to job placement, information on the regional labor markets has to be regularly updated. On

the other hand, valuable experience has been gained through the TACIS/NCC project as far as the combination of reintegration measures with the conversion of military sites is concerned. The creation of special agencies to manage the conversion of military assets is preferable to subordination to the Ministry of Defense or to a transfer of the assets to municipalities which usually see military sites only as an additional burden. Finally, it must be said that in gaining experience with reintegration policies in Europe—especially in Eastern Europe—the Ukrainian NCC has played a leading role. Since 1998, for example, the NCC has organized a series of conferences with the aim of exchanging information. Nonetheless, even if every effort should be welcomed in itself, the extent to which information is actually transferred is unfortunately still unsatisfactory.

**The Renaissance Foundation project**

In October 1993, the ‘Social Adaptation of Military Servicemen’ (*Sotsial'naya adaptatsiya voennosluzhbasbikh*) program of the Renaissance Foundation was formally launched in Ukraine and continued until 1998 based on an agreement between the President of Ukraine and George Soros. In reality, the Renaissance Foundation project properly began in 1994. The Retraining of the Military program retrained discharged or reserve officers in altogether 50 disciplines, among them sales management, bookkeeping, economics, PC skills and small business management. Training centers were located at Kiev, Kharkov, Lugansk, L'viv, Donetsk, Dnepropetrovsk, Odessa and on the Crimean Peninsula. The courses were licensed by the

Ministry of Education. Although 48,858 former servicemen are reported to have been retrained through this Renaissance Foundation project, these numbers seem unrealistic, given the schooling facilities and the finances available.

On 13 December 1998, an International Fund for Social Adaptation (IFSA) was formed on the basis of the earlier Renaissance Foundation project. The adjective ‘international’ indicated the intention to cooperate with NGOs operating within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), particularly Russia, Belarus, and Moldova, as well as with donor organizations in the West. Against the framework of the IFSA, 24 centers for social adaptation, 17 centers for the promotion of businesses and business-incubators, 3 centers for social-psychological and medical rehabilitation, and 3 credit unions have been set up since work began in 1999.

**Box 3: Secondary reintegration measures**

**Grassroot activities**

Some associations of officers—there are altogether 43 such associations in Ukraine—offered professional training courses as well. The Ukrainian Association of Professional Reserve Officers (*Ukrainskaya assotsiatsiya vvolennykh v zapas kadrovnykh voennosluzhbasbikh/UAUZV*), for example, organized short-term courses (from two weeks up to five months) in Kiev, but there was no cooperation with the efforts of the NCC.

**NATO language courses in Ukraine**

Since November 1998 the NCC has been collaborating with the Economic Department of NATO in order to facilitate the reintegration of officers

who have left the military. The aim of this cooperation consists in training between 80 to 130 Ukrainian officers annually, mainly in foreign languages, and 130 former marine officers for reemployment on trade ships. Participants have to pass competitive exams before course enrollment. The courses were provided by the British Council (English), the Institut Français (French) and the Goethe Institute (German). According to figures given by the NCC, the overall costs of these language courses amounted to US \$100,000 by the year 2001. From the perspective of NATO's Economic Department, the promotion of these language courses represented an inexpensive means of polishing up NATO's image in Ukraine. In 2001, language training financed by NATO reached some 90 students, receiving wide press coverage. As a NATO official admitted in private conversation, their purpose consisted primarily of PR activity for NATO.

With the formation of the IFSA, the personnel covered by reintegration measures expanded. The promotion of social adaptation was widened to encompass not only former serviceman, but troops of the Border Guard, the Security Service (former KGB), the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Emergency Situations as well as family members of these troops. The scope of activities run by the IFSA also expanded. Anyone interested in creating his or her own small business could apply to the IFSA for help. This expansion of services is indicative of a broadening in the understanding of reintegration. Over time, however, it turned out that the retraining centers had built up more capacities than could actually be used by former servicemen. Coupled with the fact that the retraining centers also required alternative sources of income, the IFSA began to develop purely business activities of its own—not only general training seminars but even marketing their retraining programs in other countries.

**Figure 3: Number of ex-servicemen retrained by the Renaissance Foundation, 1992–1998**

Source: Information supplied to the author by the International Foundation for Social Adaptation, Kiev, [aksionov@ifsa.kiev.ua](mailto:aksionov@ifsa.kiev.ua)

Measures	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	Total
Re-training	253	2,000	7,258	12,582	10,412	9,836	6,517	48,858
Job placement	-	510	2,808	4,784	6,410	6,147	3,158	23,817
Formation of small businesses by former officers	-	72	11	52	152	112	211	610

Though the author could not verify whether reported figures of retrained officers corresponded to actual figures, allegations were repeatedly made by persons spoken to in Ukraine that funds belonging to the Renaissance Foundation were being misused for purposes other than those specified under the grant. The underlying idea of the Renaissance Foundation project was to organize reintegration primarily through non-governmental structures, idealistically assuming that these would be less compromised and corrupt than governmental ones. Former officers usually set up centers in the expectation

of receiving funds. The weak spots of the Renaissance Foundation project evidently consisted in the absence of adequate monitoring and auditing from outside and the lack of proper coordination with governmental institutions such as the Ministry of Defense, the National Coordinating Center at the Cabinet of Ministers and the regional administrations, including the labor offices.

**Figure 4: Implementation of the Program of the International Fund for Social Adaptation/Retraining of the Military Program (RMP), 31 December 1999**

Source: Information supplied to the author by the International Foundation for Social Adaptation, Kiev, [aksionov@ifsa.kiev.ua](mailto:aksionov@ifsa.kiev.ua)

1994–1999	Kiev	Dnepro-Petrovsk	Donetsk	Kharkov	Luhansk	Lviv	Odessa	Crimea	Total
Retrained	27,035	3,307	2,706	3,819	200	4,037	3,933	5,979	51,016
Employed	10,803	2,428	2,327	2,145	58	1,766	2,255	3,599	25,381
Total number of persons assisted by the RMP	38,185	6,271	4,162	5,835	218	4,896	6,085	6,507	72,159

## **Russia**

Until the turn of the century, reintegration efforts in Russia were not allotted high priority by the Russian government. Reintegration policy in Russia had a protracted start, and it is not clear to what extent demobilization efforts announced in the 1990s were actually implemented (for an early assessment, see OECD, 1993). During the 1997/98 demobilization campaign, when the strength of the authorized forces was ostensibly reduced from 1.8 million to 1.2 million, only 120,000 people were actually demobilized (BICC, 2001, p. 74). As in the case of Ukraine and Belarus, reintegration measures initially benefited from the German contribution to reintegrate servicemen formerly stationed in East Germany. The German government provided money to set up 10 retraining centers for servicemen, similar to the ones in Ukraine. Over time, other Western countries invested money as well. However, with the new Putin administration, the approach to demobilization and reintegration changed.

Reintegration was inhibited by the indecisiveness of the Russian government and the alleged shortage of money. For long, the scope and nature of future downsizing remained undecided, and even at the time of this writing, disputes over the future troop strength had not yet been resolved. Vladimir Potapov, Deputy Secretary of the Security Council, announced in June 2002 that the numerical strength would be brought down from the authorized figure of 1,200,000 for the year 2000 to between 1,000,000 and 850,000 by 2010. Nonetheless the General Staff cites a different figure, speaking of an even 1,000,000, the troop strength initially specified for the armed forces by 2005 (*Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 4 June 2002). The military is particularly concerned about the unprecedented high number of resignations from the officer corps on

top of planned troop strength cuts in the army and navy. It is mostly the young officers who decide to leave the armed forces, a situation which is mainly attributed to social insecurity and low salaries.

During the first decade after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Russian Ministry of Defense did not create institutional capacities to deal with reintegration. At a meeting of a government committee on social issues affecting servicemen, the chief inspector at General Headquarters, Gen. Mikhail Moiseyev, released figures showing that, since 1992, more than 900,000 officers, warrant officers and midshipmen had been dismissed. Of this number, only 60,000, or 7 percent, had undergone retraining for civilian professions at Defense Ministry training centers (Mukhin, 2001). Up to 1999, there were only 5 or 6 officers in the whole of Russia providing information on retraining programs while Germany, by contrast, had approximately 1,000 such people. It was not surprising that the morale of servicemen to be discharged was low as they knew that the Ministry of Defense was not taking care for them. A survey of servicemen showed that two-thirds were worried at the prospect of having to find new work after leaving the military. Many of those affected by the cutbacks will also face problems finding new places for their wives to live and work.

### **The government program**

The system of retraining was finally altered in 2000 by being centralized and brought under the Ministry of Defense, with regional authorities contributing to job placement for former officers. In 2000, the 'All-Russian Center of Social Adaptation of Military Servicemen' was established, uniting all retraining centers. International assistance, supplemented

by some national off-budget funding, is the main source of funding (BICC, 2001, p. 75). Out of a total of 3.5 billion rubles allocated for military reform in 2002, 50 million rubles were earmarked for the retraining of military professionals. However it was only in 2001 that the government set aside money for retraining military professionals when it allocated 24 million rubles for the first time, and it is not yet clear whether the government will indeed hand out all the money allocated for retraining (see Mukhin 2001, also on the following).

