

MILITARY RETENTION. A COMPARATIVE OUTLOOK

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One of the main goals for human resources management structures and for armed forces leaders is to maintain all necessary personnel, both qualitatively and quantitatively for operational needs or for full required capabilities. The retention of military personnel is essential to keep morale and unit readiness and to reduce the costs for recruiting, training, replacement of manpower. Retention rates depend not only on money or other social measures. The goal for retention is to keep in use the most valuable resource that belongs to an organization: the human beings and their knowledge. The aim of this paper is to provide a comparative analysis of retention measures in various countries based on Research and Technology Organisation report released in 2007 and, thus, provide more examples of retention measures as far as the Romanian military system is concerned.

Key words: *military retention, recruitment & retention, retirement, pay, benefits, morale, military career.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Why are our best officers leaving the military? Why are so many of the most talented officers now abandoning military life? These two rhetorical questions are often heard in many armed forces around the globe and answers are various and more or less based on scientific studies. A short answer for these questions reveals a cruel truth: it's not just money. In this respect, it is astonishing to find out that 93% of West Point graduates [1] believe that half or more of "the best officers leave the military early rather than serving a full career". Misunderstanding of personal problems, promotion based on seniority rather than merit, lack or poorness of social measures, stressful climate, rigid or discriminatory attitudes of the high-ranked officers lead some of the best officers out of the military system before completing full term of service.

One of the main goals for human resources management structures and for the armed forces leaders is to maintain all necessary personnel, both qualitatively and quantitatively, for operational needs or for full required capabilities, without major deficits in force categories and military specialties. Thus, the replacement with recruits of the personnel leaving the armed forces by retirement or by their own will or the retention of existing personnel, trained and specialized to lead military structures or to exploit high-specialized equipment is compulsory. The retention of military personnel is essential to keep morale and unit readiness and to reduce the costs for recruiting, training, replacement of manpower.

A dictionary type definition of retention describes it as the action of keeping somebody rather losing it or stopping it to leave the system. Losing a member of organization is not only a blank in one box or a new vacant position. It means more: the loss

of knowledge and experience gained in years of work, and also wasting the material and intellectual efforts underpinning education and training.

The goal of this paper is to make a brief description of the phenomenon of retention in general and how high or low retention rates can be achieved using different solutions in armies around the world. The term of “military” used for this paper refers to all categories of personnel: professional soldiers (enlisted), NCOs, and officers. When some measures are targeted to a specific category of military personnel then the term used indicates that only a specific category is designated.

2. DEFINITIONS AND FORMULAS

Military retention is the term that refers to the measures taken in armed forces to maintain voluntarily the personnel during their mandatory term of service and after that. Military retention is measured in percentage by the rate of retention that could be defined by the ratio between the number of personnel that continues their service (n_1) and the number of personnel that started service (n_0) or by the ratio between the number of personnel that stopped their service during the time of contract (n_2) and the number of personnel that started their service (n_0).

$$R = 100 \times n_1 / n_0 \quad (1)$$

or

$$R = 100 \times (1 - n_2 / n_0) \quad (2)$$

$$\rightarrow R_{\max} = 100\% \text{ and } R_{\min} = 0\%$$

Another problem of human resource management strategy is to establish for medium or long terms retention desired rates, for each year, for the types of armed forces, category of personnel or military specialties. Setting retention rates must be based

on the forecasted evolution of the estimated number of staff required annually or within a defined period of time, globally or for categories of personnel, using some formulas.

$$N_{\max} = N_0 - N_{\text{out}} + N_{\text{in}} \quad (3)$$

N_{\max} = upper limit of personnel (ceiling)

N_0 = number of existing personnel
 N_{out} = number of outputs
 N_{in} = number of inputs (recruits)

or

$$N_{\max} = N_0 - (N_{\text{wout}} + N_{\text{pout}}) + N_{\text{in}} \quad (4)$$

N_{\max} = upper limit of personnel (ceiling)

