

Janos Szabo¹⁰⁴

CONCLUSIONS I: THE FORMATION AND PROSPECTS OF EXPERTS IN THE SECURITY SECTORS OF SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

3.1 Introduction

The defence sectors of Southeast European countries devoted to a fully fledged change in their social structure and oriented towards democratic parliamentary systems and competitive market economies. These countries: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Moldavia, Romania, Serbia, and Ukraine also recognized the necessity of adapting to the requirements of a civil or democratic control. Within this adaptation to the new norms the most important questions are: whether there are defence experts – and if so, of what quality – and what institutional background can guarantee the activities of new type of defence experts in the institutions of defence sector? The present study will summarise those needs and experiences felt to be synthesisable on the issue of recruiting, training and activities of the defence experts of the above-mentioned countries in order that such general interrelations may be utilised.

¹⁰⁴ Professor Szabo, who had been researching the Stock-Taking topic independently, has kindly consented to share his thoughts with us on the future of expert formation in transition countries.

3.2. Changes in the Social System in the Former Soviet Bloc Countries

The Soviet-type party-governed countries were far from identical. Behind the similar symbols and ideologies fairly different structures and systems existed. However, common to all the Soviet-model countries was the lack of pluralism and party-state system. And this is no wonder as the history and social-economic realities are very different for each country in the region.

The civil-military relations in the countries of the former Eastern Bloc can be analysed by taking into account the great variety of differences. It is paramount to emphasise the well-known fact that armed forces in these countries had a twofold mission: an external mission – to protect the country from its potential external enemies, and an internal mission – to protect the party-state system from its internal opposition. Within these states the armed forces functioned under a close control of the hegemonic, often monopolistic Communist Party.

At the same time, however, there were clear signs of an extremely close relation between political and military structures and personnel. This fundamental difference in civil-military relations between the Soviet model and the Western democracies originated from the simple fact that a democratic political system is able to survive without supportive military structures while a Communist system is not.

Militarist tendencies were easy to detect in the social life of the countries based on the Soviet model. Certain elements of military education, for example, became a part of general socialisation and were embedded into the education of young children and youth. Various types of paramilitary organisations were established by the state-parties. Apart from these organisations, science, technology and national economy were militarised and the armed forces also took up the task of political socialisation and indoctrination.

The Communist Party needed armed forces that were loyal to the social system and willing to defend it both from its external and internal enemies. For this reason, the armed forces were so deeply penetrated by

the Party and one of the preconditions of taking a military career was the loyalty to the Party as well. On the other hand the armed forces – or at least the military elite – also needed the Party in order to preserve or improve their financial condition, their share of power, and some elements of their social prestige. (The improvement of all elements of social prestige would have been made possible by a general legitimacy of the armed forces which was, however, impossible for various reasons.)

Analysing the changes, it should also be highlighted how important the differences among the armed forces of various countries were.

The post-1989 changes of the social system liberated the aspirations of the peoples in the Central European region, populated by nearly 100 million people. Those, however, developed not only towards rational economic and political forms but also towards ethnic urges and unfounded hopes, marked as backwaters of history. The armed forces played a distinct role in this process in every country depending on whether they remained the supporters of reasonable aspirations or followed the sounds of sirens.

The multifunctional character of the armed forces became a daily issue again in the countries of the region. It greatly depended, however, on whether the armed forces became the protectors of national sovereignty and security or openly intervened in policy-making and changing the internal balance of power. The temptation of praetorianism (the emergence of the armed forces as an independent power factor) was mentioned as a permanent threat in the societies of changes.

At the time of the collapse of Soviet model-based Central and Eastern European regimes the option of deploying the armed forces was seriously contemplated by both the conservative supporters of the regimes and the radical driving elite of the changes. The direct participation of the armed forces in the Romanian ‘revolution’, for example, was considered as obvious, for instance, as servicemen were said to have fought on both sides of the barricades. Before 21 December 1989 the Romanian Armed Forces executed the orders to open fire at demonstrations in Timisoara, Bucuresti and Cluj. Later, however, they

refused to carry out Ceausescu's orders and played a crucial role in capturing, bringing to summary court martial and executing the dictator. A separate study could be devoted to the role of armed forces in the breakout and conservation of the Yugoslav crisis and in the peace process or in the preparation and suppression of the Russian coup d'état.