Nevertheless, at least on paper the government is doing something for the servicemen who have lost their jobs in the military. Such servicemen are covered by a 1998 Federal Employment Program for 1998–2001. Another plan, passed by decree in 2000, is aimed at compensating dismissed servicemen for the cost of training for a new profession. Furthermore, a government committee on social issues affecting servicemen is in existence, headed by Deputy Prime Minister Valentina Matviyenko. The committee is working on a draft federal program that aims at facilitating the integration into civilian society of servicemen to be discharged between 2002 and 2005. The committee is drawing up welfare programs for servicemen and their families. In early 2001, former Defense Minister Igor Sergeev signed a resolution to set up a coordinating council on the welfare of dismissed servicemen and their families, which should unite the efforts of the various Defense Ministry departments. Yet, the proliferation of servicemen's welfare committees does not in itself solve anything. The military sociologist Sergei Solovyev estimates that a little less than half the officers who fall under the cutbacks will end up having to find work of some kind or another for themselves. "It's particularly hard for servicemen over 50 living in small towns or in garrisons where there are

many retired servicemen," Solovyev said (Mukhin 2001). Generally speaking, job placement depends on the state of the labor market in the regional economy; training itself is no assurance of finding a place to apply the learned skills.

### **Regional efforts**

Most of the regions (68 out of 89) have set up centers of their own for the social adaptation of military servicemen, though some of these centers deal exclusively with the development of self-governing bodies in garrison-towns (full list in TACIS 1999, pp. 21–32). The center in Kaliningrad, for example, supports the establishment of residential self-governing committees in four formerly closed military towns (see: [www.civilsoc.org/nisorgs/russwest/milgrnt.htm#Social%20Adaptation](http://www.civilsoc.org/nisorgs/russwest/milgrnt.htm#Social%20Adaptation)). The emphasis of the Kaliningrad center ([centr@csam-trans.com](mailto:centr@csam-trans.com)) is on citizen involvement in community development. The Nizhny Novgorod Center for the Social Adaptation of Military Servicemen supports the development of civilian institutions in three formerly closed military towns through the establishment of residential self-governing committees (contact: [sergsor@osi.nnov.ru](mailto:sergsor@osi.nnov.ru)). A further center exists in Odintsovo, Moscow *oblast*, supporting job creation and business activity among decommissioned military officers through specialized training, consultation services, and assistance in obtaining micro-loans from a local credit cooperative serving this target group (contact: [psrcsav@cityline.ru](mailto:psrcsav@cityline.ru)). Apart from the regional centers, usually linked to the regional government, 34 regional institutions specialized in the retraining of former officers existed in 2000 (for a full list, see TACIS 1999, pp. 60–62). However, not only are these centers usually in need of the appropriate equipment for teaching, but teaching itself ought to be more closely linked to

the educational and training requirements of local business and industry. There is, furthermore, an identified need to strengthen distance learning capacities for those who do not live in the vicinity of retraining centers. A particular role in reintegration of servicemen is played by various regional Associations of Soldiers' Mothers, though their prime focus is on soldiers who have participated in the Chechnyan wars (see International Foundation for Civil Liberties, [Kolokol.org](http://Kolokol.org), at: [www.209.235.228.197/english/161.htm](http://www.209.235.228.197/english/161.htm)).

### **Centers of higher education**

Some regional centers of higher education have begun to specialize in retraining courses for military servicemen. But the existing system of professional retraining programs is often hindered because financial support for travelling to the retraining centers is limited, while the cost of renting accommodation for the duration of courses is high. Furthermore, services offered by retraining centers on a commercial basis are rarely affordable for laid-off officers.

## **Box 4: Cooperation between Russia and NATO**

Since 1998 there have been discussions between the Russian Ministry of Defense and NATO on possible reintegration measures ([www.nato.int/docu/pr/1998/p980528e.htm](http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1998/p980528e.htm)). On 28 May 1998, the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council discussed cooperation on the retraining of retired military servicemen at the ministerial level in Luxembourg. In December 2000, NATO defense and foreign ministers met their Russian counterparts, Marshal Igor Sergeev and Minister Igor Ivanov, once more at ministerial sessions of the Permanent Joint Council at NATO headquarters in order to discuss, among other things, the retraining of discharged military personnel.

Michel Duray, who was with the Economic Department of NATO until 2001, said that retraining programs funded by NATO for officers leaving military service were of particular importance. This comment became especially valuable once Russia announced that it would make large cuts in armed forces personnel over the following few years. Duray called attention to the fact that even long-term enlistment usually meant only 15–20 years in the army, so that it was necessary to offer retraining in civilian skills when a person entered the military and not after they had left. He stressed that many servicemen were faced with losing not only their jobs but also their housing, in some cases at only months' notice (Lagunina, 1999). According to a joint plan of NATO and the Russian Ministry of Defense, training in the use of the internet would be provided to service personnel. In June 2002, NATO and Russia's Ministry of Defense set up a center, which, among other things, provides stipends for officers to learn how to use the internet.

### External support

In 1994, a EU TACIS officers retraining program was launched, the initial phase of which totaled Ecu 24 million. It involved the establishment of retraining centers and the retraining of 17,000 officers, some 60 percent of whom have already found permanent jobs. In addition, the EU has provided teaching equipment and computers to build a network linking the retraining centers. This network covers 10 retraining centers of the Russian Ministry of Defense.

At the end of 1998, a project worth Ecu 4 million in support of officer retraining was approved. Under this, demobilized Russian officers were to receive help to find work either in military industries which were being converted to civilian production or in small and medium-sized enterprises. Training in job skills—including management, banking, ecology, insurance, investment, logistics and production—would be provided by a total of 600 teachers throughout a network of 23 retraining centers run in conjunction with the Russian Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Defense. The EU project was to pay special attention to both the municipal development of former military towns and the reintegration of military people into these local economies. The shift in focus, from mere retraining to reintegration, is a reflection of the current needs in Russia (see TACIS Annual Report 1998 at: [www.europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/nis/tar98/russia.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/nis/tar98/russia.htm)). Thus the EU TACIS project particularly targeted servicemen in remote military towns and tried to help them both with professional retraining, development of local self-government and with business development.

The UK Ministry of Defense program is the most prominent retraining program in Russia. From 1996 onwards, the United Kingdom has been spending over US \$2 million annually in the support of 6 retraining centers for retiring officers in the Moscow region, St. Petersburg, Kronstadt, Nizhny Novgorod, Rostov-on-Don and Vladivostok. During that time, more than 10,000 officers and their dependents have passed through the program and over 70 percent of them found employment upon graduation. “The secret of the British success is its commitment to retaining full financial and operational control over the program with a full-time British officer running the program on the ground in Russia. All funding has been delivered directly to retraining centers, thereby minimizing opportunities for corruption. Another important feature of the UK program is its flexibility, which includes constantly reshaping their training curriculum in accordance with local employment market research. Finally, the UK program has managed to establish constructive relations with the commanders of the North Caucasus Military District and the Pacific Fleet, who then issued orders authorizing officers to attend the UK courses before retirement, thus assuring their smooth transition to civilian life” (Antonenko 2000). About 14,000 Russian servicemen have received civilian training through funds assigned by the British Ministry of Defense. The British coordinator, Jack Hemsley, noted however that, under an agreement between the United Kingdom and Russia, the program “would not last forever” and may in fact cease to exist very soon.

The British experience was subsequently used by the Japanese government in developing their own reintegration program for the Russian Far East. The Japanese program, running in Vladivostok, Khabarovsk, Sakhalin and other regions, offers retraining for

officers to service Japanese cars and other products. “The rate of employment among its graduates is very high, given the local demand and prestige that it has developed. Many graduates are employed in Russo-Japanese joint ventures and assist Japanese investors to develop local infrastructure for distributing and servicing their goods” (Antonenko 2000, see also on the following).

In 1999, the Norwegian government started a program for naval officers in Murmansk with support from the commander of the Northern Fleet. It is conducted in cooperation with a Norwegian university.

Until recently the US government has not participated in reintegration programs in Russia due to congressional limitations that were imposed on providing assistance for military retraining and housing, following corruption allegations about German government assistance. However, the British assistance has demonstrated that corruption can be effectively minimized. The PONARS study concluded in 2000 that “there is no reason why such programs and experience cannot be extended to social adaptation and small business development among ex-military personnel” (Antonenko, 2000).

Along with these, other programs supported by foreign countries and international organizations also exist (on the following see Hemsley, 2001). Two German NGOs are active in the resettlement field although the numbers being retrained are small. The UK’s Know How Fund ran a “Training the Trainers” program to establish retraining facilities on a number of Strategic Rocket Force bases but there is no recent information on whether this project has continued under Russian

guidance. Sweden initiated a small program in Northwest Russia, Norway, as mentioned above, has a program in Murmansk, which started in 2000. 109 officers of the Northern Fleet have been retrained so far, 81 of whom started in March 2001 and the annual target is 160. The reported success rate of those moving on to employment is 60 percent. The program is very similar to the British program. As also mentioned above, Japan has run several 2-week seminars in Vladivostok and Khabarovsk and may expand to Sakhalin. Denmark recently expressed an interest in joining the UK program in St Petersburg.

