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SECURITY SECTOR EXPERT FORMATION: ACHIEVEMENTS AND NEEDS IN THE VISEGRAD COUNTRIES

Introduction

Since security sector reform has started to dominate the agenda of analytical work in international security it has been expanding horizontally. It means to cover security sector reform on the surface, extending analysis to new areas rather than deepening it. This extension is particularly troubling in such areas, which are difficult to analyse due to the limited availability of information. This is certainly the case in such fields as the formation of experts or the training of professionals in security policy matters. Their information is scarce and distorted when available. This scarcity is due to the fact that the national bureaucracies and training institutions which hold the information do not find it necessary to make it widely available. Interestingly enough, information on the topic is regarded as highly technical and is very seldom subjected to analysis. Distortion is due to the fact that most information on the topic has been made available by organisations, which carry out such formation/training. These factors set the analytical confines of this paper.

The Visegrad group, practically the only sub-regional cooperation framework in East-central Europe that has become part of the political map of Europe,[69] is a loose cooperation framework of originally three, now four countries of the region: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and the Slovak Republic. Even though the group has become highly visible both between 1991 and 1992 and then again since 1998, it has not become institutionalised. Although the focus of cooperation centred around security related matters (in 1991–92 coordinating policy on the

[69] The other sub-regional cooperation framework, which has 'found its way to the map' beyond a narrow circle of experts is the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA). It has become known among economists primarily due to its area of activity.

withdrawal of Soviet troops and the dissolution of the Warsaw Treaty, after 1998 supporting the NATO membership aspiration of Slovakia), and the meetings of leaders of the defence establishment have been one of the (if not *the*) most frequent and regular, it would be a misunderstanding to present the Visegrad group as one that has been centring around security and defence. The relative and ostensible prominence of defence cooperation has been due to a host of reasons, including the lack of institutionalisation, the half decade long temporary decline between 1993 and 1998 and the eventual further decline in the future as well as the lack of intimacy among the leaderships of the four constituting countries. Its limitations have been clear due to the lack of intensity of cooperating in some crucial defence areas, including procurement and training.[70] Furthermore, after the NATO and EU accession of the four participating states of the group the Visegrad agenda (first coordinating the departure from the Warsaw Treaty, secondly cooperating during the accession processes) will have been exhausted and there is no objective reason to assume that it will be filled with content again. The remnants of some regional togetherness in the geographical sense of the word supplemented by joint transition efforts will not be sufficient to speak about a group and its agenda.[71]

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[70] I have followed with interest the evolution of cooperation in the Visegrad group and published extensively on the topic. Hence, I have no reason to repeat my earlier conclusions. It suffices to refer to some of those publications. For more details see Pál Dunay, 'Security Cooperation in the Visegrad Quadrangle: Present and Future'. In Andrew J. Williams (ed.), *Reorganizing Eastern Europe: European Institutions and the Refashioning of Europe's Security Architecture* (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1994), pp. 121–44; Hungary and Subregional Cooperation. In Berthold Meyer and Bernhard Moltmann (eds), *Neuer Osten – Alter Westen: Die europäischen Staaten zwischen Annäherung und Distanz* (Frankfurt am Main: Haag + Herchen Verlag, 1996), pp. 186–205; 'Regional Cooperation in Central Europe: Input Without (Too Much) Outcome?', in László Póti (ed.), *Integration, Regionalism, Minorities: What Is the Link?* (Budapest: Hungarian Institute of International Affairs, 1997), pp. 53–83 and Ansätze subregionaler Kooperation – Visegrád-Gruppe, CEFTA und ZEI. In Wolfgang Zellner and Pál Dunay, *Ungarns Aussenpolitik 1990-1997: Zwischen Westintegration, Nachbarschafts- und Minderheitenpolitik* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1998), pp. 403–43. Most recently see Pál Dunay, 'Subregional Cooperation in East-central Europe: the Visegrád Group and the Central European Free Trade Agreement'. *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft*, No. 1, 2003 (forthcoming).

[71] It is possible some low-intensity cooperation will continue among the four countries in order to harmonise their movement from the periphery to the centre of the European Union through a long period of transition. This will extend to achieving the same treatment for the farmers of these countries as for the 'old' member-states, to joining the Schengen

2.2 Historical Background

For the reasons above the study of security policy expert formation in the Visegrad countries is an artificial construct in two senses of the word: (1) the group does not exist as a cohesive entity; (2) expert formation in the four states carries some similarities. It has been influenced by factors, which make differences at least as important as similarities. It may well be that current factors give premium to similarity, whereas historical ones are more important in terms of differences. It may seem sufficient in hindsight to conclude that these countries were members of the Warsaw Treaty and hence share the same military legacy. Nothing could be more misleading than that. Such a starting point would highlight some important aspects though it would neglect many others. It would correctly point to the fact that providing for external security of the Warsaw Treaty member-states was in the hands of the defence establishment. Hence, and this is relevant for this analysis, there was no civilian expertise in defence matters. Furthermore, and this is less frequently mentioned than the previous point, the strategic aspects of 'common defence' in the Warsaw Treaty were concentrated in the hands of the Soviet High Command. Therefore, not only was civilian expertise largely absent in the smaller Warsaw Treaty member-states but relevant military expertise as well. Namely, when the system change occurred there was no military expertise present in the smaller Warsaw Treaty countries that would have been suitable to organise the defence of these countries. That is why it is important to emphasise that it was not the case, as sometimes presented, that competent militaries were facing incompetent civilians. It is probably more appropriate to speak about two incompetent groups facing each other. Commonality stops here, however.

The three countries played different roles in the Warsaw Treaty as Czechoslovakia was a 'frontline' state whereas Poland and Hungary were military springboards. It may be even more important that the

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regime and the Euro zone. It is an eloquent demonstration of the doubts concerning the long-term future of the group that the member-states practically immediately after the end of the EU accession talks, and the invitation of Slovakia to NATO, found it necessary to emphasise that they would continue their cooperation. See Visegrad four vow to continue cooperation within EU. RFERL, TASR, CTK, 14 January 2003.

political reliability of the armed forces of the three differed greatly. Whereas the Hungarian and the Czech armed forces in 1956 and 1968, respectively did not fight for the independence of the two countries, the Polish armed forces were available in 1981 to prevent eventually an international armed conflict. Hence the assessment of the political loyalty of the armed forces of the three countries differed as well. Whether this has something to do with the differing military traditions and the role of the armed forces as a national institution in case of the latter is difficult to contemplate. There is a saying about the Polish armed forces according to which it was similar to an apple in the Socialist/Communist era: it was red on the outside and white inside.