A superficial analysis of the facts that have been not yet entirely explored shows that the armed forces of the Central and Eastern European countries played a significant role in domestic policy on both sides: both in undermining the previous regimes and in their preservation. Career soldiers played fairly different roles in influencing political processes and supporting conservative or radical forces even within one country. In the process of the changes of the social system the role of the armed forces is of importance in two interrelated fields: on the one hand their influence on the support or impediment of political, economic, and social processes of the transformation and on the other hand their achievements in the field of their self-transformation which is rebuilding their own structures, values and ways of operation.

Researchers of democratic transformation have short-listed a great number of steps which should be made during the process by a country that has chosen that way of development. They agree on the fact that features like control over the decisions made by elected officials, regular free elections, a general right to vote for the adults, the right to be elected to a wide range of offices, the freedom to found a political party or a civil society, the right to join a political party or society, and civil control over the armed forces are regarded as preconditions and requirements of a democratic transformation.

Essentially the field of civil control over the armed forces or in a wider sense the democratic military-societal relations are regarded by most researchers as a synchronising of political pluralism and the armed forces and their professional personnel and also as a subordination of armed forces to civil policy-making. Some also add that it is very problematic if there is too close a relation between officer corps and any political party as it is inconsistent with the role of armed forces in modern society.

During the process of structural military transformations within the general transition, dramatic changes took place both in national security policy and defence systems. After getting rid of the old party-state structures the democratic transition in the defence sector, according to most experts, could develop in three main fields: exercising democratic control over the entire defence sector, reorganising civil-military relations, and accomplishing defence reforms.

The new developments generated by changes in social system in the Central and Eastern European regions resulted in a new approach to the armed forces. In each of the affected countries, although to a different extent and at different times, a reduction of the armed forces was launched. In all, these reductions were of larger scale than similar changes in the developed democracies. The reason for this is that the armed forces of the former Eastern Bloc were generally oversized and societies following the Soviet model were over-militarised. The new ideal armed forces were ‘small but highly professional armed forces’.

As has already been mentioned, reductions of armed forces varied greatly. In countries where the perception of threat was low and the armed forces were not very prestigious (for example in the Czech Republic or in Hungary) the changes were much more deep, rapid, and intensive than in countries with a higher perception of threat and more prestigious armed forces (in Romania or Poland, for instance).

Apart from this, a redefinition of security policy principles and structures also became an imperative.

3.3 Some Specific Features of the Changes of Defence System in the Southeast European Countries

At first glance Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Moldavia, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine seem to be countries with similar characteristics of the same geographic region. At least three very important differences should be identified in this group of countries. The first difference is the conflict-rich state of former Yugoslav republics of the Balkan region characterised by wars, military

clashes, demands towards one another and multiple sovereignty. Bulgaria and Romania belong to another group dominated by post-communist relations and extremely problematic economic situations and stabilisation efforts. In the case of Romania this situation is further complicated by the legacy of an armed revolution and the deployment of Romanian armed forces by both players. An important feature of both countries is their long-time sovereign statehood, which the others do not have. The third group of countries comprises Moldavia and Ukraine, whose secession from the Soviet Empire resulted in a number of unfortunate legacies and extraordinary deficiencies. A unifying factor in the region is, however, that all three country-groups are forced to manage some very specific conflicts rooted back in history, and also in modern times generated by the change of social system.