One of the programs specifically targeting small business development among ex-servicemen is being undertaken by the Russian 'Partner' Foundation, which in turn receives financial support from the Soros Foundation. By February 1999 this program had reportedly retrained 5,700 servicemen and employed around 4,000. In 2000, Antonenko reported on the achievements of this project: "Two 'business incubators' have been set up and 9 more regions have offered to create them. Fourteen credit unions among ex-servicemen have been established to help fund business start-ups. The program has also helped to create 23 small enterprises. The program connected 28 resettlement centers to the Internet and set up 15 libraries in military towns and garrisons, as well as preparing 36 resettlement specialists for other regions". Part of the success of the projects rests in the close cooperation of the Foundation with regional governors, who provide space in closed military towns free-of-charge for setting up the business incubators.

### **Lessons learned**

Because the Russian reintegration efforts are still ongoing, the following remarks must be seen as preliminary. In the Russian case, the most critical shortcoming pertains to indecisiveness over the future strength of the armed forces along with salaries, pensions and the benefit package for officers—all of which affect the subsequent size, and consequences of, downsizing. Work is still needed to clarify the roles, responsibilities and resources at federal, regional and local levels of government. External support can help to formulate legislation on pensions, housing and retraining and to support the build-up of related capacities, but a definite financial and administrative commitment by the Russian government is a prerequisite for implementation. The experience of the UK project is particularly worth taking into account: it was regionalized, thus circumventing bureaucratic stalemate in the central government; it established clear cost-benefit ratios and paid due attention to accounting, thus reducing the potential for corruption and misuse of funds.

As in the case of Ukraine, it became evident that retraining programs alone are no longer sufficient. Reintegration must become part of a comprehensive program targeting economically deprived areas and creating employment. Programs supported from abroad should also assist local governments in acquiring professional employees and should help integrate ex-servicemen into civil society by supporting non-governmental associations to set up local social adaptation programs. They should particularly help to develop self-governing structures in converted

military towns. A final remark on the frequently mentioned shortage of funding—funding from the business world would enable the retraining project to proceed more rapidly. Instruction should be adapted to reflect the needs of businesses in which officers will be working.



## Poland

Since 1989 the Polish armed forces have experienced numerous plans for reorganization, changes of doctrines and alteration in the relevant legislation. The general intention was to replace the former offensive and support functions of the Warsaw Pact; to ensure integration into and interoperability with NATO by mirroring its structure, training and equipment; to cut back air and air defense forces; and to redeploy Polish forces from the Western to the Eastern border (the following section draws largely on Dragsdahl, 1999; Giermakowski and Keson, 2002).

Between 1 January 1989 and 1 November 1998 altogether 71,296 individuals left the professional military staff. Of this total number, 35,611 had already left during the period 1989–1991. From 1989 to 1999, the overall number of posts was reduced from 398,660 to 226,460, namely by 43 percent. The number of posts for commissioned officers was reduced by 27.3 percent, warrant officers posts by 9.8 percent and NCO posts by 36.4 percent. These

figures include reductions in the actual total of compulsory-service recruits by 56.2 percent (from 279,110 to 122,260) and of professional servicemen by 30.5 percent (from 112,656 to 80,634). The given numbers refer to official figures, but do not necessarily reflect actual holdings: official figures differed in the 1990s from source to source and actual holdings were often below the numbers reported.

### Reductions in the 1990s

The years 1996–1999 saw a sharp increase in the number of contract-soldiers. A total of 8,181 professional soldiers were conscripted at the time, including 320 commissioned officers, 699 warrant officers, and 7,162 non-commissioned officers. The number of professionals leaving the armed forces during the entire period is nonetheless higher than the number of positions cut. Between 1990 and 1999, more than 62,500 professional servicemen retired from the army—approximately 67 percent of the manpower in service at the end of 1990. This includes

approximately 31,500 commissioned officers (c. 67 percent of the 1990 figure), some 18,100 warrant officers (c. 70 percent), and some 12,750 NCOs (c. 62 percent) (Dragsdahl, 1999; Giermakowski and Keson, 2002). The deterioration of living conditions in the armed forces—even poverty, bad housing and expected gains on the civilian market led the younger, more ambitious and better qualified professionals to leave the armed forces voluntarily whereas older colonels, of whom there were too many, remained (“A Servicemen’s Poverty”, *FBIS Daily Report, FBIS-EEU-97-023*, 20 January 1997). Apart from individual preferences, the number of persons leaving voluntarily depended on the regional unemployment rate and the cost of renting flats. In larger towns in particular, officers frequently took up second jobs in order to increase their income while formally retaining their status in the armed forces. As a result of restructuring and voluntary exit the armed forces actually lacked qualified personnel. Many positions were held by captains and lieutenants whereas NATO countries would have filled them with NCOs.

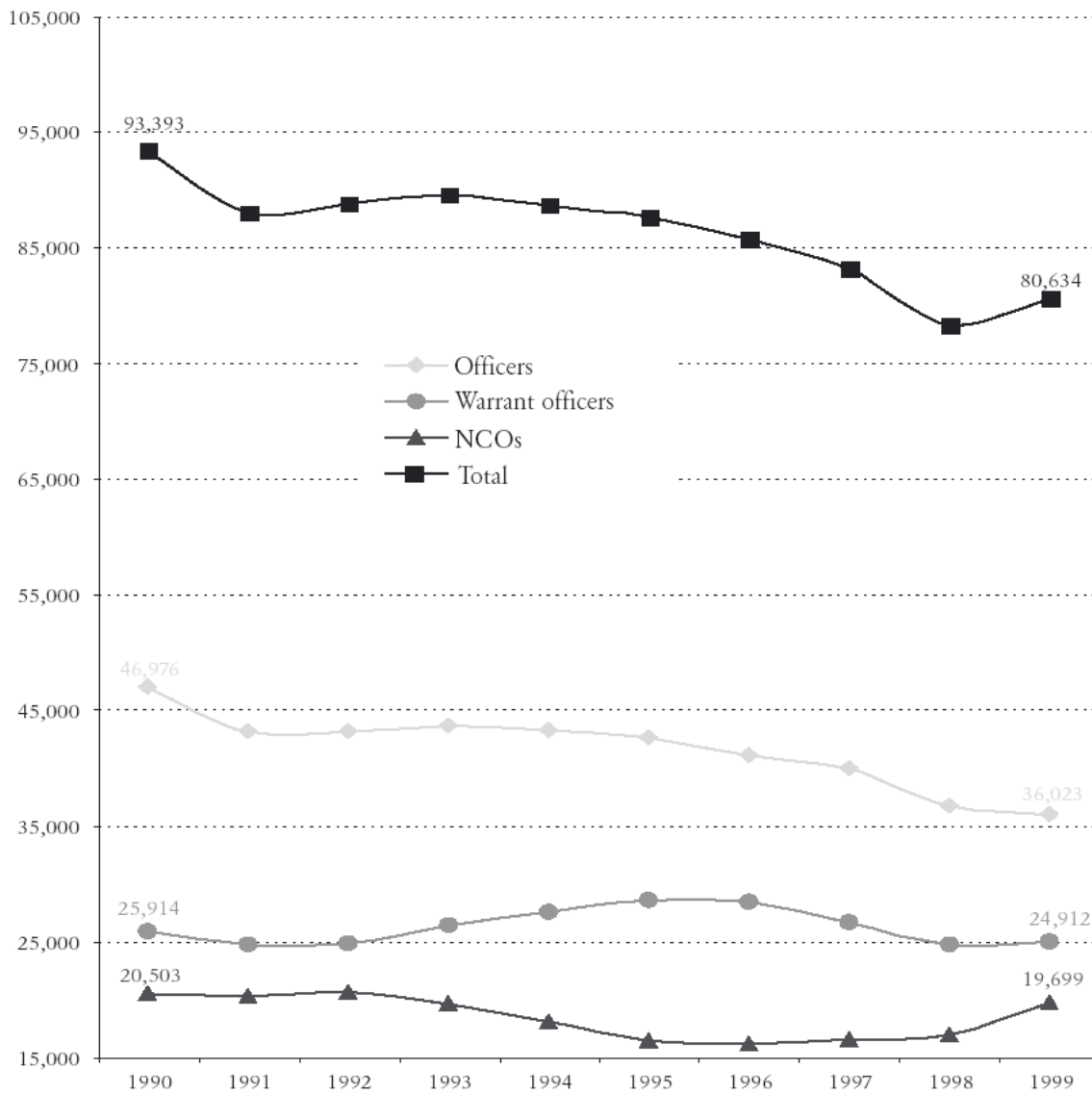
**Figure 5: Changes in proportions between professional servicemen ranks, 1990–1999**