N_0 = number of existing personnel

N_{wout} = number of outputs by own will

N_{in} = number of inputs (recruits & others)

N_{pout} = number of outputs without own will (retirement, medical cases, casualties)

or

$$N_{\max} = N_{\text{ret}} - N_{\text{pout}} + N_{\text{in}} \quad (5)$$

N_{\max} = upper limit of personnel (ceiling)

N_{ret} = number of retention
 N_{in} = number of inputs (recruits & others)

N_{pout} = number of outputs without own willingness (retirement, medical cases, casualties)

Formulas (1), (2) and (5) are linked by a new relation

$$N_{\text{ret}} = R \cdot N_{\text{exp}} \quad (6)$$

N_{exp} = number of the personnel whose services expired in one year (or months, years, etc).

Of course, the number of personnel in the calculations will not consider militaries who could not meet the contractual terms relating to service period due to illness, injury or medical unfit declaration. In reality, the calculations take into account those seeking termination of a contract by their own will for various reasons and hence choose not to not sign a

new contract although the armed forces allow signing a new contract. In my opinion, a maximal retention rate of 100% is not desirable, nor a rate close to 0%.

Retention rate analyses should be done in close relationship with the rate of recruitment. A high recruitment and retention rate without clear criteria for further contracts in activity or lowering standards for the sake of maintaining a high retention can have undesirable effects, both on the number of candidates for recruitment, but also on the whole military system. Moreover, low retention can further influence the recruiting process. A low retention is generated by low wages or nonexistent social measures for the militaries. These things are usually known to young people who want to be recruited to the armed forces. How can it be attractive with low wages or without compensatory measures?

On the other hand, if many militaries choose to pursue their career/contracts, the number of new recruits will decrease, and the chances of promotion for existing staff will decrease or the military system will have too many experienced persons. This will have an effect in the future, when these militaries with experience and leadership skills leave the military system, creating a huge lack of personnel with the necessary experience. Sometimes, seniority and great confidence in this experience can cause failure, capping, and lack of interest in training or resistance to change.

When armed forces' goal is downsizing the number of people in the military system, it is clear that a simple solution is to obtain a reduced military retention rate or to decrease the number of recruitments. Obviously, a low retention rate is desirable because reducing the number of recruitments has negative influences also in short-

term (reduction of training, number of staff in the centers of education and training) and long-term (creating a gap between generations, small number of people with low levels of experience, seniority promotion, etc.).

3. A SHORT ANALYSIS OF RETENTION

Retention analysis is quite complicated because there are many factors influencing retention and a lot of them are linked. Also, the retention of a military career concerns all part of a career: initial training, career and post-career phase. The relationship between retention and recruitment is very important, so that in many countries the solutions are established interdependent. This chapter tries to make a brief analysis of the factors influencing retention, relationship between recruitment and retention, and some aspects of retention in different periods of military career.

3.1. Military retention factors

The retention into many of NATO's armed forces can be attributed to one of following factors [1]:

- financial factors:
- pay and benefits;
- relatively higher private sector wages;
- social & psychological factors:
 - mismatch between individual interests and job assignments;
 - mismatch between social values and the military organizational culture;
 - low unemployment rates in economy;
 - misinformation during recruitment and selection;
 - values research;
 - individual differences and turnover;
 - quality of life;
 - gender and minority issues;
 - military factors:
 - military operational and personnel tempo;

- management of recruitment, selection, and classification;
- geographical location of military jobs;
- promotions systems based on seniority;

Any factor listed above can be solved in short-term or long-term. Any country has different issues to identify retention problems and the best solutions, also for short-term or long-term. Solutions are common across countries. But sometimes solutions for short-term can have negative long-term effects and costly consequences. For example, when rapid results are desired, as in the case of a low retention rates were reached in Romanian MoND between years 1998-2007 when bonuses for leaving Military worked very well. In the long-term, have appeared the lacks of certain categories of specialists who are difficult to replace or educate.