Therefore, it should not be assumed that ambitions to approach EU and NATO standards are motivated by similar conditions. Realities and values behind these objectives reveal very diverse importance when these countries declare their intentions to develop defence sectors in this direction. In the case of Romania and Bulgaria – due to their long-time independence and the fact that Romania was not ruined by the events of the 1989 revolution – the economic, political situation and conditions and problems are fairly similar. The positions of the armed forces, however, are not identical. In Romania the armed forces seem to be more present; their dominance being supported by a higher level of threat perception. In Bulgaria the role of the armed forces is somewhat less significant. The institutions of civil control and expert training within both countries have relatively good chances of achieving a European level with the support of international organisations, the Partnership for Peace program, and Higher Education Consortium. As for Ukraine and Moldavia, their completely new statehood was impaired by a characteristic legacy of governments, power structures and media, coupled with the novelty of independence and national confidence. Besides these hardships, the lack of traditions in the field of civil control should also be mentioned. All this conditioned those difficulties whose resolution can support the progress (among others) in the field of civil control, expert training for these institutions and the making available of their expertise.

The most serious problems can be observed in the group of Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Bulgaria, and Macedonia. These states struggle with extreme tensions, and a nearly permanent threat of war in spite of the fact that peacekeeping operations have been able to localise armed conflicts for a long time.

It can be claimed that these countries are situated in the crossfire of emotions generated by wartime damage, large and suppressed societal unrest, despair due to losses – in each country many lives were lost during the war. Simultaneous to wartime destruction and disorganisation, resources required for developing democratic institutions necessary for the development of the armed forces were also destroyed by the war.

Nowadays, these countries are harbouring a significant amount of aversion to internal strife. Their success in managing this problem could be crucial in harmonising their efforts and resources with the democratisation of their countries including the improvement of conditions of civil control over the armed forces which also includes the creation of expertise and a pool of experts without which the systems are not operational.

3.4 Civil-Military Relations as a System of Relations

The reform of civil-military relations and the introduction of civil control over the armed forces became a key issue for the Central and Eastern European countries. This situation presented unavoidable problems for the political elite and their armed forces. Civil-military relations include defence, governmental, administrative and legislative relations and also relations between armed forces and society. Taking a closer look at defence and governmental relations basically means focusing on the institutions of democratic control.

Chris Donnelly is said to have declared: ‘if there are no problems with civil-military relations and democratic control over armed forces in a country, there is no democracy in that country’. In fact it can be considered logical that there is a permanent tension between military and

civilians in the course of the day-to-day control. The quality of relations has always depended on the quality of those channels through which these tensions can freely move toward resolution.

In the Central and Eastern European countries two fundamental tendencies can be noticed with regard to civil-military relations. One of them is the traditional trend characterised by the great prestige attached to the armed forces within society. The military profession is highly appreciated by these societies. It is well indicated by a relatively high salary, which is over the average, to those who pursue this career; the public accepts the institutions of compulsory military service; and the citizens meet these expectations. The armed forces are relatively influential and are regarded as a guard and supporter of national sovereignty. The armed forces are widely supported by the public and regarded as a school of the nation. A typical feature of traditional relations is the less developed informal sector and defence community. In these cases soldiers or former soldiers are the greatest experts in the field of defence and security questions (as it can be seen in Romania and Bulgaria).

Another tendency, which exceeds the traditional one, is characterised by disillusioned popular attitudes towards the armed forces. Here the armed forces have little social prestige, which is demonstrated by the average or below-average salary of career soldiers, the relatively low-level attractiveness of military professions and by a growing demand for preferences, professional career-stimulators. The political influence of the armed forces is minimal, the dominance of politicians – even in defence-related issues! – is obvious and accepted unconditionally. In the societal attitudes there are fairly significant doubts about the preparedness, and deployability of the armed forces in conflict situations. An increasingly small proportion of population regards the armed forces as the main factor of defence, and security. In this trend the political and diplomatic elements and institutions of security are growing increasingly significant.

It should be noticed here, that in these countries there is a significantly different attitude towards the armed forces between particular social strata. It is a general fact that older strata, with lower level of education

and little mobility support the armed forces and have a positive attitude towards them, while the younger, better educated and more mobile strata have a high level of apathy and disillusionment towards the armed forces and reinforce tendencies in opposition to the traditional trends.