It is another important difference that whereas Czechoslovakia lost 21 years of its history under the oppressive and intellectually tragic and at the same time comical Husak/Jakes regime (comical for the outside observers, tragic for the population of the country), Hungary and Poland enjoyed a relatively liberal atmosphere particularly in the 1970s and 1980s. The transition in Warsaw and Budapest was gradual and could be regarded as a 'negotiated revolution' to use Rudolf T_kés' term.[72] The change was sudden in Prague. It resulted because the elite was poorly prepared for it intellectually. For all these reasons there were different starting points, development patterns and learning curves. Furthermore, by now the group consisted of four states. Slovakia had genuine problems due to the fact that its independent statehood could hardly be supported by experience in state building. Irrespective of how rapidly Bratislava has caught up with the other three, the lack of experience in state-building and governance has been felt. The illiberal democracy introduced by Vladimir Meciar has aggravated the situation. The Meciar era is not the exclusive reason, however, that Slovakia is lagging behind the other three states in consolidating its security policy training.

Since the system change of 1989–90 in East-central Europe significant external attention has been paid to the civilian control of the armed forces. It was also an important matter for the political establishments of the new democracies partly due to genuine concern about the eventual

[72] See Rudolf L. T_kés, *Hungary's Negotiated Revolution: Economic Reform, Social Change and Political Succession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

interference of the armed forces with political processes and partly due to their unwillingness to challenge the main tenets of the West concerning civilian control. The narrow focus on the danger of Praetorianism has vanished quickly at least in East-central Europe. The armed forces never interfered with politics after World War II, not even when the possibility of playing a political role was apparent. The only major exception was in Poland on 13 December 1981, as mentioned above. The emphasis of analysis should have shifted to civil-military relations (and not to civilian control in the narrow sense of the word) and the participation of the military in the formation of defence policy. The change was nevertheless gradual at best. Due to insufficient differentiation between East-central and Eastern Europe the time and energy was spent on matters which had no political relevance in countries like the Visegrad states. The ideological emphasis has thus resulted in loss of time and lack of attention to matters which really influence the security and defence policy posture of the East-central European countries.

It has been my impression for some time that Western analysts, often due to their background in Soviet studies, have found it difficult to understand the difference between the Soviet Union and the rest of the Warsaw Treaty. It is not necessary to address this matter in historical terms.[73] It is important to emphasise, however, that the phenomenon persisted for some time with further decreasing returns. Fortunately, there are an increasing number of experts who rightly conclude the difference:

> In contrast to those of Central Europe, the majority of the post-communist states in Eastern Europe remain heavily militarised ... The armed forces are heavily oriented to offensive tasks and, in most countries, are complemented by equal numbers of internal police and secret security services

[73] The book of Zoltán Bárány on Hungarian defence during socialism is one of the worst examples. He has systematically drawn conclusions from Soviet studies for Hungary when civil-military relations, particularly due to the weak bargaining power of the defence establishment in Hungary, were fundamentally different. For more details see his *Soldiers and Politics in Eastern Europe, 1945–90: The Case of Hungary* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993) and my review of the book in *Survival*, no. 4, 1994, pp. 176–7.

> which look to different ministries, chains of command and mechanisms for civilian control.[74]

It is not only members of the establishments in East-Central Europe who emphasise the difference, it is, to the regret of many, those in Eastern Europe who, of their own volition, have not aspired to 'jump on' the bandwagon of modernity.

The fact that the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland joined NATO in 1999, as expected, five years earlier than Slovakia, does not play a major role in that the countries are in different phases of their evolution as far as the development of security expert formation. Rather than dwelling extensively upon the matter it will suffice to mention two factors:

1. Not long after the first post-Cold War enlargement of NATO the Alliance concluded that it was necessary to pay more attention to the military preparedness of potential candidates for membership and launched the idea of a Membership Action Plan (MAP). This meant that the preparation of Slovakia for NATO membership in a military sense started approximately at the same time that real attention was paid to the military contribution of the three new members to the Alliance. Hence there was no gap between interest devoted to the military preparedness of the three East-central European member-states and Slovakia as a candidate country by the most important point of reference for these states, NATO.

2. The performance of the three countries that joined NATO in 1999 continued to be problematic, particularly in the sense of military interoperability. Even though shortcomings were more clearly identified in areas other than security policy expertise, it is a fact that particularly in the case of the two smaller new member-states, human compatibility was often referred to as a problem. (To some extent this has also characterised the situation

[74] Dylan Hendrickson and Andrzej Karkoszka, 'The Challenges of Security Sector Reform', *SIPRI Yearbook 2002: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 192.

in Poland.) As this has been due partly to the insufficient effort to create human compatibility since the system change, one can guess what has been the source of the shortcoming.

2.3 The framework: what is common in security expert formation in the four Visegrad states?

The category of expert formation in security policy is not well established and hence it is problematic in the sense that there are a number of options in defining it.

1. It is possible to identify it with expert formation in (or for) the armed forces and thus for the artificially narrowly defined security sector.

2. It is possible to broaden the scope and analyse expert formation for the full security sector that includes the armed forces as well but certainly cannot be identified with it.

3. It is also possible to address the forming of a scholarly community, the general increase of security policy competence in the society.

Every approach is legitimate and may bring interesting results. Some sources are available in the first area. It would be extremely difficult to draw conclusions on security expert formation for the entire security sector, however. Due to the background of the author this study makes an attempt to focus on the first area (security expert formation for the armed forces and military security more broadly) although it regularly refers to the third one (building of security expertise in society through a competent scholarly community). This would be relevant as, in my opinion, the general increase of knowledge on security policy has a spillover effect on the level of expert formation. This effect is both direct and indirect at the same time. It is indirect in the sense that it is difficult to identify the interface between the increase of professional expertise and its effect on the society. It is direct as most experts contribute to

expert formation not only through their writings but also through their teaching activities and participation in public life.

Security expert formation is part of the security sector and in those cases when security sector is to be developed is also part of its reform. It is obvious that the developed world had to go through security sector reforms in light of the basic rearrangement of the nature of threat; hence expert formation should be regarded as a part of reforms nearly everywhere. This formation made the reforms more demanding if the unavoidable changes went in parallel with a fundamental change of the socio-economic system. These reforms meant, among other things, depriving the defence sector of its stable (though stagnating) socio-economic basis. Expert preparation has burdened the reform process among others through drawing upon the same financial resources as any other sector of the socio-economic structure at an early phase. At a later stage the prime problem has stemmed from the shortage of competitive human resources.[75] Furthermore expert formation, similar to other parts of defence reform, is an organic, time-consuming process. The results appear gradually and reliable conclusions can only be drawn retroactively.

The paper intends to demonstrate that despite the declared existence of group identity and similarities in the development of the four countries, evolution in the field of security policy expert formation can be better characterised by parallelism rather than similarity. It is for this reason that the paper will stop short of giving a comprehensive and comparative analysis of expert formation. After outlining some common problems it will be necessary to go into national details. It is hoped that it will be possible to strike a balance between the two.

The most important source of parallelism has been the defence reform needs generated by the change of the international political environment.

[75] Interestingly enough, one of the finest analysts of the topic has complained, however, that reform has been 'a process led by a few senior officers of vision, courage, determination and technical knowledge'. This criticism, however, does not clearly express that the phenomenon has been partly due to the non-competitiveness of the defence sector in the booming market economy of the most developed transition countries. See Chris Donnelly, 'Reform Realities', *NATO Review*, vol. 49, Autumn 2001, p. 33.

