# INTRODUCTION

WHOM SHALL WE SEND: THE BEST OF THE BRIGHTEST OR THE WORST OF THE DESPERATE?

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The end of compulsory military service in a growing number of European countries, starting in Belgium (1993) and the Netherlands (1996), is a bellwether among the continent's profession of arms. Over twenty European countries are now relying on all-volunteer forces, which are a hallmark of the professionalization of militaries, a changing security environment, and evolving domestic constraints (see figure 1). Domestically, these factors include new fiscal and political realities and the compound effect of population aging and greater social diversity owing to immigration. They culminate in mounting tensions in civil-military relations across Europe – a function of the widening de-alignment between changing social values on the one hand and a fairly static military culture on the other hand. Nowhere is this tension more immediately manifest than in the area of recruitment and retention. As the single greatest challenge to the functional imperative and operational effectiveness of armed forces in post-industrial society, personnel policy is rapidly displacing conventional preoccupations with issues such as *matériel*. The magnitude and significance of the looming challenge is matched by a historically unprecedented temptation, which is too good to pass up, to study the phenomenon by using controlled comparison; there are over twenty laboratories of experimentation, which are highly variegated in some regards, yet quite

FIGURE 1
Military manning systems in Europe, 2010
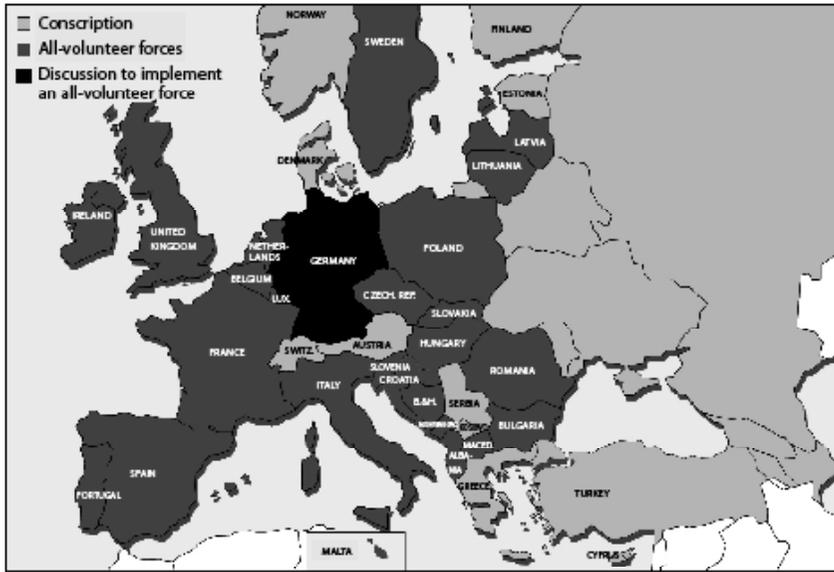
Source: Möckli (2010, 2).

uniform in others. This book is but an initial foray into the wide-ranging research possibilities that the end of mandatory military service among many of Europe's armed forces opens up for the comparative study of civil-military relations.

The status that an armed force enjoys as an organization is directly related to the propensity for youth to join the profession of arms. The prestige of organizations tasked to provide collective security wanes as the perception of personal threat changes with the transition to a post-industrial society. Threats increasingly emanate from the personal sphere (Haltiner et al. 2007; Micewski and Schörner 2007). As Huntington (1957) trenchantly observes, changing social norms are affecting the way people perceive not only work and career but also the military. In post-industrial society, traditional values such as discipline, subordination, and obedience – which are central to hierarchical military organizations – are gradually being replaced by demand for more participatory and deliberative mechanisms, and thus "flatter" organizations. Social trends towards greater individualization and pluralization (as initially observed by Durkheim) are closely linked to differentiation (cf. Luhmann) and its manifestation in the professionalization and specialization of an increasingly complex living environment or public sphere (cf. Habermas) or habitus (cf. Bourdieu). For the armed forces, as for other professions, these changing structural fundamentals necessitate greater professionalization

and systemic (in Luhmann's sense) changes to national defence, which at times is euphemistically referred to as the "revolution in military affairs." The suspension of compulsory military service and a new mode of recruitment and retention are prominent manifestations of this trend.