Also, for long-term measures, armed forces need policies for human resources, stable laws, and well-defined standards. If you want to keep same military personnel well trained, you cannot change annually the payment law or military pensions, because for militaries who began their careers made in their choice based on certain principles and prerequisites, and they will change negatively their perception and that situation can be perceived as a violation of the rights of militaries and therefore an important part of their system will leave Military.

Other studies [2] for retention have determined three major factors influencing retention:

- **quality of work:**
 - job satisfaction;
 - work enjoyment;
 - a sense of pride in accomplishments;
- **quality of life:**
 - pay;
 - education opportunities;

- time at home;
- access to quality health care;
- a sense of financial security;
- **quality of leadership:**
 - leadership of senior leaders;
 - quality of leaders within their immediate chain of command.

Each factor must be examined individually and can be a subject to detailed or extended studies. Subjects of studies are most likely to leave Military because of a perception of high operational tempo, life balance, low service, declining pay and compensation, waning desire to hold senior leadership positions, and a widespread distrust of senior leadership.

Identifying the best solutions to a rate of retention is also complex, various measures aimed at solving the problem being already taken. In some countries, in the absence of applied studies, human resources structures and top-leaders of armed forces have taken measures based on experience, which applied progressively led to desired results for military retention.

Usually giving up military career is not because of just one of the factors from those enumerated above. The decision is taken because of gradual or simultaneous appearance of factors, just one acting as a trigger and usually that is the factor to manifest the last. This triggering factor forces the person to take a radical measure: leave Military for a new civilian life.

3.2. The relation between recruitment & retention

In many countries, recruitment and retention of personnel are considered and solved as part of a unique policy aiming at hiring new members and meanwhile maintaining existing personnel with already developed abilities, skills and knowledge. The personnel choose not to renew their contract with the military system for various reasons (a phenomenon also

known as attrition) can influence by their attitudes and dissemination of positive/negative/(un)real opinions in the public space, the number of recruits to the military system. Also, a small number of people who want to join the military system, reveals a reduced attractiveness of the military system to people (the reasons may fall in any of the following categories: low wages, deprivations inherent of the military system, relocation problems, gender and minority issues, etc.), leading in the future to reduced military retention. As mentioned earlier, lowering the standards of recruitment, education, evaluation, and retention increases the likelihood of using “less qualified” or less-motivated personnel.

Another case occurs when the low numbers in recruitment are aggravated by the fact that many military personnel attrite prior to the completion of their initial contracts. In this respect, many military personnel choose to return to civilian life later in their careers, attracted by private or public sector opportunities, with increasing wages or career opportunities. This happens frequently in specific specialties: pilots, IT specialists, some technical specialties. For civilian companies it is too expensive to recruit and train so they choose to “steal” well-trained and experienced workers from the armed forces.

Traditional recruiting, selection, classification and retention practices are no longer adequate to attract and retain the necessary military personnel to ensure the stability of readiness requirement. Thus, countries like Romania, Spain, Turkey who have relatively recently transitioned from a conscript to an all-volunteer force are seeking alternatives to the traditional approaches of recruiting and retention of personnel, especially

in uncertain economic times or with low unemployment.

3.3. Retention problems during initial training and early career

Turnover of recruits and young militaries occurs for various reasons and most likely within the first term of service. It is obvious that early turnover is very costly to an organization. Firstly, there is no return on investment, so efficiency for education centers goes down. In addition, it is likely that turnover will have indirect and unintended effects on organizational outcomes. Disappointed militaries will disseminate their stories, real or unreal, and in doing so, probably repel others from recruiting or going on in service. Soon, this leads to some problems in organization’s ability to retain newcomers and gain desired retention rates.

Disappointment leads to a decrease in job satisfaction and as a result to an increase in voluntary turnover. Also, the role of inflated expectations is generally accepted. Theoretically, this is an interesting construct to explain turnover intentions and behavior.