Since the end of the Cold War three waves of reform were deemed necessary by these changes.

1. The first stemmed from the need to establish armed forces, which are able to operate nationally. Although this would have presented a major challenge, particularly as far as national defence planning was concerned (due to the fact that the former smaller member-states of the Warsaw Treaty did not face any military challenge), their change over to national defence has never been put to test.

2. The second wave of reform was made necessary by the declining importance of the defence of national territory and the increasing importance of contributing to international operations (with a declared emphasis on peace operations), i.e. power projection.

3. The third wave has been made necessary by 11 September 2001 when the central element of the international system faced asymmetrical military challenge and all allies and like-minded countries had to associate themselves with the priority of counter-terrorist activity as a priority of their national defence.

The need for these reforms followed each other too rapidly and presented particularly heavy burden for states, which had to carry them out in parallel with a fundamental rearrangement of their socio-economic structure. Furthermore, countries which do not operate on the full array of the strategic spectrum were particularly disadvantaged by the change. For them the series of reforms did not mean merely changing the emphasis of their defence efforts. It also meant fundamentally revising their defence reform several times. Moreover, these small and medium-size states have had limited resources. In sum, the Visegrad countries (similar to the other East-Central European states) were disadvantaged in multiple ways. The subjective mistakes, which have been made in the process over the last decade, burdened the situation further. The fundamental dilemma stems from the constant need for military reform that has, of course, required adaptation of security expert formation as well. However, as these changes were not self-initiated, not to say self-

imposed, the need for adaptation– at least in case of the second and third waves – was generated by the world at large.

Hence, security expert formation appeared as an external predicament that could not be met domestically, particularly as far as the training of those professionals who later have to provide for the multiplier effect. The training of the trainers has represented the most severe challenge and will continue do so for some time to come. The situation could change if the pace of rapid-fire reforms, following one after another, slows down and stability dominates the defence agenda of Europe. It is for this reason, among others, that the defence establishment of smaller allies may favour specialisation that could also stabilise the international contribution they are expected to make. This is associated with the November 2002 Prague agenda of NATO, which presupposes such specialisation for most European allies beyond some core capability that every nation must possess. It must be noted, however that this positive attitude presupposes full confidence in the continuation of the Atlantic Alliance. In case doubts prevail, specialisation should be regarded as an unacceptable risk for the small countries as they certainly would not like to be left with highly specialised military capabilities in case of their defence re-nationalisation or alignment with some other group.

The modernisation of the security sector of the Visegrad states took place under conditions which provided little support to the process. Resources, both human and financial, were scarce and little public attention was devoted to the matter. In order to go beyond this generalisation the attention of the public – as will be demonstrated later – has been selective, whereas the political elite has lost interest when it became evident that there was no reason to fear defence involvement in political matters.

As far as public attention was concerned, it was selective. Opinion polls have consistently shown readiness of the public to devote resources to the defence sector when asked *in abstracto.* When, however, the question was posed differently and the respondents had to prioritise different tasks and sectors, defence has practically lost out immediately and priority was given to areas like health care, social services and education. The picture has been influenced by seasonal developments. In

Poland it was developments in the CIS, primarily in Russia, which coloured the picture whereas in Hungary it was the evolution of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia that affected the attitude of the public, reflected in opinion polls.[76] Furthermore the Czech Republic felt its security lagging after the Velvet Revolution but since the Velvet Divorce the picture has been increasingly rosy.[77] In sum, there has been some limited support for increasing defence efforts in the Visegrad states. The most lasting and determined was the Polish public whereas the three smaller Visegrad states were hesitant and for long periods outright reluctant to increase resources allocated to defence. This has underlined the assumption that it is difficult to argue for any increase of defence efforts in a largely threat-free environment.

Professionals have made attempts to overshadow this phenomenon. A leading Hungarian military sociologist put it as follows:

> In the civil society next to those citizens who want the most reliable security for their tax forints [the national currency of Hungary – P.D.] we also find those citizens who do not want to take any defence burden.[78]

If one takes a close look and analyses the statement of Prof. Szabó it is clear that he juggles with two categories. Namely, he does not clearly distinguish between 'security' and 'defence'. It is not a coincidence. It is due to the fact that the *security concerns of the population were associated with activities other than defence*. Szabó does not want to state the obvious. Namely, that the citizenry wanted to increase internal security, have a more reliable (and less corrupt) police fighting (transnational) organised criminal and more effective border guard,

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[76] Ferenc Molnár, A közvélemény alakulása a biztonságról és a hader_k szerepér_l a Cseh Köztársaságban, Lengyelországban és Magyarországon / The evolution of public opinion about security and the role of armed forces in the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary/, *Új Honvédségi Szemle*, No. 8, 2000, p. 9.

[77] See Jeffrey Simon, Central European Security, 1994: Partnership for Peace (PfP). *Strategic Forum*, No. 1, 1994, p. 1.

[78] Prof. János Szabó, *Hader_átalakítás: Az ezredforduló hader_reformjának el_zményei, jellemz_i és perspektívája* /Defence reform: The antecedents, characteristics and perspective of the defence reform of the turn of the millennium/ (Budapest: Zrinyi, 2001), p. 11.

preventing illegal migration. In this respect there have been striking similarities in the Visegrad states. *The entire security agenda has moved from the main external security provider, the armed forces, to internal security providers.* In sum, the decline of external threat went in parallel with the very limited increase of the prestige of the armed forces. The improvement of the status of the armed forces remained confined to Poland where the armed forces have been regarded traditionally as a national institution and were mostly associated with temporary developments in the three other countries. In the other countries, not even the increase of prestige (stemming from the fact the armed forces could have been regarded as national institutions of sovereign states), helped to maintain their standing in the long run. Interestingly, whenever events relevant to the military took place in Europe, the importance attributed to the armed forces increased, although the change remained temporary. This has had an impact upon the transition to a modern military and professional thinking on international security.

It turned out that the modernisation of the military draws on scarce resources and there is no chance to cash in the peace dividend any time soon.

> This has meant that the long awaited 'peace dividend', which a reduction in the size of the armed forces might bring about, can only be achieved after a long period of sustained reforms which increase efficiency in the armed forces, usually concomitant with an overall transformation of the economy.[79]

It was for this reason that the establishment had little interest in defence matters. One cannot even speak about 'lost interest' as 'interest' has never even been there. The system change burdened the political class and the society with such a complex agenda of transformation, extending to institution building and the modernisation of every sector of the socio-economic structure, that no energy was left for areas that were not particularly urgent. Except for those who exaggerated the problem of external threat, it was obvious that the security perception of the

[79] Dylan Hendrickson and Andrzej Karkoszka, op. cit. p. 198.

population was left largely unaffected by the development of the armed forces (this view was shared in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia at least). At the same time, any noticeable improvement in the defence sector would have required huge (primarily financial) resources. Hence many (if not most) defence reforms were carried out for several years for no other reason than to meet external expectations. Therefore it is understandable that many of them have remained half-hearted.