As a result of these developments, the armed forces and their human-resource needs start to resemble those of other large bureaucratic organizations in the private sector (Janowitz 1960). While faced with a tightening labour market (in the form of low unemployment among skilled labour even when the economy is weak), the armed forces find themselves competing with the private sector for highly skilled and educated personnel. Since the public sector is less flexible and more constrained in adjusting its incentive structure (benefits and relative job security notwithstanding), lagging compensation and remuneration are hampering both recruitment and retention (Cohn 2007, 322). In a dynamic labour market, experts tout the comparative advantage afforded by creativity and flexibility. These attributes are notoriously lacking among organizations that thrive on the long-established structural and procedural proclivity which is so pervasive among public-sector bureaucracies, in general, and militaries, in particular.

On the occasion of the tenth Biennial Conference of the European Research Group on Military and Society (ERGOMAS) at the Swedish National Defence College in Stockholm in June 2009, the working group on recruitment and retention broached research questions such as "How successful are Europe's armed forces at recruiting and retaining professional personnel?" "What incentives have to be provided to meet the profession of arms' demand for volunteers?" "What outreach and advertising strategies have proven successful?" "On what grounds do military personnel opt to leave rather than prolong their initial term contract?" and "What risks are associated with attitudinal cleavages between military personnel and civil society?" (See Feaver and Gronke 2001; Szvircsev Tresch et al. 2005; Szvircsev Tresch, Moelker, and Caforio 2007; Okros, Hill, and Pinch 2008.)

This volume collects the contributions presented at the conference, as well as additional articles complementing the topic. Most articles are expert case studies of a single country. Still, they are instructive for comparative purposes: the armed forces in many of these countries, and especially their personnel policy, have hitherto received little or, in some cases, no attention, especially in English texts (Gilroy and Williams 2007 is the exception). So, this study is as much an initial effort to make data on these countries and their armed forces more accessible to scholars, decision makers, and practitioners alike as it is an effort at expanding the comparative horizon of the field of civil-military relations. The first section of the introduction surveys the determinants that are germane to the ensuing challenges of recruitment and retention; the second section introduces the chapters that follow in an effort to isolate key variables;

and the final section draws conclusions about the role and importance of certain drivers and implications for forging sustainable personnel policies in the armed forces of twenty-first-century, post-industrial societies.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES IN HUMAN-RESOURCE POLICY AMONG ARMED FORCES: EMERGING CHALLENGES OF RECRUITMENT AND COMMITMENT

Whether it be in the military sector or the private sector, the broad objective of personnel policy is to ensure the timely and cost-effective supply of potential labour not only with respect to current needs but also with a view towards the organization's future strategic developments (Oechsler 2000, 238). Recruitment may thus be defined as the process of searching out and finding qualified personnel in sufficient numbers to meet the organization's demand. In light of current demographic and labour-market trends, this means that organizations will hitherto have to rely increasingly on strong incentives, in terms of tasks, working conditions, professional development, remuneration, and other benefits, both to retain their current workforce and to position themselves strategically in an increasingly competitive labour market.

Personnel policy thus has internal and external ends. Internal personnel policy transpires within an organization. External personnel policy, by contrast, distinguishes further between a passive and an active approach. For the purposes of the former, the organization's familiarity plays a significant role in attracting unsolicited applications on which it can draw to meet potential personnel needs without having to devote resources to reaching out. These resources can then be redeployed elsewhere in the organization to bolster its familiarity further. The latter approach, by contrast, requires resources to be invested in traditional media and other means of advertising, such as the Internet, to target prospective applicants for a specific job. It may also involve recruiting agencies that actively seek out people with a desirable profile of skills. Rather than relying on external agencies, the armed forces usually devote a significant part of their budget to maintaining their own professional recruiting organizations. In a tight labour market with fierce competition for highly skilled personnel, this type of active personnel policy becomes ever more important (Oechsler 2000, 239): in contradistinction to *matériel*, people cannot just be procured at the organization's whim. Sustaining the organization's functional imperative in a tight labour market requires a sustained long-term strategy. Shortcomings or failure of that policy will have a negative impact on the organization's operational effectiveness.

Armed forces have two different methods at their disposal to assure the quality of recruits. The first, which tends to be more prevalent among countries with smaller armed forces, sets the criteria for selection relatively high, such as minimum entry qualifications of a high-school

degree and no criminal record (which in and of itself actually disqualifies a considerable portion of the prospective talent pool). Eliminating such applicants keeps the quality of recruits high. Quality trumps quantity but at the risk that some occupations may end up understaffed. The second method, more prevalent among large armed forces, is prepared to sacrifice quality for quantity, deliberately keeping the barriers to entry low. As a result, the failure rate during basic training can be substantially higher because a larger portion of applicants are insufficiently qualified. Moreover, organizations that rely on quantity end up having to invest a lot more resources in "training up" under-qualified recruits. The higher costs and lower benefits associated with selection and training in this second method can quickly add up to suboptimal outcomes of personnel policy.