Another aggravating factor leading to a high rate of attrition is a promotion system based on seniority or cronyism. Some young personnel begin to lose their faith in the system’s fairness when only the length of service leads to the next rank or to a new assignment without realistic analysis, selection and evaluation. So, the evaluation and promotion activity should be based on standards established over a long period of time on accurate performance indicators, related to a specific work or job.

When asked why they left military service former military refer to concrete experiences and try to answer honestly: homesickness,

problems with the instructors/leaders/colleagues, problems at home, a disappointing salary, losing the job he preferred, assigning to not-desired post, found a better job elsewhere, new opportunities outside Military. Hence, if all of the above are not properly taken care of through an integrated approach of human resource management, the military personnel as a group will be more dissatisfied, will be less committed to the organization, and will have higher turnover intentions.

3.4. Retention problems during career

Two major reasons lead people to leave the Military: the attractiveness of alternatives outside the Military and the dissatisfaction about the circumstances inside the Military. Of course, most decisions to leave are based on a combination of both reasons.

Pilots, IT-specialists, technicians and air traffic controllers are among the people leaving mainly because of the attractiveness of alternative employment opportunities. These highly qualified persons can easily find a new job in civilian life when the economy is good. The departure of these highly trained persons is a major problem for armed forces because they are very expensive to recruit and train.

Nevertheless, there are certain times when the reverse movement occurs in not leaving the military system due to economic downturn or low salaries outside the Military. For pilots and aircraft technicians, the Military experienced a temporary standstill of their departure due to the worldwide recession of air travel after 2001.

An important group consists of persons who were deployed several times. During the last decade, many armed forces contributed extensively

in many operations abroad, especially in war zones on dangerous peace-keeping zone. Because of the age structure of personnel, many persons are considered too old and unfit to be deployed. As a consequence, the pool to draw from is rather small and the younger and mid-age persons fit to be sent abroad are deployed several times. In a number of cases, their family no longer accepts this and forces the person to leave the Military. However, the refusal to assume the mission assigned may have negative consequences. For example, in the Romanian Armed Forces, non-acceptance of assignment in abroad mission organized by their unit means a mandatory and unilateral dissolution of the contract according to the law in peacetime or worst, a criminal conviction in wartime.

4. SOLUTIONS FOR HIGH RATES OF MILITARY RETENTION

The solutions to the problems of military retention are common across countries. One or more of the following measures and programs have been implemented across NATO countries [1]:

- increases in pay and benefits;
- family care and quality of life programs;
- improved selection and classification measures;
- guaranteed training programs;
- lowering standards;
- educational measures;
- retention bonus programs;
- varying contract length and so on.

Another classification of solutions can be made depending on the type of solution: financial, social, training, human resource management, material resources management.

Another classification can be made depending on the target population and the career level:

- general solutions, for long-term, during the entire career;
- early career solutions, including also for initial training;
- mid-career solutions;
- pre-retirement solutions, for the final period of military career;
- post-retirement solutions.

For each measure, some details and practical solutions applied by armed forces around the world, especially in Romania and other NATO's countries, are to be provided in the next subchapters.

4.1. Financial measures

These measures provide salaries or other financial benefits for military personnel, so that leaving the military system becomes non-attractive and privations and difficulties of military life are counterbalanced by the financial gains. They are discussed below with their inherent advantages, disadvantages and by resorting to some specific examples.

pay and benefits (pay rise, special service allowances, bonuses)

A balanced relationship between military salaries and civilian salaries (when looking comparatively at the defense and civilian sectors), and between officers, NCOs and enlisted personnel (when focusing on how the military system is organized) must be set according to the labor market, so as to ensure the necessary personnel for the capabilities established by the national defense strategy. A major effort to improve both recruitment and retention should be a significant pay raise for all military personnel to reflect the overall evolution of the salaries in country or to highlight the role of armed forces on the labor market. Between 2001 and 2005, in Belgium [1] salaries were raised

between 3.7%-33.5%, differently for enlisted, NCOs and officers.