It is a common characteristic of the transformation of the armed forces in the Visegrad states to carry out development selectively. This has resulted in 'a lack of balance between the elite cadres, which are used for international missions, and the rest of the armed forces, which focuses on territorial defence'.[80] For instance, 'Slovak armed forces are organised around two components – the largely untransformed main defence forces alongside a few professionalising elite units capable of participating with some degree of interoperability in NATO-led operations'.[81] In case of Hungary the same differentiation was reflected in the establishment of immediate and rapid reaction forces. This boiled down to the fact that there were a few units which could send troops to international operations and then the great majority suitable for the unlikely event to defend the territory of the country.[82] It is fully understandable in light of scarce resources that development had to remain selective. Tacitly this has resulted in a situation where the armed forces were divided into two parts: One with relevant purpose, motivation and prospects, and another without any of the above.

As the armed forces of the Visegrad countries are heading towards professionalisation it will be a major challenge to bridge the motivation and competence gap created – understandably – due to 'selective development'. Although it is common sense that such internal division of the armed forces is meant to be temporary, it is going to be one of the

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[80] Marie Vlachova, 'Defence Reform in the Czech Republic'. In István Gyarmati and Theodor Winkler (eds), *Post-Cold War Defence Reform: Lessons Learned in Europe and the United States.* (Washington D.C.: Brassey's, 2002), p. 395.

[81] Marybeth Peterson Ulrich, 'Professionalisation of the Slovak Armed Forces'. In Anthony Forster, Timothy Edmunds and Andrew Cottey (eds), *The Challenge of Military Reform in Postcommunist Europe: Building Professional Armed Forces*, (London: Palgrave, 2002), p. 50.

[82] Prof. János Szabó, op. cit. p. 51.

biggest challenges to ‘reunite’ the professional forces when every unit will have to be able to participate in international assignments. As far as the full professionalisation of the armed forces is concerned, the Visegrad countries seem to differ only in the projected date of introduction. Even though the matter is controversial domestically, in some of the four countries, the reasons for its introduction vary but the transition to professional armed forces remains an undisputed reality. It is only a matter of time before it is introduced in the respective countries.

The intention to meet Western expectations in defence or, at least, not to challenge them, has been coupled by Western support and assistance. It has resulted in a situation where the international military cooperation of the Visegrad states, much like other transition countries centred upon the West, relies intensively upon the resource rich large members of NATO. Geographical factors and certain traditional pre-Cold War sympathies have somewhat modified this simplified picture, however. Hence, an overwhelmingly concentric structure of relations has evolved where the Visegrad countries have developed more intensive uni-directional links with some major NATO members than with any others. The support of these major players has extended from the supply of surplus equipment, to contribution in training and military education as well as to screening the performance of the armed forces of the Visegrad countries. The advice has most often come from countries and defence establishments which were in a fundamentally different situation from any what were then NATO candidate countries. It was partly unavoidable, as none of the 16 member-states went through the post-World War II experience that the transition countries had. It was somewhat difficult for the large NATO countries to understand the kind of confines which the defence sector of small East-central European countries had been facing.

It would deserve a separate study to analyse the zigzags of the effects of Western military assistance. Suffice it to mention here that, as with any human endeavour, it has been carried out with a certain amount of waste and redundancy. If one could mention some shortcomings relevant to the purposes of this study, an emphasis would be put on an early failure to establish civilian expertise in defence. This assistance took place at a time when there was so much fluctuation in the political system that very

few trained people were still addressing defence matters. Later, maybe in light of this experience, the emphasis shifted towards the training of military professionals. It was a reflection of the fact that the lack of military competence hindered the ability of military professionals to carry out their task, including their contribution to shaping defence policy. Simultaneously, the importance of contributing to the development of civilian expertise has been fading, which is regrettable. This happened in spite of the fact that the political establishment, and to a lesser extent the civil service, has stabilised in most transition states (including the Visegrad countries). This would give ample opportunity to return to developing civilian expertise, which is still thin in most countries. It is, of course, not necessary to start massive retraining on the basics to develop civilian expertise in defence more than a decade after the system change. Such training should be targeted and discriminate. The transfer of knowledge and experience should come selectively and be addressed to persons who are in need of the knowledge of certain aspects of the problematique.

It was one of the most severe shortcomings of the external support that it tacitly, and in some relationships explicitly, carried expectations by subserviently following western models. It is difficult to contemplate whether it was the expectations of the West or the willingness of the new democracies that resulted in this situation. It is safe to conclude nevertheless that '[G]overnments and armies have gone from the one extreme of rejecting any Western influence to the other of rushing to embrace Western ideas ... without any real understanding of what it involves – or costs.'[83] It suffices to listen to the representatives of the security sector of various countries, which are going through the same experience nowadays, to see how much resentment is generated by the intention to impose a model upon the countries in transition.

This has resulted – particularly in those countries which went through more successful domestic transition – in paying lip service to external advice rather than following it. The situation has not been particularly helpful and is largely responsible for the fact that transition has remained partial. That is how the national and subjective elements have not

[83] Chris Donnelly, op.cit. p. 32.

supported fully and consistently the bringing about of military reforms. Experts argue that such reluctance has been due to the fight between the 'old guard and the new guard'. This assessment is just as simplistic as it is overwhelming. The 'old guard' attitude – although it has represented some resistance towards reform – cannot be identified with it. In some cases legitimate concerns of total ignorance of national traditions and capabilities in the defence reform process formed the underlying reason, whereas in other cases it has been due to the resistance to any change. The latter approach could not be simplified to the subversive activity of 'Moscow-educated military leaders who were neither committed to implementing real change nor had the relevant skills to conduct such a review'.[84] Although this may be among the reasons, oftentimes it could well be that the traditionally conservative mentality of the defence establishment prevailed (particularly when military reforms have only partly been nationally initiated). Furthermore, reforms have often been associated with instability in the defence sector that was understandably not favoured by those who had to implement them. When such instability is portrayed in objective terms and without empathy with regard to the human factor, it may be rightly concluded for each state of the group: 'Clear rules of career and promotion do not exist or are not implemented fully, creating opportunities for those individuals who remain in positions of sufficient influence to thwart any change that could jeopardise their easy and comfortable lives.'[85]

There has been one element of training which was actively pursued in each state. This was language training primarily in English and to a lesser extent in some other languages of major NATO member-states. It has extended to both civilians and military professionals. National efforts were actively supported by the member-states of the Alliance in a number of ways. This included the sending of language teachers to the respective countries as well as hosting their professionals at language courses in NATO countries. It has resulted in the situation that by the end of the 1990s the number of civilian experts and military professionals with adequate knowledge of the working languages of NATO, primarily that of English, was more than 1000 in the Czech

[84] Marybeth Peterson Ulrich, op. cit. p. 52.
[85] Marie Vlachova, op cit. p. 401.