The method that better serves the organization depends on the desired and needed qualifications on the one hand, and timing on the other hand – at the outset of (basic) training or at its completion. Regardless, these observations are indicative of an economy of recruitment that is peculiar to each country, in which the bar is set to optimize the resources expended on recruitment as well as training. Contrary to its importance in earlier generations of warfare, size per se is becoming a less significant determinant of sustaining the functional imperative. Rather, the challenge is a personnel policy based on an equilibrium between the quantity and quality of the recruit pool on the one hand, and the expenditures on recruitment and training on the other hand. Since this equilibrium is a function of a large number of narratives – such as population aging, delinquency, the population's general level of education, not to mention its relationship to and familiarity with the armed forces – the final calculus is quite country specific. Owing to population aging, a tightening labour market, and curtailed defence spending, this calculus is increasingly significant in optimizing the personnel strategy of a given country's armed forces. Failure to pay greater attention to this calculus will require a disproportionate investment in recruitment and/or training in order to achieve desired outcomes, with increasingly suboptimal results for the organization as a whole.

HUMAN RESOURCE POLICY AMONG EUROPE'S ARMED FORCES

As it turns out, Europe presents an ideal laboratory to subject the optimal recruitment-resources hypothesis to empirical scrutiny. As early as the 1970s, some of Europe's armed forces started to run up against manifest personnel constraints. Mandatory military service notwithstanding, many armed forces experienced serious difficulties in enlisting and retaining qualified volunteers in sufficient numbers for the regular forces and reserves (Doorn 1975). Both the end of the Cold War and the introduction of a new security environment appear to have aggravated the problem and changed its attributes. Akin to the recession of the early 1990s and

the bursting tech bubble of the turn of the millennium, momentary downturns such as the Great Recession of 2008 have further aggravated the problem by encouraging complacency because high unemployment temporarily works in the armed forces' favour. Ergo, the reasons behind earlier recruiting shortfalls warrant closer examination. What accounts for the armed forces' mounting inability to compete on the labour market against the private sector? How can the armed forces counter the higher private-sector salaries in Europe's strong economy? What options do the armed forces have when confronted with the emerging European phenomenon of decreasing structural unemployment? How can the armed forces compensate for lagging behind in remuneration and non-material incentives? Why is the profession of arms losing lustre as a career (which harkens back to the widening incongruity of prevailing social norms with military culture)? Why are the armed forces less accepted among civil society than they have been, with a resultant loss of prestige? What is to be done about geographic disjuncture – that is, a waning of rural youth (among which the armed forces have traditionally over-recruited), an increasingly urban recruit pool relative to the largely rural location of bases, and expeditionary deployments far afield from the country (and culture, religion, and language, for example) of origin? And, of course, how should the armed forces position themselves strategically vis-à-vis a decreasing recruit pool (initially, in terms of the diminishing proportion of the youth cohort relative to the population as a whole and, subsequently, in terms of a real eventual decline of the number of youth)?

To the armed forces' credit, many of these challenges are not unique to them but instead are prevalent throughout the public sector. At the same time, this is no reason for complacency, because these challenges tend to figure disproportionately prominently among the armed forces. The long and short of the story is this: as armed forces become less successful at recruiting quality, they will have to compensate by investing more in training and education. As they devote more time and money to education and training, retention will become increasingly important. With the investment per recruit on the rise, attrition will become increasingly costly to the organization, both financially and as a qualitative loss. While it is important to keep rates of attrition as low as possible, attrition is a fact of life; therefore, the armed forces will have to compensate with greater flexibility towards lateral movement from the private sector and other public-sector organizations.