Source: Giermakowski and Keson, 2002, p. 14



**Figure 6: Changes in proportions between ranks in the Polish armed forces, 1990–1999**

Sources: *Giermakowski and Keson, 2002, p. 13*



**Figure 7: Total number of dismissals from professional military service, 1990–1999**

Source: Giermakowski and Keson, 2002, p. 15

Reason for dismissal	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Incapable of professional military service according to Military Medical Commission (WKL)	2,362	1,840	723	499	541	685	786	712	596	320
Legal retirement age reached	1,115	285	277	162	155	194	270	151	104	101
Term as professional soldier expired	5,122	4,199	759	1,044	2,637	3,347	4,823	5,174	7,036	1,632
Term of military body expired	-	-	58	269	179	208	406	205	140	174
Age limit for rank reached	3,095	1,671	334	111	86	145	88	25	18	18
Full pension entitlement acquired	-	-	-	10	33	92	32	-	-	-
Court ruling (imprisonment)	23	50	46	42	35	44	21	45	33	37
On request of soldier	1,063	537	365	38	46	20	35	24	35	2
Death	226	151	140	125	111	142	102	113	86	74
Other	1,007	908	1,058	216	100	98	64	51	115	78
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,013</b>	<b>9,641</b>	<b>3,760</b>	<b>2,516</b>	<b>3,923</b>	<b>4,975</b>	<b>6,627</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>8,163</b>	<b>2,436</b>

**Benefits on discharge**

Contradictory opinions are held in Poland on the potential savings gained from downsizing personnel: the benefit package given to military professionals is generous when compared to average pensions. This is admittedly a reason why reductions have not been more drastic: the costs associated with retirement are too high (*Jane's Defence Weekly*, 17 April 1996). Nonetheless, in future, maintenance of manpower will occupy a decreasing share of military expenditures in comparison to the share

of outlays for weapons procurement, command systems, communication systems and interoperability with NATO.

According to Polish regulations, professional soldiers have a right to impressive pension benefits—40 percent of their basic salary after 15 years of service (see Giermakowski and Keson, 2002 on the following). For each additional year, a rate of 2.6 percent applies, up to a maximum level of 75 percent of the basic salary. When discharged, a soldier who has acquired full pension rights amounting to 75 percent of his basic salary can then take up new employment without the

amount of his new salary having an impact on the level of pension received. However, when a soldier has acquired partial pension rights, regulations are such that taking up a new job does not necessarily mean an increase in income. Especially among NCOs, warrant officers, and junior officers with short seniority, the economic situation of the soldier's family may deteriorate upon his release from duty. For former servicemen, taking on an additional job is therefore practically unavoidable. Career officers with seniority shorter than 15 years are in the worst situation,

as they do not have any pension rights at all. During the restructuring process, the attempt is made to protect such people from redundancy, even if this cannot be guaranteed in every case.

To facilitate their integration into the civilian community, the following benefits are available to discharged military personnel:

- The amount of remuneration of the last position is paid out every month for a period of one year after discharge. A discharged soldier may take up an additional job within this time and still receive remuneration from the military. As this additional income from the military does not count for tax purposes, tax benefits are incurred for one year.
- A monetary equivalent will be paid for holidays which are outstanding, including the holiday not taken in the year of discharge.
- A one-off severance payment, equivalent to three months' salary of the last position held, is provided. The level of this severance pay rises by 20 percent of the monthly salary for every full year of seniority above 10 years of continual military service, up to the amount of 6 monthly salaries.
- Additionally, until 31 December 2003, the period of notice for termination of military employment may—even on request of the soldier—be reduced from 9 to 1 month. Soldiers discharged from military service are entitled to receive a one-off payment equal to their accumulated monthly salary for the reduced period of notice. Thus the reduced period of notice is treated as being equivalent to military service and is recorded as a period of active military duty.
- Costs for moving the soldier and his family to a civilian place of residence of their choice will be reimbursed.

### **Reintegration support**

Reintegration measures began in 1993 as a reaction to the first wave of dismissals, but it was not until 1996 that these were given a legal framework through their inclusion in the law on the military service of professional soldiers. Sociological studies undertaken by the Ministry of Defense in 1997 show that 68.8 percent of the soldiers released during the years 1993–1996 took up paid work, 5.7 percent were in the process of finalizing formalities related to employment, 18.7 percent did not currently work but intended to do so, and that only 6.4 percent of those interviewed had no intention of looking for work after discharge. 5.1 percent had taken up work straight after leaving the forces, 51.2 percent in the 6 months following discharge and a further 20 percent took up work between 6 and 12 months after discharge.

Various agencies in charge of human resources have been active in assisting laid-off officers to prepare for civilian employment. This help has included so-called 'conversion seminars', professional advice, professional training, support in finding employment, housing assistance, financing of individual qualification efforts and organized group retraining. Though understaffed, there is a special department at the Polish Ministry of Defense that deals with the 'conversion' of personnel. This department of the Ministry of Defense cooperates with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the regional labor exchanges (*Interview*, M. Fedasz, 21 July 2000). Laid-off officers were entitled to a one-off amount of financial support for retraining by the Ministry of Defense, ranging from 1,750 to 2,500 Polish zlotys (430–612 euros). Formally, the Social Department has the right to place retired officers in state enterprises and civil administrations. Until 1998, retraining was organized by the Ministry of Defense but since then some 180 institutes of higher education have begun to offer retraining courses on a regional basis. Finances for retraining are provided upon request of the Ministry

of Defense. The army itself does not offer any particular retraining for officers slated for discharge. In the years 1998–2000, 2,768 former officers were retrained, mostly with a view to working later in security services (60 percent); 10 percent acquired computer skills, 7 percent driving licenses, 5 percent foreign languages skills and 4 percent knowledge of accounting.

As of September 1997, a special decree has been in force specifying which posts in central and local administrations dealing with national defense are to be staffed by former professional servicemen. An agreement aimed at easing the adverse effects of unemployment was signed by the Ministry of National Defense and the National Office of Labor in March 1999. In practice, however, these provisions are ineffective, as the said positions are already occupied by civilian personnel: to employ former soldiers would necessitate dismissing the current staff.

The following example may serve to illustrate this practice: The officer in charge of reintegrating personnel in the Krakow region identified 627 open positions in 526 agencies subordinated to the regional administration (Vojevodstvo, Krakow). Though former servicemen were eligible to preferential job placement, only 30 percent of these positions were filled with discharged officers. The office in charge gave the following reasons: former administrations lacked knowledge of mandated tasks; capacities which would allow the implementation of legislation were very limited; agencies were unwilling to hire former officers; there was a widespread perception that officers with military pensions did not need jobs; and—on the part of the former officers themselves—many officers were unwilling to take up jobs in case this might have a negative effect on their military pensions (Koscielecki, 2001).

In total, 25,762 professional servicemen left the armed forces in the period 1996–2000, 13,642 of whom came under the Personnel Conversion Program. Of these 13,642, 3,491 soldiers were retrained, 7,925 were given job counseling and 5,620 were assisted in looking for a job, while jobs were found for 2,077 others. Even though the number of soldiers who actually found new positions may seem low, one should bear in mind that this only includes those soldiers who found employment opportunities through the direct involvement of the conversion authorities. The above figure is in fact quite promising, as it does not include former soldiers who established their own businesses or found jobs either on their own or through other employment services.

The financial benefits available to ex-soldiers in addition to pensions (remuneration for one extra year, severance pay, compensation for a shortened period of notice) and support in finding jobs (seminars, collective and individual career advice, recruitment assistance, collective retraining, and so on) are far from being sufficient. The ‘conversion seminars’ offered to groups of 40–50 persons usually last for only three days and provide little more than basic career planning advice. The names of laid-off servicemen are entered into a databank of persons looking for jobs, but apart from identifying preferences, little assistance is offered.

### **Shortage of funding**

Efforts to reintegrate personnel into civilian life are constrained by a shortage of funding. In 2000, the Ministry of Defense planned to earmark 1.6 million PLN (392,000 euros) for demobilization and reintegration measures up to 2005. Yet, only 1.14 million PLN (279,000 euros)—one-third less—were *de facto* set aside for the 5-year restructuring program and the ensuing downsizing which commenced in 2001. Reintegration measures are further inhibited by the limited number of administrative staff. Until February

2000, there were only four persons dealing with reintegration at the corps and military district command headquarters. In fact, throughout the entire armed forces, only 33 people deal full-time with the reintegration of personnel—23 civil servants and 10 from the military. Members of the Provincial Military Staffs and of the Military Reserve Commands are expected to support the program although not officially involved in it. Of these 33 people, 8 are in charge of reintegration work at the Social Department of the Ministry of Defense, 16 provide information on the job market at the Provincial Military Staffs or the Military Reserve Commands, and the remaining 9 are spread between several Military Centers for Professional Activities.

The existing structures are not able to effectively provide all assistance measures foreseen for military staff under the law. Along with extremely limited capacities at headquarters and an almost complete absence of representation in the field, there is a permanent lack of funding. It has therefore been recommended that the means for reintegration be distributed not simply to the command posts of the military districts but also to military administration authorities at a lower level and to garrisons slated for downsizing. Unless administrative resources are increased, reintegration efforts—organized for the most part centrally—will not be able to provide the necessary measures foreseen by law.

