

## **MILITARY EDUCATION AS POSSIBILITY IN BULGARIA**

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### **Abstract**

The army is a closed organization with structures, working rules, hierarchy and career development other than the civil sector. The military education system is being developed in accordance with national and European legislation and in accordance with NATO directives for organizing and conducting the individual training of personnel from the Armed Forces. A new NATO approach to crisis resolution, which results in the need for closer cooperation between military units and civilian organizations, reflected the Bulgarian military educational system. The education system was an approach to answer of requirements of the Bulgarian armed forces missions. The defense is tied to the training of cadres for the armed forces, and the education is aimed at training them to acquire higher education in accordance with national and European requirements. The higher military schools train students in the Military live work to the needs of other ministries and agencies with responsibilities for national security. It is an element of the policy of the Ministry of Defense for nearly a decade, aimed at the strategic goal of military education and military science being increasingly opened and placed in a competitive environment, both in terms of civil education and civil society organizations in Bulgaria, Military Education and Military Science in NATO and EU countries.

**Keywords:** education system, individual training, armed forces, higher military schools.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

The profession of military and the education it needs in Bulgaria are not very clear and attractive to the public. Without making comparisons it is clear that the soldier profession has one dimension in our country and quite another in the developed countries, it is common that this is a profession for people who have a sense of a specific vocation and desire to enter one of the so called „Systems “. The army is a closed structure with structures, working rules, hierarchy and career development other than the civil sector. Generally speaking, military education involves training in military theory and practice, including the handling of weapons and military equipment, which will lead to the exercise of a profession in the defense system, often with a qualification valid in the civilian sector.

## **2 NATIONAL MILITARY AND EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN BULGARIA**

The military education system is being developed in accordance with national and European legislation and in accordance with NATO directives for organizing and conducting the individual training of personnel from the Armed Forces. It is oriented both towards building modern professional skills, as well as towards leadership skills and ability to make responsible, independent decisions. Its structure will not change, with mechanisms for assessing educational abilities and projects for their development as well as the possibility of acquiring comprehensive aviation education in the areas of the air force and civil aviation. The Military Education System will increasingly use information technologies based on WEB training, simulators and trainers, and advanced teaching and learning technologies.

The military education system has two main functions: defense and education. The defense is tied to the training of cadres for the armed forces, and the education is aimed at training them to acquire higher education in accordance with national and European requirements. In recent years, however, there has been a growing need for a new approach to crisis resolution, which results in the need for closer co-operation

between military units and civilian organizations. This idea is reflected in NATO's Strategic Concept, which states that NATO's core tasks are:

- Collective defense - Member States help themselves in the event of aggression against one of them, in accordance with Art. 5 of the Washington Treaty;
- crisis management - the use of political and military capabilities to resolve crises across the spectrum and at each stage - before emergence, during the crisis and in the stabilization and recovery phase;
- mutual security - partnership with other countries and international organizations to enhance international security.

These three NATO tasks are reflected in the missions of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria.

The first mission is "defense" and it covers the tasks related to national sovereignty and independence, protection of the territorial integrity of the country and NATO member states under the conditions of Art. 5 of the Washington Treaty.

The second mission is "Support to International Peace and Security" and includes the implementation of international and coalition commitments to NATO and European Union operations in response to crises, conflict prevention, counter-terrorism, UN missions, OSCE, etc.

The third mission of the armed forces is "contributing to national security in peacetime". It includes maintaining early warning capabilities for potential risks and threats, air and maritime space control activities, protection of strategic sites, protection and assistance to the population in natural disasters, accidents and environmental disasters, etc.

As can be seen from these conceptual documents, the future use of the armed forces far exceeds the traditional view of them. Clean military tasks are now just part of the whole spectrum. There are tasks that require cooperation with civil society organizations, and this is something new that requires the implementation of new approaches to achieving the desired goals. The idea of such a new approach in NATO stems from the need to find the best means to address the numerous and diverse challenges to security under new conditions.

What should be the result of these policy tasks for the development of education in the security and defense sector in Bulgaria? First, it is necessary to determine the starting point in the understanding of "education". There is no unified opinion and generally accepted definition in scientific pedagogical literature. The lack of common vision reflects the existence of different approaches, definitions and attempts to interpret. However, there is something common in the whole range of definitions. Education is:

- a social phenomenon - it takes place only in the human society and is influenced by the laws and factors on which the development of society depends;
- process of differentiation and systematization of human knowledge in different fields, system of organized transmission of knowledge from one person to another;
- reflecting the level of public utility of an individual in his attempts to master systematized and synthesized human experience and knowledge;
- implemented only in specialized public education systems, meeting the requirements, objectives and peculiarities of the society (there are also regulated the conditions for realization of the training process and the educational levels that the learner aspires);
- Various and depending on the cultural, economic and other peculiarities of a given society can be manifested in different forms.