3.5 Democratic Control as a Process

Democratic control has always been a two-way process between the armed forces and society, which can never be simplified to a dictatorship of politicians over the military. Since the post-1989 changes of social system the building of institutions and functions of democratic control has been a significant objective that must not be ignored.

For the new political elite one of the first things done was to remove formally the interconnections between the Party and the military thus making the armed forces a policy-free institution. Power was divided in accordance with the presidential, governmental, and parliamentary fields of responsibility. Civilian Ministers of Defence were appointed and the General Staffs were placed under governmental control in peacetime.

Besides the formal measures, however, the operation of structures and functions generated more symbolic than real changes in many cases. The analyses disclosed a number of signs indicating that the new structures had not met a lot of requirements of democratic control yet. The major problems are as follows.

First, there are a lot of inconsistencies in the legislative and constitutional regulation of defence issues. Today they generate significantly fewer problems than in the early 1990s; however, their existence is still detectable. One of these inconsistencies is that the division of power is not defined clearly, concretely and precisely enough for the spheres of authority of the President, government, Defence Minister, and Chief of General Staff. In this respect the main problem is that in the execution of the existing acts the elements of constitutional responsibilities can be interpreted in various ways by the various players. Lately, as NATO-aspirations grow stronger a great number of countries have made significant progress in eliminating these

inconsistencies of the constitutional regulation. However, this driving force is insufficient where the amount of interfering features is significantly higher.

The second problem is the lack or very limited number of well-prepared civil experts supporting these processes. It is partly because of the low-level societal and political affinity towards military issues and partly because of the underdeveloped civil expertise in the field of security and defence issues. Even if accepting the explanation that the limited and unprepared nature of the experts is a direct result of the military separation from the party-state era, the efforts made for eliminating the negative legacy 10–12 years after the change of social system should be evaluated – as some country studies point out – as problematic.

The third difficulty is that the armed forces often avoid measures aimed at executing the elements of democratic control and as a kind of response they launch campaigns for reinforcing their own structure and staff. The post-communist armed forces are linked to civil society as a special military community.

The fourth characteristic is that among certain political parties and the armed forces some old-type relations which were aimed at mobilising the armed forces for providing support to particular interests, (relative to all-national progress) remain intact. These nationalistic tendencies may generate unjustified hopes and expectations in the armed forces – or in certain groups within the military – concerning their ambitions to regain their former positions and societal dominance as the guards of national sovereignty.

The fifth point is that from time to time there are overt attempts made by the military to break the principles of democratic control and have some political influence as supporters of the newly elected elite.

Some analysts clearly claim that democratic control grew into a tactic instead of a general strategy and there is a permanent discrepancy between structures and the realities of civil dominance. Others challenge this opinion warning about realism. They highlight the fact that a full-scale establishment and comprehensive introduction of democratic

control requires a long-term process and the identification of efficient resolutions cannot be independent from the existing (and very much different) cultural, historical, and economic factors of the involved countries.

Finally, it is worthwhile to point out that especially ambitious and more or less consistent measures were taken by those countries which committed themselves towards changes in accordance with their NATO membership and EU integration.

3.6 The Position of Civil Defence Experts

The civil defence-security experts who were naturalised in the democratic institutions of these countries form a specific factor in the civil control of the countries of the region. Analysing this stratum the preparedness of Members of Parliament and defence administration staff of local municipalities; the positions of their advisory boards and personal experts; the qualification of the leaders and personnel of civil security services should be discussed. The level of training and qualification of personnel, civil servants and administrative staff of police forces, justice, penal authorities, and other fundamental law-enforcement agencies should also be analysed. Those qualified experts who participate in scientific research and public discourse employed by universities, research institutions and NGOs should also be taken into consideration.

The establishment of NGOs, a fundamentally new event in this region, deserves special attention.

The preparedness of media managers – both in electronic and printed press – and journalist staff, their working conditions and – especially – qualifications are to be discussed here.

