



# VASIL LEVSKI NATIONAL MILITARY UNIVERSITY

1

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**MOTIVATIONAL SALIENCE AND SATISFACTION WITH TRAINING IN THE  
FIELD OF SECURITY AND DEFENCE, FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF  
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN EUROPE**

**PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS**

**Veliko Tarnovo  
2019**

# Contents

- **INTRODUCTION**
  
- **CHAPTER ONE. GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH ON MOTIVATIONAL SALIENCE THROUGH THE PRISM OF HUMAN COGNITIVE ACTIVITY AND ITS IMPORTANCE FOR NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**
  
- **CHAPTER TWO. EXPERIMENTAL STUDY ON MOTIVATIONAL SALIENCE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH SATISFACTION USING THE EXAMPLE OF STUDENTS AT THE VASIL LEVSKI NATIONAL MILITARY UNIVERSITY, VELIKO TARNOVO, BULGARIA**
  
- **CHAPTER THREE. EXPERIMENTAL STUDY ON MOTIVATIONAL SALIENCE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH SATISFACTION WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF CONTROL GROUPS FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF LEARNERS AT THE VASIL LEVSKI NATIONAL MILITARY UNIVERSITY IN VELIKO TARNOVO, BULGARIA**
  
- **CHAPTER FOUR. RESEARCH ON MOTIVATIONAL SALIENCE AND SATISFACTION WITH TRAINING IN THE FIELD OF SECURITY AND DEFENCE WITH THE INCLUSION OF SOME HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN EUROPE**
  
- **SUMMARY ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 1. Actuality of the problem

A timely analysis of motivational excellence in the training process based on higher education institutions in Europe is a necessary prerequisite for drawing up a complex picture, characterizing the state of the organization in terms of the methods and forms used for motivation, the satisfaction of the individual and organizational needs, the forms and the level of the achieved motivational salience in the sphere of security and defense.

## 2. The subject of the study

is the motivational salience of the students in higher education institutions in the field of security and defense in Europe, focusing on the students of the National Military University, the tools used for the motivation for training and daily military activity and the satisfaction achieved by the trainees in learning process.

Objects of an **internationally** are 19 educational institutions in the field of security and defense in Europe.

### 3. Methodology of the study

5

- **Diagnostic stage.** The diagnostic phase of the study was conducted in the academic year 2012/2013 with the Nicolae Balcescu Land Forces Academy. A questionnaire consisting of 15 questions was used, which included Likert 5-degree responsiveness questions and open questions with the opportunity to provide feedback from respondents.
- **Preparatory stage of the study.** A methodology was developed for conducting a study on the motivational salience in the training process and its relation with the satisfaction.
- **Basic stage of the study.** The main part of the survey was realized in the period 2013-2017. The representative aggregate array included over 85% of the trainees in the different academic years. It was determined the degree of satisfaction of the needs of the surveyed persons.
- **Final stage of the study.** At the final stage of the survey, a study of the organizational culture and the problems in the training and motivation of the students, both at the National Military University and at foreign universities and academies in the field of security and defense, was carried out using the method of the expert evaluation.

## 4. Limitations of the study

# CHAPTER ONE. GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH ON MOTIVATIONAL SALIENCE THROUGH THE PRISM OF HUMAN COGNITIVE ACTIVITY AND ITS IMPORTANCE FOR NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

- 1. The strategic security environment and the military education system
- 2. Motivational salience as a motivated behaviour of the individual in the learning process
- 3. Self-assessment, self-efficacy and social learning as socio-cognitive models of building individual behaviour
- 4. Motivation and satisfaction with human activity as determinants of motivational salience
- 5. Basic methodology for conducting research on the motivational salience in the learning process and its relationship with satisfaction
- SUMMARY ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
- CONCLUSIONS

No country *is able to cope* with the risks and threats posed by the demand for multilateral approaches in addressing important development and security issues and reinforcing the interdependence between policies taken at national and international level.[1]

Changing geopolitical, military and economic balance, deepening opposition, strengthening the existing and emerging new risks and threats to security in the world, and the development of EU integration processes and transatlantic cooperation have an important place to regulate major international issues.[2]

- European Security Strategy 'Secure Europe in a better world', Council of the European Union, Brussels, 2003.
- An updated National Security Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria, adopted by a decision of the National Assembly from 14.03.2018.



While motivation is a theoretical construct that can also be defined as a direction to a particular behavior or it is what motivates a person to initiate, follow or repeat a particular behavior,[6] motivational salience is a practically oriented construction that is used to explain and describes the already formed human behavior and which reveals the cause of the actions of the particular individual or group of individuals.