### **Grassroot initiatives and business start-ups**

Even though there are no formal structures supporting reintegration within the associations of former officers, many ideas are born at their meetings. For example, the Dean Convention (which consists of representatives of various different ranks such as NCOs, warrant officers and officers) proposed that a special

governmental authority be appointed to deal with matters relating to the employment of former officers in the defense industry and the public sector. A suggestion has been made that career officers might be offered shares in the property of garrisons to be disbanded and bases to be closed as well as in their infrastructure and land. Discharged soldiers could participate actively in the process of creating jobs and conditions conducive to business. The real estate and assets of former military property, transferred by the Ministry of Defense to the Agency for Military Assets with the express purpose of finding an economic use for them, might provide premises and infrastructure.

There are two additional non-governmental associations dealing with reintegration. The first is the Foundation for Professional Activation (FAR), founded in 1994, which aims to stimulate the economic activity of former servicemen and to support the Ministry of Defense in retraining. FAR organizes training courses and establishes contacts with job providers. Another grassroots association is Mars & Mercury Europe, founded in 1996, offering courses in marketing and microeconomics as well as languages for former officer. Mars & Mercury, financed by a small French grant, covered only a minor group of totaling 40 servicemen. Compared to Ukraine, it appears that the collective self-help of former servicemen is even less significant in Poland.

A notable new direction has been the establishment of a system to help soldiers start up businesses using some of the assets currently at the disposal of the Agency for Military Assets. According to Article 9.1 of the law of June 2001 on the restructuring of the armed forces, “the Minister of Defense may, until 31 December 2006, transfer a subordinated or supervised unit to the Agency for Military Assets for a limited or unlimited period to secure the continuation of its business activity”. Moreover, Article 10 stipulates that property from disbanded military organizations subordinated to, or

supervised by, the Minister of Defense may be made available until 31 December 2006 under the terms of a limited tender for enterprises whose sole proprietors are discharged career officers. This solution may prove effective for whole groups of discharged soldiers. Another useful decision would be one enabling the Agency for Military Assets to take over individual facilities at garrisons slated for closure while they were still operational (such as workshops, fuel depots, canteens, laundries, nurseries, warehouses, or hotels) and transfer them to new companies established by ex-military personnel whom it employs, pending tender. The businesses set up by such ex-military staff could offer perimeter guard duty along with additional services such as construction, geodesic or military catering services; they could run recreational and sports facilities, or clear the military complexes of explosives. A next step would be the legislative backing to establish appropriate procedures and a preferential system within the agency (payment deferrals, preference prices and tenancy fees) in support of the legal handover of property to former military personnel.

### **Box 5: New directions**

In view of the substantial reductions planned for overstuffed garrisons and military districts between 2001 and 2003, special authorities responsible for conversion issues will be nominated. The Department of Social Affairs within the Ministry of Defense has also proposed some further-reaching solutions. Four career support centers could be established in Bydgoszcz, Wrocław, Kraków, and Olsztyn to expand the structure of the entire reintegration apparatus to 105 persons (currently 33). The employment of discharged soldiers calls for inter-ministerial dialogue and cooperation among the communities.

Based on recent experience, it seems no longer advisable to switch to a career in management and marketing as the boom in such positions is receding. With this market segment saturated, technical specialists—especially in the area of information technology—seem to be the ones most sought after. According to the Ministry of Justice, it would be possible to employ discharged soldiers either in prison management or as probation officers. This idea coincides with another project of the Ministry of Justice focusing on the transformation of former garrisons into penitentiary facilities. Action taken by the Ministry of Regional Development and Construction is even more promising in that it has designed a “Pilot Project of Re-conversion of the Nysa Garrison into the Center of Innovation, Technology and Education (CITE)”.

In collaboration with the local government, the Ministry has prepared a program to test new solutions and instruments for regional growth. The program will be financed through governmental resources (in 2001, 8.5 million PLN = 2,081,000 euros will be allocated from the general budget reserve).

What are the lessons of the CITE-Nysa pilot project? First, governmental assistance is required, particularly a legislative foundation for the local and central administrations. Second, launching the project at an early stage in the downsizing of the garrison paves the way for counteracting unemployment in the town and in the region alike. Third, the reintegration of personnel cannot be left in the hands of the military alone. Collaborative efforts by local government and the Ministries of Regional Development and of Defense are crucial.

Fully aware of the deficient state of reintegration measures, the Social Department of the Ministry of Defense suggests the following: the transfer of career planning and advisory services to the provincial military commands; special programs for abandoned garrisons; the facilitation of acquisition of military assets by former officers; the attraction of non-budgetary funds; regular sociological studies on officers’ needs; and, finally, preferential job procurement within the civil administration of national defense for ex-officers (Koscielecki, 2001).

## **Hungary**

The legacy of the Warsaw Pact affected the post-socialist armed forces of Hungary in many ways: the command system was oversized; the army was overstaffed; the number of officers and warrant officers was out of proportion to the number of recruits and contract soldiers; troops were primarily located in the western side of the country; there were a great number of support and service bases; military technology was of an offensive rather than a defensive nature; and, finally, massive emphasis was laid on land forces instead of air defense. The overall goal of post-socialist restructuring consisted in the creation of a small, but modern, army.

Although the restructuring of Hungary's armed forces has been underway for more than 15 years, a planned effort has only become apparent since the year 2000. In public, the military burden was largely perceived as the main obstacle for economic reform and as one of the last bastions

of socialism. Until the late 1990s, adjustments had concentrated primarily on the downsizing of personnel (on the following see Urbani, 1998a; Urbani 1998b; Urbani, 1999; Urbani, 2002; Molnar and Keresztes, 2000; *Interview Szabo, 2001*). Only with the war in Kosovo and Hungary's joining of NATO did military reform begin to follow a conscious design (*Interview, Szabo, 4 December 2000*).

The downsizing of the Hungarian armed forces has caused considerable social tension. Complaints from the Association of Hungarian Servicemen, HOSZ, maintain that officers who have been laid off did not receive any material assistance apart from the money paid as an indemnity, and that even such compensations were at times only transferred after court rulings. In Hungary, the most crucial problem impeding military reform has been a deficiency in financial allocations. During the period 1989–2000, the share of military expenditures in GDP (gross domestic product) decreased substantially—from roughly 2.71 percent in 1989 to 1.51 percent in 2000.

Transfer to civilian life and a new profession is often abrupt and happens without appropriate warning. It has proved quite difficult for former officers to find new jobs that correspond to their level of qualifications. Given that the overwhelming majority of military professionals with 25 or more years of service tend to leave the armed forces voluntarily and that younger officers and NCOs often switch to the private sector immediately after having received a college diploma, the pool of military personnel is being depleted. A sociological study conducted in 1993 revealed that the prime motives for leaving the armed forces in the early 1990s were: misconduct of leading commanders; insecurity about future career; the bad atmosphere; exaggerated bureaucracy; the hope of a higher income; more freedom. Over time, the expectation of higher income became the most dominant factor (Molnar, 2000).

### **Figure 8: Changes in the distribution of military ranks**

*Source: Figures provided by the Hungarian Ministry of Defense, November 2000*

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Nominal positions available</b>	<b>Actual positions occupied</b>	<b>December 2001</b>	<b>Planned by the end of 2003</b>
<i>Generals</i>	85	62	45	45
<i>Officers</i>	11,100	9,500	8,555	8,000
<i>NCOs</i>	11,000	10,000	10,320	11,000
<i>Contract soldiers</i>	5,300	3,700	6,700	7,200
<i>Recruits</i>	21,000	19,000	12,160	13,000
<i>Civilian employees</i>	11,600	10,500	4,010	5,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,085</b>	<b>52,762</b>	<b>42,900</b>	<b>45,045</b>

**Reductions, 2000–2003**

According to the parliamentary decisions of June 2000, the future peacetime strength of the armed forces under the command of the Ministry of Defense is to be limited to 45,000 persons with a concentration on contract soldiers and NCOs and with a reduced number of recruits. The major bulk of troop reductions was to be accomplished by the end of 2001. Restructuring between 2000 and 2003 will involve a nominal reduction of approximately 15,000 persons, but this does not mean that all these people will enter the civilian job market. In 2000, fewer positions were actually occupied than were available on paper: 23 fewer generals, 1,600 fewer officers, 2,000 fewer recruits and 1,100 fewer civilian employees. Based on the real amounts of military personnel in 2000 and the planned strength for 2003, there was an excess of 12,217 people to be dismissed and a deficit of 4,500 persons to be hired. All in all, many more contract soldiers, officers of lower rank and corps officers left the armed forces than had been planned by the Ministry of Defense which was mainly due to low salaries. On the other hand, pressure from the military to increase salaries was regularly met with criticism from civilians in the government.

**Box 6: Changes in personnel structure**

Plans for changes in the personnel structure of the armed forces predict an overall reduction of 29 percent in the number of planned posts: the number of officers is to drop by 32 percent, NCOs by 6 percent, recruits by 40 percent and civilian employees by 56 percent. As a consequence, the overall proportion of officers will be reduced from 16 to 15 percent, of recruits from 39 to 33 percent and of civilian employees from 17 to 11 percent; the proportion of NCOs on the other hand should increase from 18 to 24 percent and contract soldiers from 10 to 17 percent. The division of labor between officers and NCOs will be largely determined by NATO requirements. While officers will be mainly responsible for strategic tasks, NCOs will deal with training and everyday command duties; peacekeeping and crisis prevention duties will be performed by contract soldiers.