Republic, Hungary and Poland and has exceeded critical numbers in the Slovak Republic as well. A PfP language training centre was also established in Hungary (the Partnership for Peace Military Language Training Centre) where the professionals of new members, aspirants and other PfP participating states are trained at shorter or longer courses. The courses are of varying length, ranging from one week to one academic year. The average duration of a course is five months.[86] English, French and German are the languages taught. The primary task is pragmatic, to teach 'military' language. It is a major task of the next phase that those professionals who have completed their studies at military high schools and defence academies since the beginning of the 1990s acquire an adequate command of English. After the catching up phase, it is imperative that language training reach the necessary level as part of the regular curriculum of military academies and other training facilities. As there is reason to assume that the students of these institutions are fully aware of the importance of having a good command of English, it is reasonable to assume that cadets and junior officers will devote energy to their language studies. The knowledge thus acquired makes participation in international activities, including international operations and the filling of posts in international (NATO) headquarters, much more feasible than a few years ago.[87] One could conclude that this has been the most convincing success story of developing expertise.

It would be false to assume, however, that the significant improvement of language abilities and the increasing importance of a good command of a foreign language were well received and supported without exception. This has resulted in a situation that proficiency 'in English has become a valued skill, though it has led to fears among some that language abilities are valued more highly than other military

[86] For more details see http://www.zmne.hu/tanszekek/bknyk/index.html

[87] Memorably, each of the three NATO members admitted in 1999 had taken a tough stance to be eligible to fill as many international posts as possible after accession. Poland, for instance, wanted to be entitled to have 200 posts, Hungary got 50. Both countries realised quickly that they are simply unable to fill the posts due to a lack of qualified professionals. I do not blame those who negotiated their countries' accession for this as it has been in the interest of the new member-states in the long run to have more positions available when the number of competent professionals reaches higher numbers.

professional skills'.[88] This has resulted in tension between military professionals who participate in international assignments and those who have no chance to do so. This is understandable as the income of officers and NCOs serving in Hungary is approximately one-eighth the NATO average, while it matches the NATO average in international missions.[89] As a result, those officers who are internationally 'marketable' have a chance to catch up with the incomes of employees in civilian sectors of the economy. Finally, international duties have also served to widen the gap between the professional standards of these service personnel and the remainder of the armed forces – arousing jealousy and contempt from both groups and eroding a shared sense of professional pride in the Hungarian Defence Forces.[90] It is obvious that time, and thus the broadening and improving language knowledge of the members of the armed forces, will bring about a solution to the problem. In sum, for a number of reasons there are some internal divisions in the armed forces of the Visegrad states. These ruptures should be eliminated so that they do not have a negative influence on the performance of the armed forces of the Visegrad countries.

It is a further common feature of the military education of [at least three of] the four Visegrad states that they are willing to consolidate their training system. The number of training institutions, particularly those of training officers, has been reduced primarily through mergers, which has been principally due to changing needs.

1. Downsizing of the armed forces has reached significant proportions. On the average in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland the size of the armed forces will soon equal roughly one-third of the total peacetime personnel of the armed forces at the end of the Cold War.

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[88] See László Makk, NATO-csatlakozás, értékváltás, egzisztencia, esélyek, karrierépítés /NATO accession, change of values, existence prospects, career-building/, *Humán Szemle,* No. 3, 1999, p. 11.

[89] Lajos Hülvely, Javaslat a személyi kiegészítési rendszer átalakítására II /Proposal for the change of the system of personnel substitution, part 2/, *Új Honvédségi Szemle,* No. 6, 2001, p. 34.

[90] According to the interviews conducted for the purpose of this study the situation is very similar in each of the four Visegrad states.

2. The structure of the armed forces should also change. The officer corps should form a smaller part of the armed forces than in the past and the number of NCOs should increase.

3. The generation change has been facilitated by the officer corps, which retires earlier nowadays and is comparatively large, and will thus result in an increase in mobility, giving an opportunity to younger officers to move to responsible positions.

It remains to be seen, however whether the consolidation of the structure results in qualitative change. Hungary, which carried out (and seems to have completed) such consolidation first among the four in two waves, does not give much reason to feel encouraged.

2.4 Some National Characteristics of Security Expert Formation in the Visegrad Countries[91]

It is impossible to describe security expert formation in the Visegrad group without paying adequate attention to national peculiarities. A short overview is given of some of them, which may affect their competence in security matters in the long run.

2.4.1 The Czech Republic

Czechoslovakia lost 21 years of its history between 1968 and 1989. The disappointing situation as far as expertise in the national bureaucracy resulted in a situation in which the political arena, and the highest echelons of national bureaucracy, were occupied by dramatists, boilermen and window cleaners. The defence sector (similar to the broader security sector) also faced a cleaning out process that rapidly decapitated the armed forces. To put it more positively, it resulted in a quick and comprehensive depoliticisation of the armed forces. The return of a small number of defence professionals who served during the Prague spring could not compensate for the irrelevance of knowledge acquired in the Warsaw Treaty. Not to mention that the historical legitimacy of these individuals could not compensate for their lack of expertise in a genuinely democratic multi-party political environment. The situation was further aggravated by the fact that Czechoslovakia, and even more the Czech Republic, after 1992 were 'relaxed' as far as security threats were concerned.[92]

It is interesting that the defence community still lacks extensive links and institutional base.

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[91] I gratefully acknowledge the support of Dr Marie Vlachová, Ms Gabriela Mrugová, Dr Andrzej Karkoszka and Mr Mariusz Kawczynski in the writing of this part of the paper. Needless to say that the responsibility for the content rests with the author.

[92] I do not intend to refer to Jaroslav Hasek's Svejk in order not to offend my Czech friends. It is a fact, however, that Czechoslovakia as part of a multinational empire and later as an independent country was not particularly renowned for attributing particular importance to the armed forces among the factors of national survival and preserving national identity.

It has no 'core' of strong personalities who would present the defence community to politicians and the public and whose prestige would attract the interest of other important expert groups.[93]

Although the prestige of the armed forces has increased through those international operations in which they have participated, most extensively in the Balkans, it was more clearly the recognition of its operational capacity than its wider security expertise that has been recognised by the public. In the light of this, it is logical to conclude that the Czech Republic continues to have a small community of security policy experts that largely lacks socio-political influence.

The influence of non-governmental experts on defence policy is negligible in the Czech Republic, reflecting the small size of the non-governmental defence community ... and mistrust of civilian non-governmental expertise by politicians.[94]

This shows that the same tendency characterises the situation in the Czech Republic, which prevails in the other countries of the Visegrad group. The foundations of this situation are somewhat different from those in the other three states, nevertheless. In Hungary and Poland it is conditional on marginalisation of experts on political grounds and the 'revolving door' effect of change of government, which wipes out a good portion of the defence establishment, including more often than not the chief of general staff. In Slovakia, where the security expert community is also small, deep political division of the elite is easier to understand due to the fundamental difference between the political course of the Meciar regime and democratic (and not only democratically elected) governments. It is surprising that the influence of the expert community remained as limited as it was in the Czech Republic, which first consolidated its research in international relations and established an internationally recognised research institute; first

[93] Marie Vlachová and Stefan Sarvas, Democratic Control of the Armed Forces in the Czech Republic: a Journey from Social Isolation. In: Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmunds and Anthony Forster (eds), *Democratic Control of the Military in Postcommunist Europe: Guarding the Guards* (London: Palgrave, 2002), p. 51.