As countries sought to capitalize on the apparent "peace dividend" that was thought to accompany the end of the Cold War, issues of recruitment and retention were marginalized in those countries that were looking to shed military personnel (Jehn and Selden 2002; Malešič et al. 2002, Szvircsev Tresch 2005). This had a debilitating effect as many of the soldiers with competitive skills took up lucrative early-retirement packages while the less desirable ones who knew they would be unable

to find work elsewhere stayed on. At the same time, instead of recruiting strategically from the population at large, it was more convenient to draw on the final cohort of conscripts to build up the new all-volunteer force. Once this transition had passed, military recruitment proved increasingly difficult. All-volunteer forces are notoriously short on specialists. Given the high demand for technically skilled personnel, relative to the aforementioned problems that armed forces have been facing in recruiting both quality and quantity, the supply of such personnel is particularly difficult for all-volunteer forces (Jackwerth 1998, 378; see also Janowitz and Moskos 1979). Recruitment is further affected (positively and negatively) by the new security environment and the associated expeditionary deployments (Manigart 2005). The pursuit of a military career has functional and instrumental determinants, and motives vary by country. A European-wide study in the mid-1990s on the prevailing attitudes among the officer corps identified service to the nation, general interest in the military, and a propensity for leadership as key motivators for military service. Respondents also expected education and training, job security, and adventure (Caforio and Nuciari 1996; Sarvas and Hodny 1998; see also Merand 2008). Family and friends as well as an individual's social environment also influence proclivity for a military career (Bulmahn 2004). This finding may partially explain the under-representation of non-traditional groups in armed forces, especially with respect to immigrants as a growing proportion of the recruit pool, who may have no familiarity with the armed forces or may have only had negative experiences with the security sector in their country of origin; in many developing countries the security sector is in ill repute. Larger armed forces (at least on a per capita basis relative to the population as a whole) enjoy an advantage compared to armed forces in small countries because more people will have served or know someone who has served at some point in time.

For the sake of prestige, the change in tasks among the armed forces that accompanied the end of the Cold War has been both a liability and an asset. While electorates tend to support their armed forces and the idea of peace and stability operations in principle, they are often ambivalent about the financial and human cost of actual missions. To this end, electorates favour peacekeeping over peace-enforcement operations. Although the professionalization of the armed forces entails the elimination of mandatory military service, a reduction in force strength, and substantial financial savings,[1] these measures have not had the anticipated impact of bolstering the prestige of the armed forces. While the military as a whole consistently ranks among the most respected institutions in democratic societies, the armed forces enjoy only moderate appreciation as a career path, with the registration of enlisted ranks being lower than that of officers (Szvircsev Tresch 2008). Lack of social recognition is proving a particular impediment for precisely the target group that the military needs the most: those with a higher degree of education and skills. This

lack is further detrimental to diversity in the armed forces since immigrant communities often prize professional careers.

THE CHAPTERS COMPRISING THIS VOLUME

Three thematic contributions are complemented by single case studies of ten old and new NATO members (Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, and the United Kingdom) and two Partnership for Peace countries (Austria and Sweden). The contributions divide into four broad themes. The four chapters in the first part (by Rudy Richardson, Christian Leuprecht, Georges Kaffes, and Wenke Apt) examine social representation and demographic change with particular emphasis on systematic social under-representation of certain groups among the armed forces. The second part introduces studies on voluntary service among conscript armies and the general influence of mandatory military service (by Thomas Bulmahn and Victoria Wieninger; Johan Österberg and Berit Carlstedt; and Arnold Kammel). The third part explores the systematic staffing difficulties experienced by all-volunteer forces in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Slovenia; the Czech Republic; Spain; Poland; and the United Kingdom (by Tibor Szvircsev Tresch; Bohuslav Pernica and Tomáš Zipfel; Beatriz Frieyro de Lara; Marcin Sińczuch; and Christopher Dandeker and David Mason, respectively). The volume is rounded out by a more detailed discussion of retention. Results of surveys conducted in Slovenia and Poland show the extent to which military personnel are prepared to prolong their service rather than cause attrition, and a discussion on a new policy of retention follows (by Erik Kopač, Mariusz Wachowicz, and Henning Sørensen).

In the first chapter *Rudy Richardson* analyzes recruitment and retention of ethnic cultural minorities in the Royal Dutch Armed Forces. The starting point of his contribution is that the Dutch defence organization, one of the largest employers in the Netherlands, has been short on personnel for over a decade. The under-representation of ethnic cultural minorities (ECM) is of particular concern. Richardson describes the state of affairs on recruitment and retention of minorities and how the Dutch defence department has dealt with their under-representation. Survey evidence shows that the popularity of the Royal Dutch Armed Forces is lowest among women, the highly educated, and ECM. Expeditionary missions are a major driver of their disinterest. For ECM who join the armed forces, the career aspects are especially germane. Inhibited career aspirations turn out to be a major reason for their leaving the organization. Specifically, ECM identify the organizational culture and the diversity climate as the major obstacles they face. Evidence collected in 2009 suggests that the economic downturn has had little effect on ECM in their joining up. While minorities in the Netherlands show little interest in a job in the armed forces, Richardson's chapter floats and tests key independent variables.