The restructuring implies a transformation of certain services run by the military—for example cultural, social and sanitary services—into public companies which will continue to employ the same personnel. Of their 4,700 employees, between 2,000 and 2,500, officers, NCOs and civilian employees alike, will be transferred to these so-called ‘carved-out’ service companies. As the majority of officers discharged have a service time of at least 25 years and are thus entitled to military pensions, they will not necessarily appear on the labor market as potential job seekers.

Paradoxically, the Ministry of Defense is not only burdening the labor market by dismissing officers and warrant officers, but is also a major job provider in certain regions (especially in Tata, Győr, Hódmezővásárhely, Debrecen). Though the Ministry of Defense aims at an improvement in the qualifications of

the pool of future contract soldiers and NCOs, it admits that mainly the poor, or persons otherwise disadvantaged on the labor market, are likely to embark on a military career (*Interview*, Angyal, 1 December 2000).

It has been estimated by the Ministry of Defense that the number of military personnel to be laid-off before 2003 who do not have any social securities is 2,700—mostly civilian employees. Some 1,000 career officers will be relocated from closed garrisons to other units and some 700 are to be employed by other armed organizations such as perimeter guards. Nonetheless, altogether some 4,000–6,000 persons, civilians and military alike, will face problems on the job market, even if they receive some form of indemnification. The most problematic cases are people with highly specialized military skills—pilots, artillery officers or gunners—and those whose civilian qualifications are already over-represented on the labor market or who reside in areas with high unemployment. Of those dismissed persons likely to face reintegration difficulties on the labor market approximately 2,700 are civilian employees, 1,000 officers laid-off before their planned retirement and an estimated 1,000–2,000 warrant officers who voluntarily left the armed forces due to the new pension regulations.

**Reintegration programs**

According to the Hungarian Ministry of Defense, data on the absorption capacity of the labor market for former officers and NCOs is not reliable, however the overall impression is that discharged officers manage to reintegrate themselves fairly quickly. As in other Eastern European countries, many discharged officers end up as guards in security services or public service companies held by the Ministry of Defense or in other governmental agencies. Before 2000, the Ministry of



Defense had only established a modest reintegration program. In 1995, an office for the coordination of reintegration measures was formed under the General Staff with just five employees. The task of this unit was to find alternative jobs for discharged officers and to establish contacts with other state agencies, mainly the police and the border guards, or state enterprises that might become future employers.

In October 2000, an additional inter-ministerial committee was established, including representatives of the Ministries of Defense, Labor, Social Affairs, Education and Agriculture. Its task was to coordinate the use of funds for the Program for Promotion of Reemployment (PPR). The main goal of this interministerial committee was to assist closed garrison-towns in site conversion, the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises and to

offer career advice, retraining and job procurement services (*Interview*, Angyal, 1 December 2000). The overall sum allocated to this project, planned for the period until the end of November 2002, is 440 million Hungarian forint (roughly 1,798,975 euros), to be redirected from budgets of all the ministries involved.

Altogether the PPR assistance affected some 3,500 former servicemen, 2,180 of whom turned to the labor offices of the regions (*Comitats*) for assistance and 1,320 of whom approached the 12 existing Committees for the Promotion of Job Seekers (MEB) which are affiliated with major garrisons and supported by the county labor offices. Each MEB consists of representatives from the labor office, the regional military command, trade unions, local administrations and the chamber of commerce. From 2001 to 2002, the MEBs were financially supported by the labor offices of the *Comitats* to the sum

of 7.7 million forint (31,482,1 euros). By the end of 2001, 516 former servicemen found employment with the help the MEBs.

The 'tool kit' for reintegration of the MEBs includes: information on the labor market and on employment possibilities; advice on jobs and carrier opportunities; rehabilitation programs for the handicapped; subsidies for unemployed persons; the teaching of job-search techniques; psychological counseling; financial subsidies for employers (support of training, salaries or the creation of new workplaces; tax benefits) and support in becoming an entrepreneur.

**Figure 9: Number of servicemen affected by downsizing and reintegration measures resulting from the Strategic Examination between 1 January and 30 September 2001**

Source: *Keresztes, 2001*

Rank	Servicemen laid-off due to the 'Strategic Examination'	Recipients of PPR assistance	Support through the MEB Program	Newly employed after MEB Support	Participants of retraining courses
Officers	1,709	866	660	218	217
Warrant officers	1,898	917	373	95	107
Contract soldiers	749	536	153	64	109
Civilian employees	2,122	1,181	465	139	105
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,478</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>1,498</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>538</b>

**Figure 10: Forms of assistance under the Hungarian PPR Program (until the end of 2001)**

Source: Keresztes, 2001

Note: Double entries of forms of assistance possible

Employment assistance	Officers	Warrant officers	Contract soldiers	Civilian employees	Total
Professional advice	212	127	154	459	952
Career advice	314	343	278	485	1,420
Support in job search	458	401	306	549	1,714
Advice for local employment	1	11	11	121	144
Job procurement	396	249	169	294	1,108
Other forms of advice	86	74	31	58	249

### Social remedies

Officers with at least 25 years of service, usually between 42 and 45 years old, receive a modest pension which is in most cases not sufficient to support a family (maximum: 68,000 forint per month, or approximately 278 euros). Those with less than 25 years of service receive the equivalent of a one to eight months' salary as a one-off compensation, depending on age, service time and rank. Almost all members of this group are thus forced to seek post-military employment. Retraining courses which are the most popular are those for computer programmers, security guards, accountants and security managers.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the Ministry of Defense sold off the majority of apartments previously allotted to officers. Since then the

mobility of officers and warrant officers has diminished critically. In contrast to Ukraine or Poland, there is no special housing policy for discharged servicemen in Hungary. Only those willing to move to another garrison are entitled to accommodation support, either in the form of rent payment or beneficial credits for the purchase of an apartment (up to 4 million forint or roughly 16,354 euros).

The long-term plan for military restructuring (2000–2010) attempts to address some of the social problems stemming from past military reform. Officers to be discharged are now to receive compensation, pensions and other forms of material assistance. Innovation Bureaus for Employment in the Honved Army are to be allotted more personnel, while sub-offices are to

be opened at many garrisons. It is planned that joint commissions comprising representatives of these bureaus and regional commanders be set up and that regular contact with local labor exchanges, major enterprises, local administrations and education facilities take place.

Fixing criteria for salaries, the 10-year Plan stresses the interdependence of rank, position in the military hierarchy and duration of service on the one hand, and the assessment of individual performance and qualification development on the other. Service careers should follow the principle 'upwards or outwards' in the sense that those who do not move up on the carrier ladder should exit the military. The reform should meet a variety of requirements: the specific need for more officers in the lower ranks; the overcoming of congestion in upward

mobility; provision of transparent and predictable career models; implementation of competitive principles for promotion and reimbursement; and, lastly, the need to bring the composition of ranks closer to the envisaged ‘optimal model’.

At the end of 2000 the Hungarian parliament approved a program for the fundamental improvement of soldiers’ living conditions. Accordingly, soldiers will be allowed to choose between private and service accommodation, preferential credits for building or buying houses will be provided, extra allowances for accommodation will be increased, and special payments will be offered for moving from one military location to another. It remains to be seen to what extent these announcements are actually implemented.

In Hungary there are four associations of soldiers that aggregate and represent the interests of (former) servicemen: the Association of Hungarian Servicemen (HOSZ), the Trade Union for Civilian Employees (HODOSZ), the Union of Troop Soldiers (CSESZ) and the National Association of Comrade Soldiers (BEOSZ). As an association with the rights of a trade union, HOSZ represents the most important of these associations. While regional commanders were almost exclusively occupied with the effects of downsizing in the early 1990s, the soldiers associations pressed for financial compensation, retraining and job procurement (Urbani, 1998a; Urbani, 1998b). In order to alleviate the effects of downsizing, these associations took part in regular meetings at a forum attended by the military command of the central and regional levels. Furthermore, the HOSZ is regularly

involved in the setting-up and operation of regional Committees for the Promotion of Job Seekers (MEB). The personnel department of the Ministry of Defense also contacts the officer associations on a regular basis.

However, despite their tangible impact, the representatives of HOSZ complain that their criticism and proposals are not taken into consideration seriously by the Ministry of Defense and regional military commanders.

### **Box 7: Goals of future restructuring**

The 10-year plan aims at a concentration of forces to compensate for reductions in personnel; the outsourcing of functions carried out by superfluous or uneconomic institutions; a reduction of personnel in the support services and within command structures; a change in the type of training given to officers and non-commissioned officers; and an improvement in working and living conditions (*Magyar Honved*, “Reform 2000–2010,” No. 49, 8 December 2000, p. 5; *Magyar Honved*, No. 49, 8 December 2000).