Between 1998-2010, to reduce the rate of retention and to force early retirements needed to reorganize armed forces and to obtain half-decrease of personnel quickly, according to Romanian Government Ordinance no. 7/1998, Ministry of National Defense offered the possibility of early retirement and generous bonuses proportional to the number of years of service remaining until retirement. Finally, the goal of simultaneously achieving a huge premature retirement and a low rate of retention was achieved in few years by money.

benefits for service time

In Spain [1], an extra compensation consisting of 3 extra monthly salary will be given all at a time in some units once they have completed 3, 5 and 7 years of service time and have been posted at least 12 or 18 following months in the same assignment (respectively those having served 3 and 5 years). This compensation is provided in addition to the regular extra compensation (also all at a time) every 4 and 6 years of service time.

In Romania, salaries of military personnel increase by 6% of the base salary after every 3 years of military service, up to a maximum of 42%.

retention bonuses for specialists

These measures are targeted at IT-specialists, medical specialists, pilots, air-traffic controllers and others because their education is very expensive and lasts many years.

In Belgium [1], computer specialists were paid according to their military rank only, but large numbers, especially the good ones, decided to leave. It was therefore decided to grant them a significant retention bonus. This measure was not perfect. Thus, the question of

how to identify computer specialists appeared, because some of them were very good, but had had no formal training before and no formal proof of being a computer specialist in their personal file. Others were trained, but did no longer work as computer specialist (until they heard of the bonuses, of course). Finally, the persons who received the bonuses did not have to commit themselves to stay with the Military and no effect measurements were done.

In Romania, after 1 January 2015, the entire medical staff, including the military medical personnel, received bonuses of 25-30% from base salary to stop the exodus of medical personnel abroad.

In United Kingdom [1], a pilot retention scheme was used by the Royal Air Forces after 1999. It refunded pilots with the costs associated with obtaining an Airline Transport Pilots License or equivalent, in exchange for an undertaking to serve to at least the age of 38 or 16 years of service. That may mean that pilots are refunded up to £10000 of the costs associated with obtaining this license.

bonuses for deployment

Obviously, the willingness of being deployed would drop enormously if there were no bonuses. In Romania, bonuses for abroad deployed persons represent 50% up to 100% from basic salary and another additionally daily allowance. In Spain [1], the militaries posted in some specific locations, usually on islands or in far locations, are entitled to get some benefits, according to the posting.

compensation for studies and enlistment bonuses

In Spain [1] during the training stage, students earn a monthly pay (338 €). Once they have finished this training and signed the first contract,

they get their salary (1100 €/month), plus a 564 € enlistment bonus.

In Romania, officers, NCOs, and enlisted personnel, after graduating their basic training and education, when they arrive in assigned unit receive one salary as a bonus.

house renting or buying allowance

In Spain [1], reserve officers and professional soldiers who have served over five years may earn a monthly house renting compensation. Although the impact of this measure is positive on retention, it could be stronger if the time required to get it were reduced to three years of service. Also, in Spain Armed Forces, every member may apply for a compensation to buy a house. This compensation consists of a fixed amount delivered by the Armed Forces Social Institute.

In Romania, according to Romanian Government Ordinance no. 1567/2005, Ministry of National Defense offered the possibility of monthly paying for a properly residence rent, if the person submitting for such an allowance is not a homeowner in the deployment area of the unit. The amount of this allowance is the rent price, but no more than 50% of base salary.

4.2. Social measures

These measures provide non-financial benefits for military personnel or for their families:

- personnel and family support offices and programs

In Pakistan, military personnel benefits are a house belonging to military facilities and a support office. This office offers a civilian worker to help him or his family for personal mobility aid, shopping and other domestic issues [as said by COL. Kamran SATTI].

providing daycare for small children

Belgium Military had a problem in finding adequate daycare facilities for young mothers. In this respect, the Military Forces of Belgium [1] decided to open daycare centers in the larger garrisons. This solution has limits: daycare centers are only open from 7 AM till 6 PM, so mothers who have night shifts or are called up for exercises still have to look for other solutions.