Richardson's overall finding raises a curious puzzle: how is it that the organization whose primary imperative is to uphold the democratic way of life and its underlying values is increasingly unrepresentative of the society it allegedly serves? *Christian Leuprecht* explains that security organizations' apprehension about diversity is not entirely unwarranted. The challenge is to adapt to changing demographic and social conditions without compromising the organization's functional imperative. For operational, demographic, economic, formal-constitution, social, and political reasons, Leuprecht contends that this is a false dichotomy: diversity is actually an asset, not a liability.

In the Hellenic Army Academy, cadets from abroad play an increasingly important part owing to the Greek policy in the larger Balkan and south-eastern Mediterranean region. Drawing on a survey conducted among foreign cadets in 2007, *Georges Kaffes* examines how well these foreign cadets are integrating into Greek society in general and the Hellenic Army in particular. The survey controlled for Greek cadets to compare how they perceived foreign cadets. Although results vary by different groups of foreign cadets, most of the latter mentioned economic problems as living in Greece is expensive in comparison to living in their own countries. Yet, African cadets consistently find themselves confronted with suspicion and racism. Cadets from Arabic countries identified difficulties related to customs such as food, to the way of life, and to their Muslim identity and culture. Cadets from the Balkans appear to have the smoothest integration, not only into the academy's life but also into the Greek society. When asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the presence of foreign cadets in the academy, Greek cadets showed mixed results. Particularly problematic is the finding that the longer they have been in training the more negative is their perception of foreign cadets at the military academy. This counterintuitive finding problematizes the prevailing institutional norms and culture.

Given the impact of demographic change and human-capital endowments among the youth population on military recruitment and planning, *Wenke Apt* discusses the challenge of meeting future quantitative and qualitative demands for military manpower across different countries. With fertility on the wane, the proportion of youth among the population is projected to decline significantly in countries such as Germany, Poland, and Spain and, to a lesser extent, Greece, Slovenia, and the Czech Republic. As for human-capital endowments, the trend towards higher levels of education is projected to have a negative effect on military recruiting. Their relatively rosy recruitment outlook notwithstanding, the armed forces of Canada, Sweden, and the Netherlands are likely to be affected negatively by this trend. A general rise in health deficits among youth, along with a great propensity for being overweight or obese, for smoking tobacco, and for abusing alcohol, puts a further dent in recruiting prospects. These developments are a germane driver in

the shift away from mandatory military service. By some estimates, as much as two-thirds of today's youth are unfit to serve. The prevalence of "post-materialist" values among the youth generation makes military service even less attractive. This does not bode well for the armed forces: a shrinking recruit cohort, where the minority of the population that is not already over-educated and/or unhealthy is too post-materialist to consider national service.

In the second part, which deals with the willingness to join organizations with mandatory military services, *Thomas Bulmahn* and *Victoria Wieninger* describe vocational preferences, attitudes towards the Bundeswehr and the military profession, as well as the propensity for working for the Bundeswehr, by young Germans. Thus far, the armed forces have largely been able to cover their personnel requirements qualitatively and quantitatively. However, the authors conclude that emerging developments in the Bundeswehr and German society pose a challenge for recruitment over the coming years. Conducted among German youth in 2008, their study details considerable interest in the Bundeswehr. A time-series comparison, however, shows that the interest of young men in the Bundeswehr as an employer is on the wane. The authors observe that interest decreases with age and correlates with areas of high unemployment. The survey also finds that job security and decent pay are of particular importance for young Germans when considering an employer. Young people deem it important that their occupation be consistent with their own values, and for most of them it is essential that they identify with the objectives of the organization for which they intend to work. This poses a particular challenge for the Bundeswehr because a career in the military is not highly regarded in German society.