The main dimensions, which are identified and outlining the foundation for the analysis of results of specific indicators are:

- *Dimension 1: Personal effort*
- *Dimension 2: Perceptions and attitudes towards equity*
- *Dimension 3: Achieved results and performance*
- *Dimension 4: Positive and negative reinforcements, awards and sanctions*
- *Dimension 5: Relation expected effort - prize probability - degree of satisfaction*

## **CHAPTER TWO. EXPERIMENTAL STUDY ON MOTIVATIONAL SALIENCE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH SATISFACTION USING THE EXAMPLE OF STUDENTS AT THE VASIL LEVSKI NATIONAL MILITARY UNIVERSITY, VELIKO TARNOVO, BULGARIA**

- 1. Diagnostic stage of a study on motivational salience in the learning process and its relationship with satisfaction
- 2. The main stage of conducting research on motivational salience in the learning process and its relationship with satisfaction
  - 2.1. Analysis of the participants in the survey and their distribution of military specialisations and gender
  - 2.2. Experimental study on motivational salience of learners at the Vasil Levski National Military University
- SUMMARY ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
- CONCLUSIONS

## Main stage of the study on motivational salience and satisfaction with training in security and defense.

11

in the period 2013-2017

- Research on motivation for training and military activities and the satisfaction using 24 questions to the main target group - alumni cadets 2013/2014, 2014 /2015 2015 /2016 and 2016/2017 - total respondents 180 people.
- Study of motivation and satisfaction of a control group for comparison using 15 questions - first year cadets 2013/2014 year - total respondents 77 people.
- Study of motivation and satisfaction of a control group for comparison using 15 questions - first year students 2013/2014 - total respondents 88 people.

# CHAPTER THREE. EXPERIMENTAL STUDY ON MOTIVATIONAL SALIENCE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH SATISFACTION WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF CONTROL GROUPS FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF LEARNERS AT THE VASIL LEVSKI NATIONAL MILITARY UNIVERSITY IN VELIKO TARNOVO, BULGARIA

- 1. Analysis of control groups included in the survey and distribution by military specialisation, civilian specialty and gender
- 2. Experimental study on motivational salience in the learning process and its relationship with the satisfaction with the participation of control groups
- SUMMARY ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
- CONCLUSIONS

# CHAPTER FOUR. RESEARCH ON MOTIVATIONAL SALIENCE AND SATISFACTION WITH TRAINING IN THE FIELD OF SECURITY AND DEFENCE WITH THE INCLUSION OF SOME HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN EUROPE