In Romania, the Ministry Of National Defense has in use kindergarten for children of military personnel, but this measure is applied only in large or garrisons.

providing psychological support

Since it gradually became clear that deploying persons could be stressful both for them and for their family, a comprehensive system of psychological support for the member of the Military Forces of Belgium as well as for his family was set up. This was primarily done as responsible employer behavior, but undoubtedly has beneficial effect upon the retention of the deployed personnel.

In Romania, every unit has its own psychologist or some small units are assigned to a psychologist. The main duty of that specialist is to evaluate personnel and to provide for leaders any kind of necessary information about problems encountered by the counselled personnel during working hours, family related, informal relations inside the group.

operational trauma and stress support centers

In Romania, after the war experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, it was created Social and Behavioral Research Center of the Armed Forces. This Center performs activities as evaluation of the specific risk factors in abroad missions or operations and dysfunctional behaviors that can occur within them. This Center

has also the duty to plan, organize, coordinate, monitor and enforce activities as psychological preparation of personnel, management of critical incidents, and prevention and control activities of operational stress.

post-retirement measures

In Belgium [1], retired personnel have the possibility to return after leaving the military. One of the possibilities a member of the Military has after leaving the organization is simply to come back, but within one year. This is useful and it allows re-engaging a person who did decide to leave, but found out that the other side of the Military is no longer black.

In Romanian MoND, Department of life's quality was established in 2009 by reorganization of existing structures. Its motto is "*The armed forces cannot afford to ignore the social dimension of service relations for its current or former personnel*". This structure reports directly to the Secretary of State for Relations with Parliament, Public Information and Welfare and provides:

- assistance to veterans, invalids widows of war veterans;
- conversion of personnel to civilian jobs;
- post-retirement assistance to retired personnel;
- quality of life of military personnel (salary, pension scheme, health care, feeding, housing, environment, equality, recognition of merit in service, recreation and restoring work ability, problem of veterans from war theatres, family support, and social issues.

For the first 3 tasks, the Department of life quality is the only structure involved. For the last one, it ensures only the transmission of the collected data to the Minister.

4.3. Human resource measures

These measures are targeted to ensure legal rights for personnel, but only within provisions of laws.

*promotion to next category
of personnel (NCO, officer)*

In Belgium [1], most of air traffic controllers were recruited and trained as NCO. They were paid according to their rank only, but attrition was high because of the length and difficulty level of their training. Meanwhile, the opportunity to work for the civilian authority as air-traffic controller was high because the wage for civilian air-traffic controller with 13 years of experience was bigger than the wage of the Chief Head of Defence of the Belgian Forces. So, it was decided to upgrade the function of air-traffic controller to the category of officer.

In Spain [1], 80% of vacancies are kept for professional soldiers (enlisted personnel) over 3 years of service time. Candidates must be secondary education graduated and not being over 33 years old. Candidates who are selected will join the corresponding training center. Also, NCO can be promoted officer after 2 years of training.

In Romania, most NCO are selected from professional soldier's category. Candidates must have high-school diploma (baccalaureate) and not being over 30 years old. Also, after 5 years of service at maximum age of 35, NCO can be promoted officer but after regular years of training. Also, in the case of high-deficit of specialized personnel, NCO can be promoted as officers if he has a bachelor's degree and after a short training (4 months).

*flexible length of service
or career schedule*

As a sample for terms of service, in Romanian Armed Forces, the obligated term of service for officers and NCOs determined by the law for the initial contract is 8 years (10 years for pilots). After that, until they reached 15 years of service, the term is 4 years.

After 15 years of service, the contract is signed until retirement age. For enlisted personnel, the term of service for first contract is 4 years and the next terms no more than 3 years.