In June 2007, *Johan Österberg* and *Berit Carlstedt* surveyed 2,520 Swedish conscripts about their willingness to sign up for international military service. Twenty-nine percent responded that they had applied for international military service. Non-commissioned officers showed a higher level of interest than did privates; conscripts born outside of Sweden were more interested than were natives; and women showed a higher interest than did men. The study finds that having a family member or relative who had served in international service had the greatest impact on the willingness to apply for international military service. The study also confirms that the Swedish system of conscription produces soldiers who are well equipped for expeditionary deployment both psychologically and in terms of the values they project.

In his contribution on recruitment in Austria, *Arnold Kammel* assesses the impact of the country's security and defence policy on recruitment. In the early 1990s, the Austrian Armed Forces were restructured, from a force intended to defend Austria's territorial integrity against external threats, to a force able to react rapidly to crises in Europe's vicinity. That

justified a reduction in manpower. The author cites Austria's posture of armed neutrality as the primary reason for retaining conscription. However, with Austria now not only partaking in but also ramping up its participation in missions and peace and stability operations within the framework of the European Union and the United Nations and in collaboration with NATO, the legitimation of conscription is being called into question. However, to change Austrian's recruitment system, its federal constitution would need to be amended.

The far-reaching transformations that Europe's armed forces are undergoing provide the backdrop for part 3. For almost two hundred years conscription was the norm. Nowadays the trend is towards all-volunteer forces. Comparing Belgium, the Netherlands, and Slovenia, *Tibor Szvircsev Tresch* examines how all-volunteer forces cope with drawing on the labour market to meet their personnel needs. In 2007–2008, all three countries struggled with personnel; whereas the Netherlands and Slovenia struggled with recruitment, Belgium struggled with retention. All three armed forces have an imbalance in their ranks: too many officers and not enough soldiers. Belgian and Slovenian armed forces have had to compete with a hot economy, while in the Netherlands the issue is compounded by the geographic distribution of bases. The author identifies higher unemployment and the proximity of bases to urban centres as key determinants of recruitment. The prospect of being deployed abroad provides a further incentive because of the ability to earn bonus pay. The author concludes that a successful recruitment by the armed forces needs to go beyond isolated measures; the comparative evidence suggests that a range of systematic, coordinated measures is needed for recruitment to prove successful and sustainable, especially when confronted with a tight labour market.

The Czech Republic eliminated compulsory military service at the end of 2004. *Bohuslav Pernica* and *Tomáš Zipfel* analyze the evolution of the Czech Armed Forces from 1993 through to the end of 2008. Professionalization occurred during a period of remarkable economic growth and population aging. The Czech Armed Forces were competing with private companies in the shrinking national labour market, where employers continue to have a normative cultural preference for young males. The growing economy notwithstanding, the armed forces had an ambitious plan to swell their non-commissioned ranks; yet they were handicapped by a lack of clear and obligatory rules for career management, which in turn hampered development of a successful recruitment and retention strategy. The negative image of the military in the former Warsaw Pact country further complicated their efforts. By 2008 Czechs were voting with their feet; the armed forces' recruiting drive floundered and in 2009 came up short again. In the short term, however, the economic downturn has provided temporary relief as private-sector jobs dry up.

In 1996 Spain's Popular Party overhauled and professionalized the armed forces. The law on the "Professionalization of the Armed Forces" was introduced to create a new type of soldier, a "quality soldier." *Beatriz Frieyro de Lara* shows in her chapter that initially Spain's armed forces encountered two serious difficulties in filling vacancies for more effective professional soldiers and sailors. First, the armed forces' basic organizational structure remained unchanged. Second, young Spaniards were disinterested in a career in the armed forces. This led to the physical and intellectual selection requirements being adjusted. For example, intelligence-quotient parameters were reduced from ninety to seventy, and the minimum schooling requirement of six years was removed. Still, recruitment rates remained low throughout 2000 in spite of the new, more lenient screening criteria, which suggests that lower standards are not a panacea to recruitment shortfalls. In March 2004 the newly elected Socialist Party focused on improving retention and recruitment rates through better working conditions. In 2006 Spanish recruitment and retention rates improved and in 2007 hit a record high. According to the author, this is the result of policies targeting two select groups: women and immigrants. At the same time, former soldiers were moved into the national, state, and municipal police corps. Although improved skills and competencies of Spanish military personnel are vital to meeting Spain's international defence commitments, the author concludes that Spain's "quality army" remains elusive.