As research indicates, for different reasons, the defence sectors of Southeast European countries (and the pool of defence experts as well) have been basically characterised by regional disorganisation since the early 1990s. Typically the features are: survival of institutions and

knowledge acquired during the previous party-state period and based on the Soviet model; and the lack of resources and coordinated efforts to introduce and implement new structures compatible with Western ones. The interpretation, naturally, differed everywhere, and the reform of security and defence sectors was launched while the elaboration and execution of defence policies began. Parallel with the realisation of military doctrines the reduction of armed forces, reduction of compulsory service time, and introduction of civil service were launched. In all, democratic control over the armed forces was institutionalised and spread over previously closed areas such as defence budget planning, and its transparency. (The transparency of budget planning has already been introduced in establishing new forms of border guards – especially in the new countries.)

The analysis of civil control over defence sector indicates that its efficiency depends primarily on the expertise level of participants. The major question refers to the expertise of bodies and institutions executing civil control.

Defence experts belong to the first group. Many of the decision-makers simply do not have advisory backup and frequently, if there is a very primitive advisory-like network, it is usually based on political party preferences or sometimes family relations and has no solid backup of studies or experience.

In spite of the fact that military advisory activities play an extremely important role in a number of questions – ranging from domestic defence decisions to military diplomatic issues – the centre-right parties lack their advisory network and even the advisory groups with highly developed connections have limited influence within their circles. In this situation only very slow progress can be made.

If and where there are advisors, they come from former military personnel, and/or retired officers who have fairly low-level ideas concerning new trends and values in the armed forces. Their fundamental experience is rooted back in the old military structures and their personal bonds, connections, confidence and preferences are stronger than their expertise.

The fundamental expertise of non-military experts is concentrated on economic and legal fields. Besides, there is a significant difference between the up-to-date nature and the quality of their preparedness. Most of these experts graduate from short-term seminars and usually lack that experience which is necessary for knowledge of European values in security policy. Some of them speak foreign languages and have a good knowledge of information technology but most of them lack these kinds of capacities. Non-military experts do not make up a coherent group in these countries and tend to consist of certain politicians operating in randomly formed groups. They have little or no intention and interest in further and continuous training as their positions are rather instable and can be made redundant any time, which makes excessive invention very risky.

The heads of civil services are usually civilians – Heads of Departments, Directors, Heads of Directorates – with support from international companies and institutions but with fundamental military backup. These are employees who have close connections with various agencies of the Ministry of the Interior and usually cooperate with Interpol. The expertise of MPs presents an especially difficult problem as they are expected to make decisions at legislative level. They are assigned to various working committees, programmes, councils and delegations, in most cases basically by the trust of their voters. The existence of necessary expertise and professional background is hardly a crucial issue for the Parliamentary bureaucracy ('If office is given, talent is given'). Unfortunately, with similar backgrounds, assignments even in international committees can be taken, which include public appearances in international affairs, without expecting them to have such preparations. There are very few countries – Poland can be an exception – that have certain expectations towards MPs to do certain prep-courses and MPs can begin their activities in the Defence Committee only after accomplishing them. No similar MP obligations are known in the countries of the region in question.

It is very important to evaluate the professional knowledge of the armed forces, police, penal authorities and various security services. Some of their personnel graduated from military training establishments and

institutions while others were recruited from graduates of civil institutions, colleges and universities. The range is very wide: it can be stated that General Staffs and Joint Commands which are usually responsible for carrying out military reforms are well-prepared in the field of military issues; however, in other cases this is rather problematic. At the same time, the knowledge acquired by military personnel and taught in military training establishments is too little for civilians' expectations. What they miss the most is that military personnel is not provided with the background knowledge necessary for civil policy-making which – according to widespread opinions – can be taught in civil research institutes, universities and other institutions regarded by politicians as democratic and not in military training establishments. The number of qualified experts with a masters degree, PhD diploma, sufficient scientific works published, is relatively low in the defence sector. Not only is there a general deficit in this sector in most countries, but the academic acknowledgement of the few existing ones is extremely low. The most common explanations of their under-representation are claimed as follows: resistance to accepted changes, military isolationism for multiple reasons and a low salary. Sometimes – seldom – university departments also take up certain elements of teaching that can be useful for the defence sector but these hardly ever make up a systematic and consistent knowledge.