In Belgium [1] it was decided to introduce short-term contracts to maintain an acceptable age structure within the Military. These contracts are available for the three personnel categories: volunteers, NCOs, and officers. At the outset, applicants had to sign a two years contract. They could extend their contract three times for one year, if they hadn't reached the age of 25. In order to make these contracts a bit more attractive and to allow more people to apply, it was decided to allow the applicants to apply until the age of 30 with the possibility to extend their contract for a total of seven years, if they hadn't reached the age of 34.

In Netherlands [1], Military aimed at eventually reaching an average length of service for fixed-term contractors of 7 years in 2009. The completion of this objective had been delayed as a result of the various measures taken to avoid exceeding the personnel strength. Before 2009, the length of service of military personnel on fixed-term contracts was between 4 and 6 years.

In Spain [1], career schedule helps soldiers to decide the number of terms suitable for them according to their expectations, abilities and opportunities. Also, they have the opportunity to work as permanent troop, until they reached the reserve age of 58.

*using preferences when assigning to
vacancies/assignment*

Military personnel aren't universal soldiers or robots: they have changes in attitudes, expectations, aspirations and behaviour which an individual undergoes during his or her

service. For example, an unmarried soldier, NCO or officer may desire interesting operational postings, but once married, the same individual may feel reluctant to leave home for long periods or for same amount of money. Reasons for staying in the service change as these transitions take place.

In Belgium [1], during the classification process of the applicants, one has to balance the relative weight of the applicants' aptitudes for the different trades and their preference for these trades. During the last few years the importance of the preferences has been increased. This results in having more applicants to be assigned to the trade they prefer. It is assumed that this will lower early turnover.

In Romania, in peace time, for NCOs and officers, when vacancies occur, whole selection process is based on freewill requests according to provisions and regulations of MoND. These rules are changed in war-time, when entire selection process is based on orders and needs.

4.4. Measures for accommodation, feeding and duties

These measures aim to improve the conditions of accommodation, food and work inside the unit to fulfil duties in the best conditions.

improving lodging and feeding conditions

In Spain [1], especially on board Navy ships and in training centers lodging conditions aren't so good. To improve this, The Ministry of Defence will provide facilities within barracks for cultural, social, sport and leisure activities. In units with less than 150 soldiers there will be at least a cafeteria, a library and a soldier information office. Units

with more than 600 soldiers will be provided with a soldiers' mess hall and a socio-cultural center (cafeteria, game room, gym and video room, library, computer room, language laboratory and multi-purpose room).

service outsourcing

Outsourcing aims at freeing militaries from a number of duties which are not their business.

In the United Kingdom [3], after 1983, as part of its aims of improving efficiency, MoD introduced a new competitive procurement policy, embracing competition for equipment and for support services. After 1991, MoD was reporting the use of contractors for catering, cleaning, laundry, security guarding and maintenance, engineering, supply, and support functions at Military Colleges and target simulation and electronic warfare training.

In Romania, after 2003, after discharging conscription, it was a huge trend to move a lot of needed basic services in Military towards to public of private companies. Tasks completed before 2003 by conscript militaries, such as cooking, laundry, cleaning, infrastructure maintenance, tailoring, even security were made by private companies. Because some services are quite expensive or very hard to be delivered in war-time or in large operations, after 2010, some specific services are fulfilled only by militaries, as a part of new logistic support system.

housing relocation service

In the United States [4], as part of the general policy to help militaries from one assignment to the next, usually far-away, the Department of Defence has Military and Family Support Center. The Relocation Assistance Program is designated to move resources to make militaries next

move easier. They offer individual move planning when experts guide one person through the relocation process. Military relocation services include consultations, workshops and briefings that can cover anything from housing to pets, even a help for purchasing a home.

4.5. Education and training measures

equivalence of diplomas

In Spain [2], 47 diplomas of military technician are validated by the Education Ministry.