[94] Ibid.

under the leadership of Otto Pick and then Jiry Sedivy.[95] Although the agenda of the institute is dominated by broader topics than security, it has been playing an instrumental role in defining the long-term national interests of the country in this area as well.

As far as the development of security expertise in the armed forces, there are different ways to approach the matter. It is probably most simple to address the reform of the military school system. There is a tendency to downsize the military school system, which is too expensive and offers far more generous teacher–student ratios than, for example, Charles University.[96] Although such structural consolidation is necessary it is far from sufficient. The content of courses should be adapted as well. According to Czech experts military studies have been divided into 'a host of different subjects and specialities' which are not relevant for the existing or future needs of the armed forces. If there is a fairly small base of expertise in international security, there is reason to assume that training in international security may not meet international standards. External support may well be needed in this area.

The dissatisfaction with the current level of training is only one aspect of the problem, however. There are two further elements of the picture. One of them is the composition of students. According to experts the situation has improved significantly in this respect due to the increasing demand for higher education in the country. This means that the potential to provide better and more intellectually demanding education in this field is there as far as the audience is concerned. If one broadens the perspective further there is the question of what happens to those who have acquired officers' training. Although this is not the subject matter of this paper, expert opinion reflects that as of now the qualification is not connected with a position in the Czech military. This may well be a factor which may discourage young Czechs from pursuing their studies in the military and from choosing a military career. It is obvious that the objective to improve security expertise may be achieved in a number of ways. It is indispensable to increase the knowledge that

[95] For more details see Appendix 14.1.

[96] This paragraph relies heavily of the analysis of Ladislav Halbestät and Marie Vlachová, 'A Casual View in the Future: Reform of Military Education in the Czech Republic' (unpublished manuscript), pp. 9–10.

can be acquired through military education as a precondition for improving the security expertise of those professionals who are engaged in decision-making.

2.4.2 The Slovak Republic

The situation of the Slovak Republic, a relatively young state, is not much different from that of the Czech Republic. It is necessary to draw attention to the fact that there was very limited expertise in international security matters when the system change occurred. The legacy of Slovakia has been burdened by two factors:

1. Slovakia inherited a smaller portion of professionals and thus the competence in security matters when Czechoslovakia went through the 'velvet divorce'. Many Slovak professionals stayed in the Czech establishment.

2. The populist leadership of Vladimir Meciar and the constraints of democracy did not provide fertile ground to develop free exchange of views on such matters. It was often loyalty and not competence that mattered when selecting persons to fill key positions.[97]

In Czechoslovakia military forces were traditionally deployed in the western part of the country whereas the military industry and training facilities were located further to the east. The division of the country resulted in some interesting phenomena. Namely, Slovakia inherited many of the facilities and had to decide what to do with them.[98] The

[97] I find it necessary to repeat here that the situation might only have been somewhat better in other Visegrad countries. The difference was fundamental in several other respects. Namely, the abuse of state power (by, among others, the Secret Service) to interfere with political processes and the more extensive interference in career path on the basis of political loyalty was certainly present.

[98] It suffices to mention that with the exception of the Antonin Zápotocky Military Academy, located in Brno, each of the other major military training institutions were located in Slovakia. The Military Political Academy (so-called POLYTRUKS) of Bratislava, the Military Academy of Logistics in Zilina, the Military Technical Academy in Liptovsky

consolidation of this monstrous edifice resulted in the fact that only two academies are still in operation. The Military Academy in Liptovsky Mikulás and the well-known Military Air Academy in Kosice have survived. These two facilities carry out the training of officers, including foreign ones in the latter. Their curriculum is more practice-oriented and does not focus on security policy matters extensively. Slovakia thus, somewhat similarly to the Czech Republic, has relatively little to offer in security policy expert training to its military professionals.

Interestingly, no particular effort has been made to integrate broad-ranging security thinking in these institutions. Rather, another path was followed. Similar, for instance, to Poland, security policy related training concentrated on civilian institutions. At the faculty of political science and international relations of the Matej Bel University in Banska Bystrica, postgraduate studies can be pursued, which extend to international law, diplomacy and international affairs. There, security policy is also studied.[99] The introduction of postgraduate studies on international relations with specialisation in security matters occurred during the term of office of Prime Minister Meciar and thus could be interpreted as an attempt to broaden the competence base of forces close to his government. It did not turn out that way, however. At the Comenius University of Bratislava the Institute of International Affairs and Law Approximation, the so-called Rybarik Institute of International Affairs, has a two-year postgraduate programme. The graduates are trained primarily for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. According to trends, an increasing number of graduates will join the state administration from the University of Economics, Faculty of International Economic Affairs, Bratislava and some will certainly address security policy matters primarily in the MFA.

Mikulas and the Military Air Academy in Kosice were all part of the legacy left in Slovakia.

[99] Interestingly, in Cold War Czechoslovakia, postgraduate studies could be pursued in security related matters at three institutions, at the Faculty of Physical Training and Sports in Prague, at the Comenius University (pharmacy) in Bratislava and at the Faculty of Law at Brno University. From the specialisation of these institutions it is clear that studies in international security practically did not exist at the time.

The intellectual base on security matters has significantly broadened over the years in Slovakia. It is a fact, however, that security policy research centres haven't gained the level of independence that would be desirable for the proper functioning of the NGO community. Some think tanks are part of the state administration, like the Institute for Defence and Security[100] and the Scientific and Information Centre of the MOD. The Research Institute of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association, which was no doubt closer to the opposition during Vladimir Meciar's tenure, has gained prestige both domestically and internationally. It has become part of the social and political life of Slovakia, organising public meetings regularly and publishing its high-quality English language quarterly, *Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs*. It is open to question, however, whether its influence will be sufficient to contribute to shaping the security policy agenda and spreading security policy expertise in the country.

2.4.3 Hungary

In contrast to the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the transition process was gradual in Hungary. Due to some, although very limited efforts to gain some independence internationally in the mid-1980s, primarily during the so-called second Cold War, there was some foreign and security policy thinking present before the system change. It would certainly be false to speak about independent Hungarian foreign policy before 1989. Nevertheless, it is also correct to state that there was no shortage of general expertise in thinking about security when the system change occurred. Expertise became concentrated in some research institutes and university departments as well as in the foreign ministry and was to a far lesser extent present in the defence establishment.

The development of foreign and security policy expertise took place both at universities and in the process of officers training. As far as the former was concerned, teaching extended to both more systematic graduate and newly established postgraduate training, primarily at the

[100] Strangely enough, the Institute has no public website; the website is available only on the intranet of the MOD.