The first stage of the 10-year Plan (2000–2003) concentrates on changes in the location of troops, as well as in the way troops are composed, and an improvement in service conditions. With an end to the radical downsizing of the previous period, it is hoped that insecurity of status will be reduced and that military service will become more attractive for the young.

The aim of the second stage (2004–2006) is to increase the combat capacities of the armed forces along with their ability to operate in conjunction with NATO.

The main goal of the third stage (2007–2010) consists in the technological modernization of the armed forces, hand-in-hand with further improvements in the qualification of personnel.

The general aim of the 10-year Plan is to actually fill the positions planned, to

achieve healthier proportions between the various command structures and subordinate ranks, and to reduce personnel in the support services. Thus the future structure of the armed forces will affect the composition and size of the various branches, the actual meeting of planned troop strengths, the structure of command and troop locations, and the proportions allotted to certain ranks.

The transformation of the Hungarian army from one with compulsory military service to a voluntary or professional army is still under dispute. Through its new policy, the government hopes to create the factual preconditions for a professional army over the planned 10-year period. The reduction of the service time for recruits from 9 to 6 months is in line with this. The decision to join NATO clearly reversed the decade-long decline in military expenditures, and further increases are envisaged. According to the 10-year Plan, financial means will be extended by increasing the military budget and by saving money through troop reductions, the concentration of infrastructure and personnel, outsourcing of non-military tasks, and the privatization of real estate and services. While there is general support for the military reform plan among the parties in parliament, against the backdrop of increasing poverty in the populace and the substantial costs of preparing for EU membership, critics are nonetheless beginning to voice concerns over the extent of military expenditures compared to the means set aside for other pressing transition tasks.

## ***Conclusions***

When compared to the other countries covered in this report, it becomes apparent the Hungarian labor market is in a position to absorb a high share of laid-off officers. The number of soldiers voluntarily leaving the forces is correspondingly high. Moreover, comparing the numbers of dismissed officers or NCOs in Hungary with those in Russia, Ukraine or Poland, the need for reintegration measures appears less pressing. Furthermore, a cultural factor may have shaped the Hungarian low-key approach—among the countries under study here, the importance of the military for the collective national identity of Hungary seems to be insignificant. Given the low ranking of demobilization on the transition agenda, interministerial cooperation was not launched till the fall of 2000, though the main responsibility rested with the regional Committees for the Promotion of Job Seekers. Their services concentrated on career advice, but did not include a package of vocational retraining courses specified to the needs of laid-off officers and regional or local business. The Hungarian government evidently never applied for foreign funding; neither did it attract business funding for retraining.

# Summary and Recommendations

**1. The future structure and tasks of the armed forces must be explicitly defined. Support for reintegration and clear decisions on the part of civilian authorities are necessary.**

As long as the future tasks and structure of the armed forces remain blurred, manpower is usually retained in the military without actually having a clear function. Due to the minor relevance of military politics for party competition and electoral campaigns, awareness of reintegration issues remains the domain of the military establishment which commonly lacks proper guidance from the civilian sections of the government, including parliament. One of the key problems in demobilization and reintegration is the postponement of hard decisions, causing a lasting sense of unpredictability as well as psychological and moral hazards for officers subject to demobilization.

**2. The Ministries of Defense must play a critical role.**

In institutional terms it is obvious that the Ministries of Defense must play a key role in preparing, implementing and adjusting reintegration measures. Special administrative units with appropriate funding for the duration of the reintegration program together with qualified manpower must be set up to implement reintegration policies, particularly the retraining of, and job creation for, redundant officers. It is imperative that the Ministries of Defense cooperate closely with other ministries involved in the reintegration measures (Finance, Labor, Social Affairs, Education) and with regional and local labor offices.

**3. It is important to establish coordinating bodies.**

Central agencies at the ministerial level are necessary for project initiation, coordination, the exchange of information and monitoring. To facilitate adjustment, special interministerial coordinating bodies for reintegration should pool experiences gathered at regional and local levels, together with expertise in the assessment of qualifications, vocational training, and job-market requirements. It should be their task not merely to establish information networks and to encourage a constant flow of information, but also to prevent hierarchies in the access to information from developing. These coordinating bodies would be responsible for guaranteeing regular evaluation of program implementation and the generalization of insights into successes and failures. A combined military-civilian authority is a prerequisite. It is not advisable to leave reintegration measures to military institutions alone—neither to the Ministry of Defense nor to regional commands. Such military institutions usually lack proper information on labor market requirements, instruments of economic promotion and retraining skills.

**4. Reintegration programs must be regularly evaluated by independent institutes.**

Independent institutes must regularly evaluate the viability of reintegration programs, weighing them up against their aspirations and objectives. Furthermore, constant and independent evaluation is required in order to prevent misuse of funds. The way reintegration authorities are organized should be derived from their tasks and objectives as well as

from a balance of assets and needs, rather than being decided from the top down.

**5. Retraining is best organized and conducted at the regional and local levels.**

As a rule, flexible and decentralized approaches which not only respond promptly to changes in regional market requirements but are combined with regional structural policies are preferable to control by central agencies which do not have regional implementation capacities. Retraining is best conducted at a regional and local level where the specific characteristics of the downsizing pattern, the local job market, and the opportunities for job creation can be taken into account. Close cooperation with regional employment offices, job placement agencies and vocational training centers is therefore key. Regional coordinating units that bring together regional military commanders, regional administrations and the agencies involved in retraining or job creation—including small business incubators—should be set up. Regional administrations can encourage job creation by providing assistance in the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises, for example through encouraging the setting up of business parks or by providing tax benefits, public services or premises at reduced prices. Job placement necessitates close links with potential employers. Job fairs, vocational training on-the-job, and support in the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises are instruments that should already be taken into consideration at the planning stage.

**6. Individual responsibility is essential.**

Ex-servicemen should be encouraged to take on responsibility for themselves. They cannot be exempted from the market pressures faced by other social groups. Generally speaking it seems necessary to change both the image of, and approach to, military service: no longer can it be treated as a lifetime profession and officers or NCOs should be made aware of this fact from the outset. It is advisable that servicemen are prepared as early as possible for the eventuality of a post-military career.

**7. Soldiers should be prepared for the eventuality of a post-military career and given appropriate training while in the military.**

One of the findings of this study highlights the key importance of proper information on, and the timing of, retraining measures. It would be best if preparation for post-military professional life began during military service, commencing as early as possible and concentrating on transferable and marketable qualifications. The Czech Republic seems to be the only Eastern European country where retraining is undertaken before actual discharge from the armed forces. Servicemen who have been prepared for reintegration psychologically and vocationally as early as possible fare better on the job market while a protracted break with the military inhibits later reintegration. In certain cases, reintegration must be accompanied by special psychological assistance, supportive measures for families and, very often, a specific housing policy.

**8. Servicemen must be systematically trained in skills which are in demand on the market.**

Not all discharged officers need assistance but, for those who do, help should be customized, that is, it must be made to fit the particular requirements an officer, or group of

officers, might have. Part of the toolkit facilitating the reintegration process should be a systematic and regular assessment of the marketable personal strengths and qualifications of the target group as well as a sober look at weaknesses (for example, low problem-solving capacities or hierarchical thinking) coupled with possible strategies to overcome these. It is striking that, in their self-assessment, the overwhelming majority of laid-off officers think that they acquired advantageous or transferable skills during their service time. It would therefore seem advisable to assess transferable skills more systematically during the last stage of military service, not least in order to give officers a stronger sense of control over their own lives and to overcome tendencies towards passivity. Post-military job procurement should make conscious use of transferable and marketable secondary skills such as self-discipline and persistence, skills in human resource management, punctuality, a sense of duty, leadership skills, proficiency and additional degrees, for example in foreign languages, technical skills, legal knowledge and computer skills.

**9. Reintegration needs a strong legal base.**

Successful reintegration requires predictability of military career paths and of the post-military benefit package. A professional career in the military ought to be perceived, organized and legally guaranteed as a temporary occupation presupposing later civilian employment. Parliaments are called upon to provide legislative security for and control of the implementation of legal acts. Mechanisms such as limiting service age and financial incentives can be but two of many components essential to the reintegration process. In certain cases the pension system actually

discourages post-military job searches, either because job acquisition is 'punished' by total loss of pension entitlements or because pensions are too high. Instead, the military pension system should begin to reward post-military job acquisition and must be flexibly adjusted, taking age and working ability into account. At times, pension entitlements could be substituted by financial support for retraining, job searches and relocation during the critical interim period.

**10. Solid financing is a prerequisite.**

As most reintegration measures have suffered from insufficient or discontinued finances, it must now be recognized that reintegration support necessitates financial backing for the complete planned duration of the downsizing effort. Non-governmental funding mostly came from foreign actors, with few attempts made to systematically involve potential national employers or to attract private financing of reintegration measures.

**11. Financial means should go directly to beneficiaries.**

Financial means should be geared at direct beneficiaries to prevent NGOs or other agencies from consuming most of the money allocated to reintegration. Retraining agencies should be chosen on a competitive basis, evaluated regularly, and rewarded for job-placement successes and for their flexibility in meeting real needs. A fixed, transparent, and accountable ratio between management costs and the cost of retraining beneficiaries is a prerequisite.