From these common characteristics of education as a social phenomenon, it is seen that its main purpose is to prepare the individual for realization in society. Understanding very often in recent years is the ability of a person to exercise certain competencies in order to achieve the goals of an organization. However, this is only part of the "truth". The rest is that education has the task of building the value orientation of the person, which is too often missing.

In order military academies and higher military schools to respond more effectively and successfully to modern needs and challenges and to realize their capability priorities, it is envisaged that the Program and the Armed Forces Development Plan by 2020 should set several goals: Legislative and regulatory legislation is due to be updated; The higher military schools to train students in the Military live work and to the needs of other ministries and agencies with responsibilities for national security; For the provision of wartime formations with junior officers, enables students undergoing military training to undergo military training and

acquire a professional qualification as an "Officer from the Reserve"; Approving the regulations for the structure and activity of the military academies and the higher military schools by the Minister of Defense; The ability of the academic staff to develop both in the higher military school or academy itself and in another higher military school or academy of the military education system; Occupation of academic positions in the military academies and the higher military schools without a competition with a decision of the academic council after obtaining the educational and scientific degree "doctor". Changes in the security environment necessitated reconsideration of the importance of the reserve and the provision of wartime military formations with junior command officers. That is why we envisage amendments to the Law on Defense and Armed Forces, which will allow students who are trained in civilian specialties in the higher military schools to undergo training in a program approved by the Minister of Defense for acquiring the qualification "Officer from the Reserve". The program will also include appropriate initial and special military training for the individual learner categories.

The policy of training students at the higher military schools will continue firmly. It is an element of the policy of the Ministry of Defense for nearly a decade, aimed at the strategic goal of military education and military science being increasingly opened and placed in a competitive environment, both in terms of civil education and civil society organizations in Bulgaria, Military Education and Military Science in NATO and EU countries. The successful opening of educational and scientific products to the national and international market will, on the one hand, contribute to raising the prestige of the Bulgarian military education and science, on the other hand it will provide the additional financial resources needed for the military schools, and third will contribute to the improvement and the expansion of civilian-military relations and, most importantly, the growing need for personnel for state and local government with expertise in the field of national security and defense. The students in the Military Academy and the higher military schools complement the students' unoccupied capacity of the students, determined by the National Agency for Assessment and Accreditation. This provides not only additional revenue, but also the coverage of teaching staff requirements and a relative reduction in financial costs for the individual training of military personnel. This makes the Military Academy and the higher military schools unique training centers for military, national security, technical and social sciences.

The shrinking of the army and its transformation into a fully professional structure led to a reduction in the number of higher military schools and changes in the training offered. At present, you can receive military education of the traditional type in three Bulgarian higher schools, and training in the field of military affairs.

The training takes place in the bachelor, master and doctoral degrees. Obviously, the choice is quite narrow, as when we exclude New Bulgarian University, which offers master's degrees in the theoretical part of military education, even in its civilian dimensions, and the Military Academy, whose function is training and qualification of the senior officers and, in general, of university graduates, there are only two higher education institutions offering post-secondary military education.

The Higher Military Schools in Varna and Veliko Turnovo offer programs for candidate officers, but also programs aimed at students who will develop in the civilian sector. Candidates for a course (cadets) take a different admission process, which is expressed in tests of physical training, mental fitness and general health. There is age restriction and minimum height and weight requirements. Higher military schools announce a limited number of vacancies.

New Bulgarian University trains to a Master's degree in the following programs: Diplomacy in Security and Defense, as well as in two military-related programs: Organization of anti-terrorist activity in the public and private sector; National and international security.

Higher education in specialties from the regulated professions "officer for operational level of management" and "officer for strategic management of defense and armed forces" is acquired through training in military academies of Bulgarian officers holding higher education degree in bachelor degree or "Master" in the professional field "Military". Officers who have fulfilled their obligations under a training curriculum for the regulated professions of "Operational Level Officer" and "Strategic Defense and Armed Forces Officer" are awarded diplomas for completed higher education at Master's degree. The diplomas allow the regulated profession "operational level officer" and "strategic commander of defense and armed forces" to exercise accordingly. With the adoption of the above state requirements and the inclusion of the officers' profession in the list of regulated professions, military officers who have acquired education not complying with the above-mentioned state requirements are not allowed to take up positions in the regulated professions.

Military Academy „G. S. Rakovski“ offers the master programs:

- Strategic leadership of the armed forces;

- Strategic leadership in security and defense;
- National Security and Defense;
- Security and Defense Management;
- Public communications in security and defense;
- Military Psychology;
- Security and Defense Logistics;
- Protection of the population and critical infrastructure;
- Communication and information systems and technologies in security and defense;
- Counteraction to radicalism and terrorism.

Higher Naval School „Nikola Yonkov Vaptsarov“ is trained in three main faculties: Navigation, Engineering and Postgraduate qualification.

Programs for students: Shipbuilding, Ship machines and mechanisms, Ship electrical equipment, Ship radio engineering, Fleet and port technology and management, Ship repair technology, River navigation, Ocean engineering - 4-year bachelor programs.