Budapest University of Economics (formerly Karl Marx University of Economics). International relations have already been taught for some time there, serving as alternative to studies at Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO). The latter used to serve as the prime recruitment base of Hungarian diplomacy. At the postgraduate institute, the Budapest Institute of Graduate International Studies (BIGIS) , established in 1991, the same faculty teach there as well as at the international relations department of the University of Economics. The Századvég Politikai Iskola ('End of Century' Political School) aimed to teach the future political elite. There, international relations have also been studied, although their role has understandably always been marginal. In the late 1990s the study of international relations with an emphasis on European studies started to flourish at many universities. Due to the shortage of competent professionals the level of teaching varied significantly. Due to the large portion of university graduates who studied international relations, including security policy, a situation resulted in which Hungary has become a country of self-appointed security experts. Consequently, the base of expertise is broad though the systematic knowledge is shallow.

The system of military education in Hungary went through the same change as the other Visegrad countries. Downsizing and consolidation dominated the process. It is an important difference, however, that the transformation, formally completed in 1996, took place earlier in Hungary than in other countries of the region. This process climaxed shortly after the parallel teaching of former eastern and more adequate Western command methods were terminated in military higher education. The course curriculum continued to focus on practical knowledge. It happened in 1997 when security and defence policy specialisation was introduced at the Zrinyi NDU. It has been its purpose to help develop civilian expertise in this field. The curriculum is similar to a comprehensive course in international relations in other (mostly civilian) institutions in East-central Europe with some emphasis on defence-related matters.[101] The launching of such a course was also a

[101] The curriculum includes courses on the theory of international relations, theory and history of strategy, history of diplomacy (including military diplomacy), arms control, comparative defence policy, regional security issues and European studies.

demonstration that it was the intention of the NDU to be a focal point of developing civilian expertise in security policy in contrast to the two successor states of Czechoslovakia. In the Czech and Slovak Republics security policy training will continue to be concentrated in civilian education for some time to come. The fact that many of the first security policy experts, trained at the Zrinyi NDU and graduated first in summer 2002, have been facing difficulties in finding appropriate jobs is an illustration that more lip service is paid to the need for civilian expertise in security matters than real recognition given.

The Zrinyi Miklós National Defence University inherited a good part of the faculty of the Zrinyi Military Academy, which has not made transition easy. The NDU, in spite of downsizing, is overstaffed and the selection of faculty has not in each case been the most successful. It remains to be seen when willingness to catch up will be backed by determined action to carry out sufficiently comprehensive reform.

It is interesting that it was made clear for the public in Hungary that the training of military professionals did not reach the required level. It is clear that dissatisfaction exists primarily regarding the tactical and operational abilities of the Hungarian armed forces and has never been pointed particularly towards their understanding of security policy. It was probably unique that it was the (now outgoing) Chief of General Staff who expressed the critical view in an article after three years in office. As responsibility for training rests with him ultimately, it is difficult to interpret his criticism for the average trainee.[102]

Hungary has a good number of security policy (or more broadly international relations) experts and a tradition of developing security expertise dating before the system change of 1989–90. This is the case in spite of the fact that research in this area could be more closely intertwined with some persons than with institutions, i.e. contrary to the Czech Republic and Slovakia where during the 1990s one prominent institution has developed its image and has become an important player both domestically and internationally, the same cannot be said about the

[102] See Lajos Fodor, 'A kiképzés a készenlét alapköve [Training is the keystone of preparedness]', *Új Honvédségi Szemle*, No. 12, 2001, pp. 3–6.

Hungarian ‘scene’. There are several institutions acting in the area, but recognition centres on a few personalities, rather than institutes. The lack of pooling of resources, unstable leaderships and insufficient governmental support to institutions dealing with international security resulted in a loss of competitiveness compared with other countries of the region. The gradual elimination of the Hungarian Institute of International Affairs by merging it into the structure of the Lászlo Teleki Foundation is a part of this comparative loss of competitiveness. The leadership of that institution ‘changed with the wind’ without any reform that would have made it suitable to serve as the centre of research on international relations. The Institute for Strategic and Defence Studies, an institution which could serve as a natural centre of research and outreach in international security, has been changed to be an ‘Office’ for Strategic and Defence Studies. It is now a background institution of the Ministry of Defence. The fact that these two institutions, in spite of the efforts of some of their professionals, have not been able to play central role in the study of international security resulted in two phenomena:

1. Some old institutions, notably the Institute of World Economy, modified their agendas and expanded their programmes to international relations generally.

2. Some new institutions have been competing in this field, which is a healthy sign.

It is questionable, however, how often these institutions could carry out independent research due to the lack of adequate financing and shortage of intellectual resources.

In sum, in spite of the efforts of some individuals due to the absence of a long-term concept of training and research in international security and inadequate financing and fragmentation of the institutional framework, the comparative advantage Hungary might have enjoyed at the end of the 1980s has gradually disappeared.

2.4.4 Poland

Poland, similarly to Hungary, experienced a gradual change to democracy. In spite of martial law introduced in December 1981 there was an intellectual awareness of international security well before the system change. The Polish Institute of International Affairs and its activities in the 1970s and a part of the 1980s should be mentioned in particular. Although the institute was prematurely closed, many of the leading Polish experts in this area were once collaborators of that institute.

It seems that the last decade was efficiently used to develop the necessary institutional framework either to teach or to study international security according to the needs of an integrated middle power of Europe. In contrast to any of the other three countries, Poland has been developing a system where both civilian and military higher education can make a relevant contribution to the teaching of international security. While the civilian educational institutions have gradually built up their expertise and now have a lot to offer, particularly as far as postgraduate studies military training institutions are concerned, they still have their own input and will have to face some consolidation and downscaling in the years to come. It is not clear how this will affect their approach to security policy. The consolidation has started with merging a civilian and military institution of medical training. It is premature to conclude how the process will continue. It is certain, however, that the consolidation of military training through downsizing is indispensable when considering the downsizing of the Polish armed forces continues uninterruptedly. It is a further question whether difficulties that are so familiar in other Visegrad countries, most importantly the insufficient adaptation of course curricula to the changed conditions, also characterise Poland.

There are two civilian institutions which offer postgraduate studies in international security. They are the Institute of International Relations of Warsaw University and the recently established Diplomatic Academy. The latter was recently established in order to meet the emerging needs of the Polish foreign service. It is clear that Poland has realised that its security policy training has become increasingly obsolete, despite the

fact that international cooperation, in the form of the training of some professionals abroad, contributes to the evolution. Such courses, offered by the Marshall Centre, the NATO Defence College, the Geneva Centre for Security Policy and several Western European and North American national training institutions may be complementary, but they certainly cannot satisfy more extensive needs. The formation of a larger group of security experts can only be carried out nationally. This should not exclude reliance on international experience, however.

2.5 Conclusions

In spite of the author's sceptical opinion about the Visegrad group and its prospects, one may conclude that there are some similarities in the expert training of the four countries that make analysis possible. These are primarily due to the common Warsaw Treaty background of the four, the similar external expectations towards their militaries and the same confines these states have been facing during their socio-economic transition. There are also major differences, however, due to the different size, duration of sovereign statehood and history of the countries which makes it impossible to confine the analysis to similarities.