**12. The importance of an orchestrated job-creation effort.**

Demobilization itself, along with the accompanying training seminars, provides no real assistance to discharged personnel unless backed up by an orchestrated job-creation effort. The scope of the conversion

measures adopted should stem from local needs and opportunities, from the situation on the labor market, and from its capability to absorb the qualified workforce. Coaching into a new career should take into consideration the existing niches in the labor market and be in line with medium- and long-term regional development strategies. Not only should newcomers to the labor market be recognized as qualified former soldiers, but their employers should also assess the value of their qualifications before they are discharged from service.

**13. Democratic education should be a facet of military service and of reintegration programs.**

Among former officers, there has been a widespread sense of frustration over post-socialist democratic experiences, along with the strong feeling that their governments were indifferent to these problems. Even if criticism of democracy reveals only latent anti-democratic leanings, its very existence nevertheless highlights the necessity of enhancing efforts to improve democratic education during military service. There is a valid reason for this: officers who grew up under socialism and served for decades in the armed forces lack the democratic experience of civilian life. It would therefore be advisable to include political reeducation of officers in the so-called 'retraining kit' in order to help discharged servicemen differentiate between unconsolidated democracies and democracy *per se*.

**14. Officer associations should be encouraged to play an active role in all aspects of reintegration.**

The absence of a corporate identity and of organized protest among former officers may be seen as favorable as long as it prevents undue military intervention into politics; on the other hand, it is also

a sign of collective passivity. The price for the absence of praetorianism, authoritarianism or marked nationalism is nonetheless paternalism and isolation of the individual. In order to overcome such paternalistic patterns and the lack of individual problem-solving abilities caused by a long service time, reintegration policies should empower officer associations to play an active role in all facets of reintegration, not least in order to create a feedback mechanism for the government.

**15. External assistance is of crucial importance.**

External assistance has been of crucial importance. Quite often reintegration was only initiated after financial contributions were made available from abroad. The European Union's TACIS program, NATO, individual NATO countries and NGOs such as the Soros Foundation have been active in supporting reintegration in one form or another. However, up to the present time, the exchange of information and coordination between the various programs has been limited. In order to make national and international programs more available to the public, the suggestion has been made to build up a special website and an electronic newsletter encouraging the exchange of information.

**16. Reintegration must be linked to local needs and the promotion of regional economies, in particular after the closure of military bases.**

Very often, closing down military bases and dismissing military personnel affect not only individual people but entire towns and regions. It is therefore vital that projects are designed to take account of local needs and to help establish an infrastructure which will support the economic existence of the region once the military facilities have closed. Very often reintegration of

personnel is linked to the fate of closed garrison-towns. Reintegration policies should thus be organized in such a way that they incorporate efforts to convert military bases, for instance, by using infrastructures for job creation programs, including the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises.

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# Appendix: Questionnaire for Interviews with Demobilized Officers

- 1) Personal background: Age, years in service, rank, qualifications, original reason for becoming a professional soldier, years after leaving the army, times of unemployment/occupation after leaving the army, current occupation.
- 2) Was your original expectation for becoming a professional soldier matched by your actual experience in the army?
- 3) Reasons for leaving the army: health reasons, dismissal, early retirement, voluntary discharge
- 4) In the case of voluntary discharge, what were the prime motives for doing so? What were your expectations?
- 5) Which qualifications and skills acquired in the military proved to be useful for civil occupation?
- 6) Which qualifications and skills acquired in the military proved to be disadvantageous for civil occupation?
- 7) Did you discuss your decision to leave the army with your comrades? How did discussions influence your decision-making?
- 8) Name at least three major reintegration difficulties after leaving service.
- 9) How did you overcome these difficulties or do they persist?
- 10) Whom did you expect to help and assist you in overcoming reintegration problems?
- 11) What kind of assistance in reintegration (finding a job, new apartment, retraining) did the army, the government, the local community or regional administration provide?
- 12) What were the reactions by those agencies you addressed with your problems? How could they have helped you better in shifting from a military to a civil career (what are you the least content with in terms of governmental, military assistance)?
- 13) What additional qualifications did you acquire after leaving service?
- 14) Did you ever regret the decision to leave the army?
- 15) Would you recommend that your son or male relatives embark on a military career?
- 16) How do you see the prestige and standing of the contemporary army of your country compared to the socialist past (ten years ago)? Do you think its role in politics and society has diminished or increased?
- 17) Did your political worldviews and party preferences change after leaving service? If so, what were significant changes that come to your mind?
- 18) How frequently do you still keep in contact with former comrades?
- 19) Did you join any association of former officers? If so, what kind of benefits does this association provide for you?
- 20) If you look back at the time after leaving the army, do you think your life improved or worsened? Give reasons.
- 21) If you look forward, five years ahead, do you think you will live better or worse than currently?
- 22) If you had to assess the positive and negative experiences of the system change since the early 1990s, what prevails (positive, negative)?
- 23) Do you think that an army general would fit better for ruling the country and solving its problems than an elected democratic government?
- 24) What do you dislike most about the democratic form of government in your country?
- 25) Do you think that close cooperation with NATO is a good or a bad thing? Give reasons.

# List of Selected Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>ACDA</b>	Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, US State Department
<b>BEOSZ</b>	National Association of Comrade Soldiers (Hungarian Army)
<b>CIS</b>	Commonwealth of Independent States
<b>CITE</b>	Pilot Project of Re-conversion of the Nysa Garrison into the Center of Innovation, Technology and Education (Poland)
<b>CSESZ</b>	Union of Troop Soldiers (Hungarian Army)
<b>CSIS</b>	Center for Strategic and International Studies (Washington)
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FAR</b>	Foundation for Professional Activation (Poland)
<b>GDP</b>	Gross domestic product
<b>GDR</b>	German Democratic Republic
<b>HODOSZ</b>	Trade Union for Civilian Employees (Hungarian Army)
<b>HOSZ</b>	Association of Hungarian Servicemen
<b>IISS</b>	International Institute for Strategic Studies, London
<b>IFSA</b>	International Fund for Social Adaptation
<b>ITC</b>	Interregional Training Center (Ukraine)
<b>KGB</b>	Former Soviet Secret Service
<b>KLA</b>	Kosovo Liberation Army
<b>MEB</b>	Committees for the Promotion of Job Seekers (Hungary)
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
<b>NCC</b>	National Coordinating Center for the Social Adaptation of Servicemen under the Cabinet of Ministers (Ukraine)
<b>NCO</b>	Non-commissioned officer
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PONARS</b>	Program on New Approaches to Russian Security (CSIS, United States)
<b>PPR</b>	Program for Promotion of Reemployment (Hungary)
<b>PZPR</b>	Polish socialist party
<b>RCE</b>	Regional Center for Employment (Ukraine)
<b>RMP</b>	Retraining of the Military program (Renaissance Foundation, Ukraine)
<b>SMEs</b>	Small and medium-sized enterprises
<b>TACIS</b>	Technical assistance to CIS countries
<b>UAUZV</b>	Ukrainian Association of Professional Reserve Officers

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# The Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC)

an independent non-profit organization  
dedicated to promoting the transfer  
of former military resources and assets  
to alternative civilian purposes

The transfer of resources from the military to the civilian sector represents both a social and an economic challenge, as well as offering an opportunity for the states concerned. The sustained process of disarmament during the decade following the end of the Cold War has made defense conversion an important issue in many countries today. This process has now slowed down considerably, but the problems faced by those affected are far from solved. BICC's main objective is to make use of the chances offered by disarmament, whilst at the same time helping to avoid—or lessen—the negative effects.

This issue concerns a number of areas: What can scientists and engineers who were formerly employed in weapons labs do today? What is the fate of the roughly eight million employees who lost their jobs in the defense factories? Why are so many defense companies faring better today than they did ten years ago? Will all demobilized soldiers or former combatants find a future in civilian society? What action must communities take when suddenly faced with the closure of a huge military base? How does one solve the problem of the ready availability of small arms and light weapons?

It is BICC's task to tackle these questions, to analyze them on the basis of scientific research, to convey the necessary information, and to give advice to those involved—in short, to **manage disarmament**.

**International think tank.** BICC conducts research and makes policy recommendations. In-house and external experts contribute comparative analyses and background studies.

**Project management and consulting services.** BICC provides practical support to public and private organizations. For instance, BICC staff advise local governments confronted with the difficult task of redeveloping former military installations. BICC also combines development assistance with practical conversion work by helping in the fields of demobilization, reintegration and peace-building.

**Clearinghouse.** In its capacity as an independent organization, BICC supports and assists international organizations, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, companies and the media, as well as private individuals. It hereby mediates and facilitates the conversion process at all levels—local, national and global. BICC collects and disseminates data and information on conversion to practitioners in a wide range of fields and institutions. BICC strives to reach researchers and practitioners as well as parliamentarians, the media, and the general public by means of a variety of tools including its library, its extensive on-line documentation services and its internet service ([www.bicc.de](http://www.bicc.de)). Furthermore, the Center documents the course of disarmament and conversion in its annual *conversion surveys* and produces a variety of publications.

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