Naturally, through their international relations, they receive an increasing amount of university cooperation models that they utilise fairly well.

The best-prepared civil research institutes – the NGOs – have done significant work since the change of social system and have developed a great deal but the number of NGOs specialising in the defence field is still rather low. However, they maintain highly sensitive societal relations and are able to communicate defence-related issues efficiently. Most of them are characterised by random structures and non-systematic organisations. Their best-prepared military experts are former military officers and also civilians with some affinity to the issues of armed forces.

The position of the media is fairly typical. On the one hand the previous party-state style approach, playing down problems, advertising positive features and events, is definitely over. On the other hand, however, depending on the political dominance of the armed forces in a country, the press is inclined to hold its criticism. In countries where a critical approach is clear and comprehensive it is an obvious sign that the political dominance of the armed forces is over and the media has taken a key position in civil control.

Within the activities of local municipalities defence issues are, for the most part, not even of secondary importance. Usually local municipalities do not have resources nor experts. Their main problem is how to live off the economic capacities in their territory and how to run local administration. That is why defence matters come to the foreground only in endangered regions and involve the best experts.

Similar to the media, local municipalities also frequently use counter-selection for filling the ranks of their defence staff where the committees are made up or headed by experts who are useless in any other fields.

In the present situation it is paramount – and absolutely understandable – that these countries rather frequently utilise foreign support when and where international organisations and/or foundations offer training opportunities. The support provided by the Centre for European Studies, Tempus, and other foundations, are used by them for training their new generation of experts.

As far as civilians are concerned it is very important to provide a proper management for deficiencies experienced in expert training, to couple the control of defence issues with the required level of expertise, and to keep defence, security and armed forces under control in the framework of open and public discourse.

The most crucial part of new training and education consists of gathering and adapting foreign models. In this aspect the role of international seminars and workshops can be considered crucial not only for the naturalisation of international standards but also for establishing a pool of experts in every country, which has authentic information and reliable

knowledge and able to discuss new developments. In general, it can be claimed that both the NGOs and trainings are poor and under-financed, begging for resource improvement.

3.7 Military Education in the Post-Communist Armed Forces

Due to the large-scale downsizing of the armed forces, systems of military education also experienced fairly significant cutbacks. Education reform had a comprehensive impact on the institutions of officer education and NCO training. There was unlimited quantitative reduction of military schools and training centres and widespread depoliticising and de-ideologising of education.

The isolation of military education from the civil sector was abandoned everywhere. Civil institutions of higher education (universities and colleges) took up a number of research projects while military personnel were provided a chance to study at and graduate from civil colleges and universities. Military schools opened for civilians, even for those who did not plan on taking up a military career. The easy accessibility of defence knowledge and openness of military higher education to the entire society has emerged in every country of the region.

Another extremely important factor is the opportunity to graduate from foreign military schools. Not only is it significant for the increase of education level of officer corps but also for learning and adapting the experience and models of armed forces in Western democracies. Western military academies, colleges and other forms of education became accessible for the best of the current servicemen of the former Warsaw Pact states. Hundreds of soldiers graduated from Western military schools. In most of the countries, however, inserting the well-trained and educated personnel in the military structure, their assignments, utilisation of their special knowledge and qualification present a serious problem. It is not surprising that young officers and non-commissioned officers sent to foreign training feel uneasy under the command and supervision of their older colleagues affected with obsolete conditioning after return to their countries. Quite a few officers

who took their high qualification in Western educational institutions leave the defence sector for financial reasons.

Since the change of social system, part of the changes in the structures of military schools are aimed at the same objectives and the only difference between countries is the extent of the progress. In another field of changes bigger differences exist among the military education systems of the countries of the region. Nevertheless, it would be premature to speak about the final and ultimate state of the officer training systems in these countries as they are in a state of rapid changes and reorganisation.