Cadets programs: Navigation, Ship machines and mechanisms, Naval communication and radio systems - training is 5 years.

The National Military University „Vasil Levski“ - Veliko Tarnovo has the following military specialties:

- Organization and management of tactical units of the Land Forces;
- Organization and management of tactical logistics subdivisions;
- Organization and management of communication and information systems in tactical subdivisions;
- Organization and management of tactical units of the Air Force.

The university offers also civilian specialties to bachelor's and master's degrees.

In Bulgaria military education has a highly selective candidate-student process, vacancies are determined by a state regulation, and the fees are not high.

The military training and the acquisition of the necessary military qualification of the personnel for the needs of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria are carried out in training centers. They train:

- conscripts and personnel soldiers to acquire initial military knowledge and skills and to acquire first and subsequent military specialty or qualification;
- civilians admitted to a professional service for acquiring professional qualification "sergeant" and military specialty;
- personnel soldiers to acquire a „sergeant“ qualification;
- civilians admitted to a professional qualification "officer" and military specialty qualification;
- Retired soldiers to acquire a "reserve officer" qualification; • officers, sergeants and soldiers for the mobilization reserve;
- officers, sergeants and soldiers for the permanent reserve;
- soldiers and teams to take part in peacekeeping operations outside the country and other missions abroad.

Military education abroad?

Each country has its military academies, which are mostly designed and accessible to citizens of the country and, under certain conditions, for foreign candidates. As in Bulgaria, cadet programs and civilian programs are offered. The general terms are: admission form completed, secondary / higher education, physical endurance test, medical test, mental health test, language certificate, and sometimes extra math tests.

Military education in the US can begin as early as the school age. Thousands are military boarding schools for children over the age of 14. The next step is a military academy, and the most famous name is the United States Military Academy West Point. The legendary academy is a state university founded in 1802, which today teaches about 4,400 cadets. Each year, 1,000 new people receive training in a program with 26 general education courses and more than 40 masters programs. Candidates present scores from SAT and ACT test scores, which should be above the average. Other eligibility conditions: Applicants must be US citizens / exceptions are allowed for aliens from countries that have special agreements with the US / aged 17 to 23 on 1 July of the year of admission; Must be unmarried and without parental responsibilities / pregnant women are not accepted. Those wishing to learn at West Point should have excellent physical and mental health, which is certified by tests. It is unnecessary to mention that through interviews, motivation and attitude to military training and service will be checked. The students are at full board for the academy, but unlike the regular campus, the cadets essentially live together. Education at West Point is free of charge and

training lasts for at least 4 years. The code of honor that professors of the Academy sounds like this: The Cadet does not lie, deceive, steal, and does not tolerate those who do these things. In short, the reception at West Point is extremely selective. Most of the candidates have nominations / nominations / of high ranking politicians and even by the president of the United States.

The Royal Military Academy offers comprehensive military training as well as civil engineering programs to bachelor and master degrees. The training is in French, Dutch and English, and graduate officers serve in all divisions of the Belgian army.

Perhaps the UK's elite military education is offered by the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, which has been under the name of the Royal Military College (RMC) since 1947. The École Spéciale Militaire de Saint-Cyr (ESM) is the French military academy that trains the French Army officers.

### **3 CONCLUSION**

The specifics of the military profession and military education are at the heart of the wide range of opportunities and differences that may exist between traditional university education and higher education military training. Since training of this type presupposes joining the country's army, military training is in fact intended for nationals of that country. Foreign students in cadet programs are allowed under certain conditions, usually related to the probability of obtaining citizenship. Therefore, if you are interested in the military profession, it is good to finish here and abroad to specialize with a master's degree that no longer falls under such restrictions (Kanev, Terziev, 2017a, 413-423; Kanev, Terziev, 2017b, 595-606; Sotirov, Terziev, 2015a, 197-207; Sotirov, Terziev, 2015b, p25; Sotirov, Terziev, Minev, Ivanov, 2016c, 15-21; Terziev, 2017a; Terziev, 2016b, 84-90; Terziev, 2017c, p252; Terziev, 2017d, pp.22-28; Terziev, Vezieva, Arabska, 2016e, 106-121; Terziev, Manoliv, 2016f, pp.15-20; Terziev, Minev, Sotirov, Ivanov, 2016g, 272-292; Terziev, Kanev, 2017h, pp.733-742; Terziev, Madanski, 2017i, pp.8-16; Terziev, Madanski, 2017j, pp.17-28; Terziev, Madanski, 2017k, pp.28-36; Terziev, Madanski, 2017l, pp.610-625; Terziev, Madanski, 2017m, pp.575-594; Terziev, Madanski, Kanev, 2017n, pp.396-415; Terziev, Madanski, Kanev 2017o, pp.1331-1346; Terziev, Madanski, Kanev 2017p, pp.1355-1372; Terziev, Madanski, Kanev 2017q, pp.1380-1393).

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