According to the Law of National Education number 1/2011, in Romania, military education is public education and part of the national education system. Professional specialties, high-school programs, university programs, curriculum and number of students are proposed by MoND to Ministry of Education. As a consequence, all diplomas and certificates of education issued by military institutions are recognized by the Ministry of Education and are equivalent to those of civil education institution.

youth camps and pre-enlistment camps

In Belgium [2], one of the major reasons for early turnover resides in non-realistic expectations. To solve this were made youth camps and pre-enlistment camps. Youth camps are for youngster around 15-16 years old. During these camps, they lived in military units and follow a military program intended to learn them more about military life. The pre-enlistment camps were held one week before enlistment and were a very realistic preview of what they would experience once they signed their contract. So, one possible recruit

could see if that his expectations are close to military duties.

using older instructors

One of causes of early turnover is the hard approach of the recruits and students by drill sergeants, because these drill sergeants are quite young and sometimes they have macho or harsh behavior. Therefore, in Belgium [2] an experiment was conducted in which older instructors trained recruits only. Their attitude seemed to have been quite different, because years of experience for the instructors could be easily the age of recruits. As a result much less turnover occurred during that experiment.

4.6. Matrix of measures during career

The measures listed and explained above are of course only some of the potential measures suitable to be applied and only some of those identified as being applied in military systems.

In my opinion, some measures can be applied at any time during career. On the other hand, measures like the use of experience in education and training is more suitable for the final part of career. Assigning to each measure a period during career, it results next matrix.

Many other measures can of course be found and analyzed. Any taken measures are important to obtain desired retention rates in the targeted time period. As explained above, not all measures involve expenditures. Any measure has small or large expenditure, so Military have to use measures under budget limits, provisions of the law, human resources strategies and defense policy.

Table 1. Matrix of measures related to career

Measure	Recruit & early career	Mid-career	Late career	Post-retirement
pay and benefits	•	•	•	•
benefits for service time		•	•	
retention bonuses for specialists		•	•	
bonuses for deployment		•	•	
house renting or buying allowance		•	•	
personnel and family support offices and programs	•	•	•	•
providing daycare for small children	•	•		
providing psychological support	•	•	•	
operational trauma and stress support centers	•	•	•	
post-retirement measures				•
promotion to next category of personnel (NCO, officer)	•	•		
flexible length of service or career schedule	•	•		
using preferences when assigning to vacancies/assignment		•	•	
improving lodging and feeding conditions	•	•	•	
service outsourcing	•	•	•	
housing relocation service	•	•	•	•
equivalence of diplomas	•	•	•	•
youth camps and pre-enlistment camps	•		•	
using older instructors			•	

5. CONCLUSIONS

Retention is a continuous effort to maintain the strength of Military and to obtain the best results in retention rates. The leaders of Ministries of Defense around the world should develop strategies and policies targeted to human behavior and personnel needs.

- To ensure its goals, the Military will:
- develop flexible terms of service;
 - use contemporary work practices;

- attract and retain skilled workers;
- enhance career flexibility through transition assistance and choice;
- enable the rotation of personnel;
- improve career decisions by personal aspirations and employment needs;
- develop promotion system based on a meritocracy;
- apply fair and effective performance evaluation procedures;
- maintain two-way communication system between personnel and leaders;

- provide militaries and their families with social support measures in times of war and peace;

- develop policies for psychological support;

- recognize the value and performance through a system of honors and awards;

- make Military credible and visible in public life to ensure respect for military personnel.

Retention is recognized as being important in helping to maintain manning and there are some measures that have been taken to try to increase the retention of personnel. Of course, another concern should be the application of policy in the individual case. In many situations decisions and actions are constrained by laws, provisions, rules and regulations. Sometimes, there are also lots of situations when leaders and human resources managers should be considerably creative in finding the right solution to individual problems. Leaders and human resources structures should establish and maintain a culture in personnel activities that makes all military personnel that they will receive the best treatment and advices that an employer deserved: honest, prompt and useful. When a decision that affects an individual member of armed forces is being considered, a final check on the rightness of the decision should be given in the form of the following question: "What would a person want in future from his employer?".

Finally, the goal of retention is to keep in use the most valuable resource that belongs to any organization: human being with his knowledge.

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