Military experts are prepared both at a higher level of education (university and college levels) and at special and postgraduate levels by the military schools of the region. The curricula of the military schools are adjusted to those of the civil training systems so that in-service and prospective soldiers attending these courses – except for special courses – are allowed to graduate in social or medical sciences, arts or technology. It is not extraordinary, however, that curricula do not follow Western standards as they are often based on the knowledge and capacities of the academic staffs which are under retraining themselves.

Nearly all military schools have already adapted the Western model of education allowing a two-stage training. After 2–4 years of studies cadets/students can graduate and after five years of studies a full scientific qualification is provided. Nevertheless, security, political and social studies have just begun to target civil–military relations.

3.8 Relations between Media, Research on the Armed Forces

In the countries of the region public civil control over the armed forces (exercised through mass media) is a common phenomenon. Every important medium delegates its independent journalists to continuous monitoring of the events in the defence sector and the armed forces. The attitude of these journalists largely depends on traditions, the extent of transformation in the armed forces, real independence of media, and the civil-military relations in the country.

It is remarkable that journalists in Romania have by-and-large a positive approach to the armed forces while in the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Russia the media is extremely critical about the transformation of the armed forces, focusing more on failures and problems than on highlighting successes.

The public in Romania has a positive attitude towards the armed forces and judged by the images reflected by press the relations between mass media and the armed forces are nearly idyllic and the same is revealed by public survey information. This image is especially flattering if compared to that of other post-communist countries. Some experts, therefore, have serious doubts concerning the freedom of media, or their independence in connection with military issues, to be more precise.

The armed forces in every country of the region have their own military periodicals (newspapers and magazines with different circulation and issuance) that inform personnel on current issues of the military. Some of these publications are also on sale publicly but have little or no influence outside the armed forces.

Military-related research in societies structured by the Soviet model belonged to the ideologically controlled sector, i.e. it was under the control of the Party. Independent scientific research was non-existent and leaving behind this legacy makes for a long and difficult uphill struggle. Civil research institutes are not very much interested in defence issues. This, compounded with a serious deficit in qualified civil experts dealing with security, defence and military science issues makes open debates over defence issues poor. Last but not least, it is extremely difficult to obtain the required resources for important research projects like research in the field of military society, for example.

Nevertheless, within the armed forces of each country mentioned above there are social studies conducted by departments, institutes of various military schools, certain directorates of MoDs, background institutes or research institutes in subordination to and under supervision of general staffs. These institutes are structured on the basis of new principles; their researchers are recruited on professional grounds and their assignments include both security studies and public opinion polls.

3.9 Prospects

In the countries of the region, although in a characteristically uneven way of development, all the necessary factors have been established for a would-be consistent institutional system of civil control and there is a good chance it can be filled with the appropriate expertise. It can be rightly supposed that this chance would be supported by military and civil training establishments with defence and security academic subjects in their curricula, by a decreasing gap between their curricula and by the introduction of appropriate norms and regulations for various institutions and public figures of civil control urging them to have sufficient professional knowledge. It follows, for this reason, that there is a need to close the gap to the curricula of civilian higher education institutions, allow a certain overlap of subject areas and to promote their opening up towards one another. Besides this, however, the structuralisation of training also requires certain forecast with short- and long-term planning, building military reforms, structuring and exploiting budget, defence priorities and securing resources.

One of the prospects is, of course, establishing a continuous and well-planned cadre of experts. It seems to be paramount to further provide a pool of well-prepared teachers, researchers, specialists, and also supply MPs, media experts and NGO staffs with up-to-date, continuously upgraded information and preparedness.

In the personnel management a transparent and reliable budget, quality-oriented development and regular rotation in various committees are necessary, coupled with the employment of full-time experts possessing the necessary experience. The activities of various conferences, seminars, workshops and other forms of exchanging knowledge and experience are of great importance for experts as points of reference.

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