The most important determining factor of security policy expert training in the Visegrad group is that since the end of the East–West conflict a series of defence reforms and adaptations have taken place in East-central Europe. They were partly due to developments in the world at large, ranging from the end of the Cold War (including both the revolutions in East-central Europe and the dissolution of the Soviet Union), to the dominance of non-international armed conflict and the highly effective application of asymmetric warfare by non-combatants, partly due to the perceived internal need of practically every new government in the region to address and reform the structure of defence. These, taken together, have resulted in a situation in which the organic development of the defence sector has been interrupted several times. Consequently, it was extremely difficult to set the priorities right in expert formation and the efforts have remained at best partly successful.

It is interesting that although extensive information is available concerning the shortcomings in the performance of the four, particularly by their not meeting the expectations of military (including both material and intellectual) interoperability in the Atlantic Alliance, the information on preparation/training/formation that has resulted in this situation does not exist or is not accessible. Therefore it is possible to speak about a *black box* where we know the output and, in a formal sense, also the input, but we are ill-informed about the process between the entry and the exit points.

The formation of security policy experts has taken place on different grounds. Whereas in the two countries, Hungary and Poland, where transition from 'socialism' was gradual, there is sufficient, if not abundant, security policy expertise. On the other hand, in the Czech Republic and Slovakia it is scarce. There is a small group of competent persons in those countries as well, but the broadening of the intellectual base is a necessary task. In the case of Poland and Hungary it may be more important to contribute to the development of strategic thinking and the neglected operational capability than to assume that further security policy expertise should be imported by the two. It is apparent, however, that the expertise of the security policy community of Hungary and Poland is also pretty slim when faced with new challenges. Namely, it was disappointing to listen to the clichés presented by the most renowned experts of some of these countries immediately after 11 September and the subsequent re-arrangements of some of the foundations of international security. There is reason to conclude that the situation is not much better in other countries of similar size and that it is rather exceptional that small security communities are able to develop comprehensive expertise in international security.

It is an interesting commonality of the process that, although we are quite familiar with shortcomings in competence attained by security experts and military professionals, it is difficult to gain direct information about the shortcomings of expert formation and training. This results in a *black box* effect where it is only assumed that formation and training are responsible for the rather poor output.

Even though the four countries have travelled a long way and the foundations of thinking about security and defence is present more than at the time of the system change, their security expert formation is far from finished. The national efforts and also some collective efforts inside NATO through some institutions, which have the development of such expertise among their core missions, can still be complemented by targeted assistance. According to my impression such assistance may be necessary as follows. It is necessary to start out from the tasks of the defence sector of these countries and conclude that there is some selection of unfittest in each country. This means that some experts are kept away from directly influencing the development of security policy while incompetent people are shaping the agenda. Hence, it is necessary to train those who have the influence, though not the competence, rather than trying to influence the countries to absorb those competent persons who are systematically marginalised for political or other reasons.

It is a fact that there is little stability in the higher echelon of the national bureaucracy who address security issues. Although lip service is paid to the stability of the civil service, in the end loyalty and political sympathies have mattered more than sheer competence. There is reason to assume that the situation will not change fundamentally any time soon. This means that after every election a number of persons enter the higher echelon of the national bureaucracies who need urgent training in their field of responsibility, though not expertise. Such training could be provided at short executive courses in case the national bureaucracies are ready to recognise such need. The process of providing such expertise has started though it has neither been extensive nor targeted enough.

According to the impression of the author, one of the weak points of the system is the competence of those who train the next generation of military professionals. As their replacement is gradual, it may be necessary to accept that it is an area where these countries may need urgent external support. As the security expert community of the Visegrad states, similarly to many other countries of East-central and Eastern Europe is small, the ‘teaching of the teachers’ programme may contribute effectively to the completion of transition.

Last, but not least there is one common challenge each Visegrad country will face in the short run. It is the transition to fully professional armed forces. There is apparently little understanding about the complexity of such transition and about the fundamentally different character of fully professional armed forces compared to mass armies based on conscription. It is an area where targeted training by professionals of those countries, which went through similar transition lately in all its aspects, may offer significant returns.

It may well be that it is not the Visegrad countries which cause the biggest headache to the Atlantic Alliance as far as security expert formation is concerned. Due to the fact, however, that three states of the group joined NATO in its first wave of eastern enlargement, it may be of wider interest to demonstrate that they have the potential to catch up with other countries of longer democratic tradition in terms of their professional expertise in international security.

APPENDIX 1 USEFUL WEBSITES TO STUDY SECURITY POLICY EXPERT FORMATION IN THE VISEGRAD COUNTRIES

1.1 Civilian Training Institutions

Czech Republic

Slovak Republic:
www.fpvmv.sk Matej Bel University, Faculty of Political Science and International Relations, Banskà Bystrica (in Slovak and English)

Hungary:
www.bke.hu Budapest University of Economics (in Hungarian and English)

Poland:
Institute of International Relations of Warsaw University
www.msz.gov.pl Diplomatic Academy (in Polish and English) (available through the website of the Foreign Ministry of Poland)
www.ie.lodz.pl European Institute, Lodz (in Polish)

1.2 Military Training Institutions[103]

Czech Republic:
www.vabo.cz Military Academy in Brno (in Czech and English)
www.army.cz (in Czech and English)

Slovak Republic:
www.vlake.sk Military Air Academy, Kosice (in Slovak and English)

Hungary:
www.zmne.hu 'Zrinyi Miklos' National Defence University (in Hungarian and English)

Poland:
www.wp.mil.pl (in Polish and English)

[103] Please note that course curricula are only exceptionally available through the websites, they are often sketchy and dated; particularly the English versions.

www.aon.edu.pl National Defence Academy (in Polish)
www.wat.waw.pl Military Technical Academy, Warsaw (in Polish)
www.amw.gdynia.pl Naval Academy, Gdynia (in Polish hand English)
www.wsosp.deblin.pl Air Force Officer's College, Deblin (in Polish)
www.am.lodz.pl Medical University in Lodz (based on the former Lodz Medical Academy and the Military Medical Academy)

A1.3 Think Tanks

Czech Republic:
www.iir.cz Institute of International Affairs Prague (in Czech and English)

Slovak Republic:
www.sfpa.sk Research Centre of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association (in Slovak and English)
www.ivo.sk Institute for Public Affairs (in Slovak and English)
www.sims.sk Central European Institute for International Studies (in Slovak and English)

Hungary:
www.tla.hu Làszlo Teleki Foundation (includes the Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, the successor of the Hungarian Institute of International Affairs) (in Hungarian and English)
www.vki.hu Institute of World Economy (in Hungarian and English)

Poland :
www.kbn.gov.pl. Committee for Scientific Research (in English)
www.osw.waw.pl Centre for Eastern Studies (in Polish, Russian and English)
www.eurodialog.org.pl Institute of Central and Eastern Studies (in Polish and English)
www.omp.org.pl Centre for Political Thought (in Polish and English)