Marcin Sińczuch's chapter studies social communication between military institutions and young people in Poland. He finds Poles to have a reserved yet positive attitude towards their military. Still, young Poles show little interest in the armed forces, and even fewer plan to pursue their professional career within the armed forces. The study confirms that a military career is more attractive to males who live in small towns and rural areas, have an interest in technology and sports, and are members of youth organizations. The fitter and more patriotic they are, the more interest they show in a military career. From these findings the author infers that young Poles who have decided to enlist share rather conservative, traditional values. He concludes that when promoting voluntary military service, the focus should be on providing better information about the service and a professional career in the armed forces in order to allow people to make a more informed choice about their future in the armed forces.

Since the United Kingdom moved to all-volunteer forces between 1960 and 1963, a persistent recruitment shortfall has re-emerged. *Christopher Dandeker* and *David Mason* trace the process of military recruitment in Britain from its imperial history through to the modern period. In imperial times Britain sustained global dominance with naval power and a small professional army that was supplemented by local imperial forces. Owing to recruitment gaps, during the past decade renewed emphasis

has been placed on the diversification of recruitment pools, initially by targeting women and minority ethnic citizens and more recently by recruiting foreign and Commonwealth citizens who are preferably drawn from former colonial dependencies. This has proven controversial, owing to, on the one hand, a fear of diluting the "Britishness" of the army and, on the other hand, a laissez-faire attitude that allows non-UK citizens to fill the gap in military recruitment in much the same way that companies handle their human-resource shortfalls in a globalized economy. To prevent its armed forces from taking the easy way out to meet recruiting and diversity targets, the government recently imposed an upper limit of 15 percent on foreign and Commonwealth complements in much of the army, although the infantry was exempt.

By means of case studies on Slovenia, Poland, and Denmark, part 4 deals with retention. The chapter by *Erik Kopač* about the Slovenian Armed Forces (SAF) briefly reviews a number of behavioural theories and models of propensity to re-enlist in the armed forces. The model he used for the research is based on a 2006 survey by 925 military servicemen, which found a remarkably high propensity to re-enlist in the SAF. However, a favourable economic situation was found to have a moderating effect, because the bulk of military manpower was prepared to resign from the SAF if offered a suitable alternative civil employment. Military servicemen who feel that their duties interfere with family obligations show less interest in re-enlisting. Slovenian soldiers judge their remuneration to be particularly satisfying. The author explains that this satisfaction is largely the result of monetary compensation for additional workload in deployments abroad or for overtime rather than their regular salary. The author concludes that the retention of SAF soldiers by means of re-enlistment is a function of compensation, career planning, family support, awareness of professional military service, and education of professional soldiers.

In Poland, professional privates were first appointed to the service in 2003, and 2009 was the last year for conscripts to serve in the Polish Armed Forces. The economic downturn facilitated recruitment in 2009. Retention, however, is another matter. Drawing on survey data, *Mariusz Wachowicz* finds that job satisfaction was lower in 2007 than in the first survey of 2005. In the later survey, respondents frequently cited low salaries as the reason for their resignation. Respondents also reflected negatively on career opportunities, the style of leadership, the division and organization of labour within the unit, and the adherence to soldiers' rights. However, soldiers with a positive view of their unit rarely expressed a desire to resign from the duty. Still, the overarching determinant of satisfaction was a soldier's fiscal circumstances, which explains why the armed forces would fare well under adverse economic conditions; as unemployment has risen and incomes have declined, the number of Poles interested in joining the armed forces has gone up significantly.

Retention is also of growing concern among the Danish Armed Forces. *Henning Sørensen* analyzes Danish retention policy before, during, and after deployment of military personnel. It turns out that there is a disconnect between the services provided at each stage relative to the needs of the deployed. The contact officers, commanders, and psychologists who support soldiers before deployment focus on evaluating whether an individual is fit to serve, not on creating the sort of cohesive team that is essential for the deployment stage. The main actors during deployment – physicians, army chaplains, and psychologists (the latter being stationed far away back in Denmark) – play a secondary role for soldiers on the front line. Sørensen addresses issues of compensation, research, and support or recognition in an attempt to improve the current retention system of the Danish Armed Forces. This is a classic case of what happens absent a uniform understanding of what constitutes a veteran and with a political leadership that is intent on passing laws to provide a solution before having a good grasp of the problem it is purportedly trying to fix.

CONCLUSIONS

The authors concur that the transformation and professionalization accompanying the revolution in military affairs, along with a vastly transformed new security environment of peace and stability enforcement in some of the world's most fragile states, have placed greater demands on soldiers, greater perhaps than at any time in history. Ergo, more than ever, armed forces throughout post-industrial democracies now need the best of the brightest to maximize their operational effectiveness. Yet in many states the more educated and higher skilled men and women have a disproportionately low interest in a career in the armed forces. This paradox leaves the armed forces with two options: either maintain high barriers of entry and run the risk of staffing impasses or lower the level of quality at the expense of efficiency. Either way, the organization's prestige is likely to suffer. After all, who is keen on working for either an organization that is notoriously elitist, yet understaffed and overworked, or one that garners a reputation as an employer of last resort for the "worst of the desperate"? We cannot forget that the latter is precisely the reputation "enjoyed" by many security organizations in much of the developing world.

Compounding the predicament is an aging population, a tightening labour market, and bases that are often located far afield from the bulk of a shrinking recruit pool. These demographic developments have nudged the armed forces, as one of each country's largest employers (and in many cases the single largest institutional employer), to start reaching out to traditionally under-represented segments of society, especially women and ethnocultural minorities. But old habits die hard; they run afoul of a military (and civil service) culture shaped over decades, and sometimes

centuries, by a white (old) boys' club. A white-male dominated senior leadership that often holds values that are far more conservative than those held by the rest of society does not help. Similarly, closed, secretive, and hierarchical organizations such as the armed forces have been slow to embrace less conservative strategies of disseminating information, such as the Internet, which only widens the civil-military gap and puts them at a major disadvantage compared to the private sector.

Time and again, fiscal imperatives such as a good salary, competitive benefits, and job security surface as a major motivation to join up in the first place. Re-enlistment,[2] by contrast, is primarily driven by career prospects, both within and outside the organization. Glass ceilings, real or perceived, for women and cultural minorities are as much of a problem in this respect as are top-heavy organizations that offer few prospects for promotion. Concomitantly, recruitment is highly dependent on a country's economic circumstances. When unemployment is high, recruitment fares better. Looks can be deceiving though; even when the economy appears ravaged by unemployment, it turns out that the higher one's education is and the better one's skills are, the lower are one's chances of unemployment. Since stratification is the hallmark of post-industrial labour markets, the armed forces can no longer rely on the economic cycle to deliver the high-quality recruit for whom they look. And as economic cycles become more volatile, those in charge of personnel policy in the armed forces find their attempts at strategic personnel planning thwarted. This is not just an instrumental problem; an overwhelming desire to plan is endemic to the institutional culture of large bureaucratic organizations, and nowhere more so than among the armed forces, an organization that frowns upon uncertainty. So, the wicked problem that is created by the compounding of complexity (due to demographic change, tightening labour markets, and organizational transformation) with uncertainty (due to a newly emerging security environment and increasing economic and corresponding political volatility) is thus anathema to the armed forces and does not bode well for personnel policy.

Together, these constraints forebode a leaner future for Europe's armed forces: fewer but more highly trained people, irrespective of whether they are recruited as such or, more likely, the organization invests in educating and training them up. As European countries liberalize their employment regulations, economic volatility persists, and jobs become less secure, the armed forces become an attractive choice, offering a decent and regular salary, job security, health and pension benefits, and so forth. Furthermore, as European countries introduce and raise university tuition, the prospect of a free education and a guaranteed job in return for joining the armed forces becomes more enticing. Efforts to make the armed forces more accessible to under-represented groups in order to compensate for a decreasing white-male recruit cohort are bearing some fruit. Perhaps the armed forces' greatest enduring appeal, however, is that there is no

other organization or professional life quite like it in democratic society. In addition, the new security environment is opening up a whole world of opportunity that was previously closed to most armed forces whose sole purpose was limited to a strict interpretation of territorial defence. Years of experience since the end of the Cold War have shown just how integral a foreign-policy tool the armed forces are. Over the past two decades, Europe's armed forces have proven indispensable in asserting European foreign-policy interests through the plethora of contributions they have made to safeguarding global stability under the auspices of the EU, the UN, and NATO. Europe cannot do without its soldiers.

NOTES

1. Inefficiency is an important argument against conscription, which can consume as much as one-third of an organization's resources.
2. Non-European readers may wish to note that many European armed forces no longer guarantee a lifetime job as part of the civil service. Rather, soldiers contract with the armed forces for a specific number of years. Only after having spent that number of years in the armed forces does the soldier even have the option of competing for a permanent civil-service position within the armed forces.

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