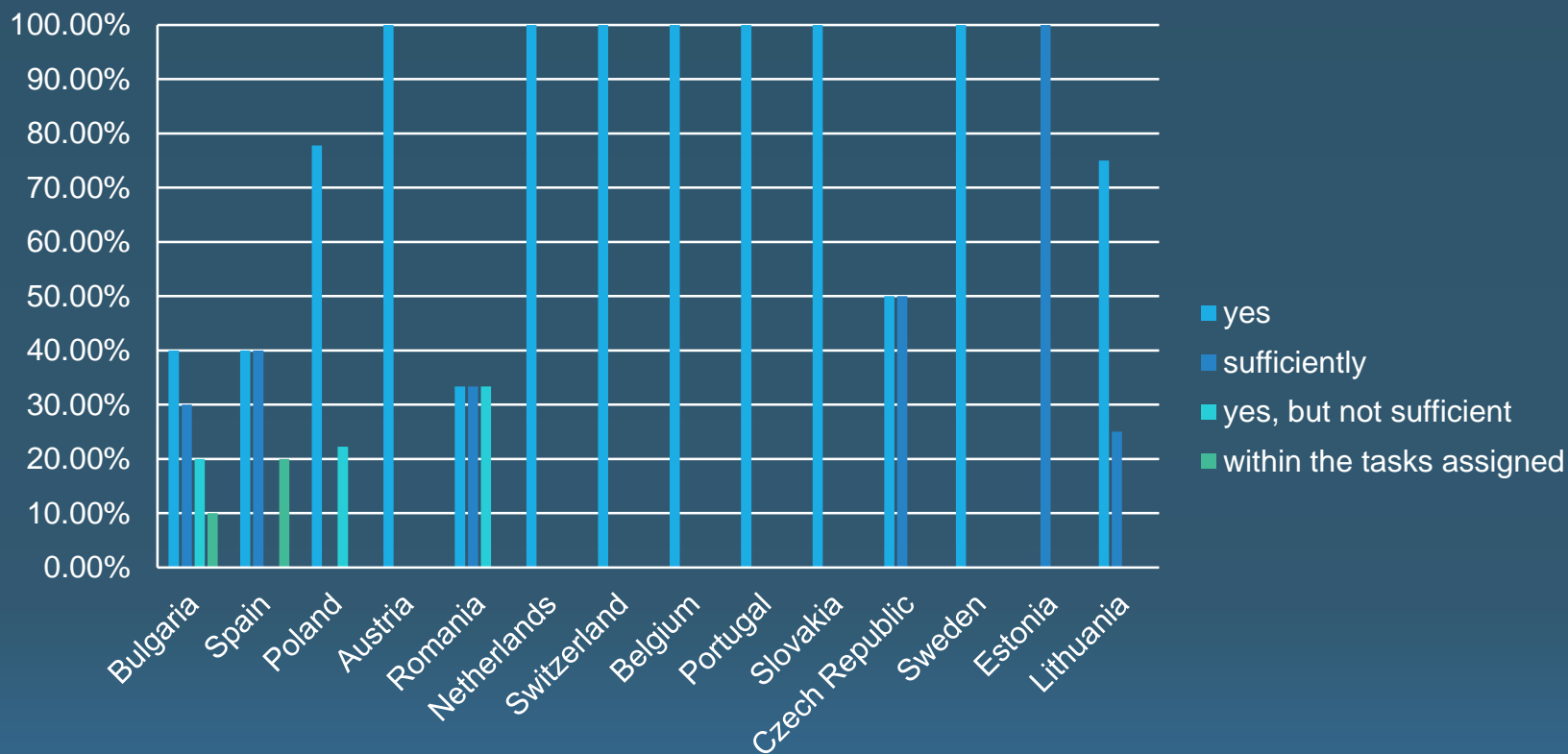
13

- 1. Presentation of the distributions of observed variables to conduct research on the motivational salience of learners' satisfaction in the process of learning at the Vasil Levski National Military University based on expert opinions
- 2. Research on the motivational salience of learners' satisfaction in the process of learning in European educational institutions in the field of security and defence on the basis of available expertise
  - 2.1. Module One. Performance of learners in the training process
  - 2.2. Module Two. Methods used to motivate learners
  - 2.3. Module Three. General satisfaction of the trainees in the institutions
  - 2.4. Module Four. Organisational culture
  - 2.5. Module Five. Problems in academic practice when working with learners
  - 2.6. Module Six. Opportunities for increasing the motivation and academic achievement of the learners
- SUMMARY ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research is scientifically supported by:

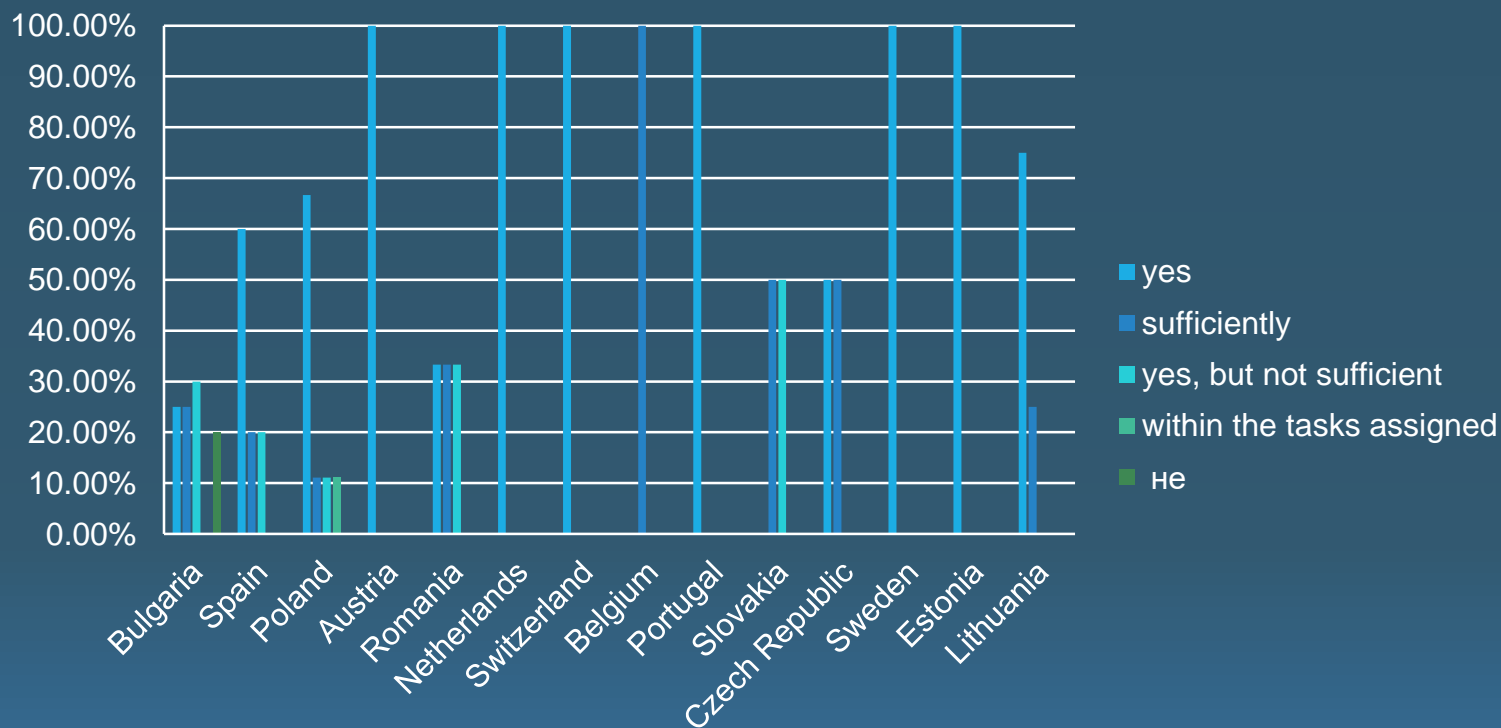
- National Military University, Bulgaria;
- Military University of Technology, Poland;
  - Theresian-Military Academy, Austria;
- University of Public and Individual Security, Poland;
  - Armed Forces Academy, Slovakia;
- Carol I National Defense University, Romania;
- Netherlands Defense Academy, Netherlands;
  - War Studies University , Poland;
- Swiss Military Academy, Zurich , Switzerland;
  - Military Academy of Portugal, Portugal;
- University of Defense , Czech Republic , Brno;
  - Koninklijke Militaire School , Belgium;
  - Spanish Army Military Academy, Spain;
- Nicolae Balcescu Land Forces Academy, Romania;
  - Swedish Defense University, Sweden;
  - Cuiavian University in Wloclawek , Poland;
- Estonian National Defense College, Estonia;
  - University of Mykolas Romeris, Lithuania;
  - Major-general Vasile Roman, Romania.

# Module One. Performance of learners in the training process.



**M1Q1. Do students/cadets in your institution take active part during academic hours?**

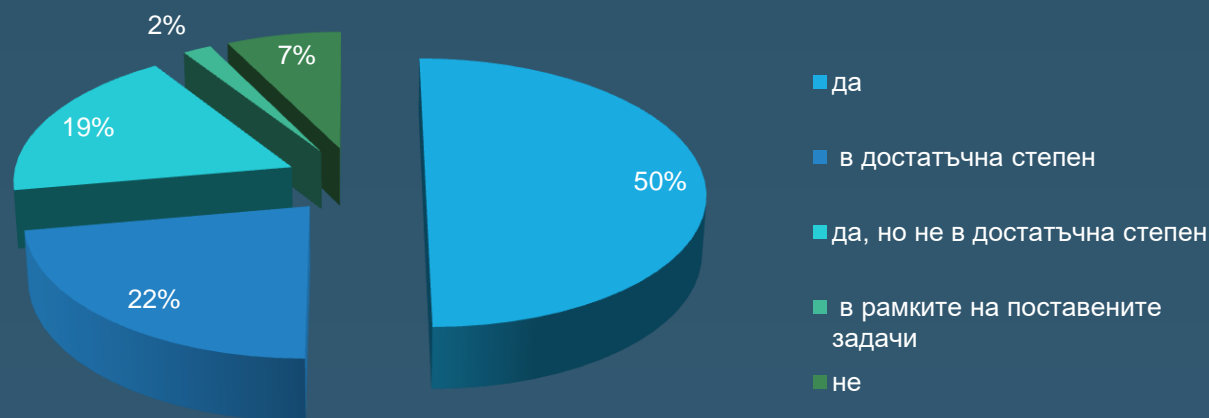
# Module One. Performance of learners in the training process.



**M1Q2 Do students/cadets initiate activities to develop their personal and professional qualities and skills?**

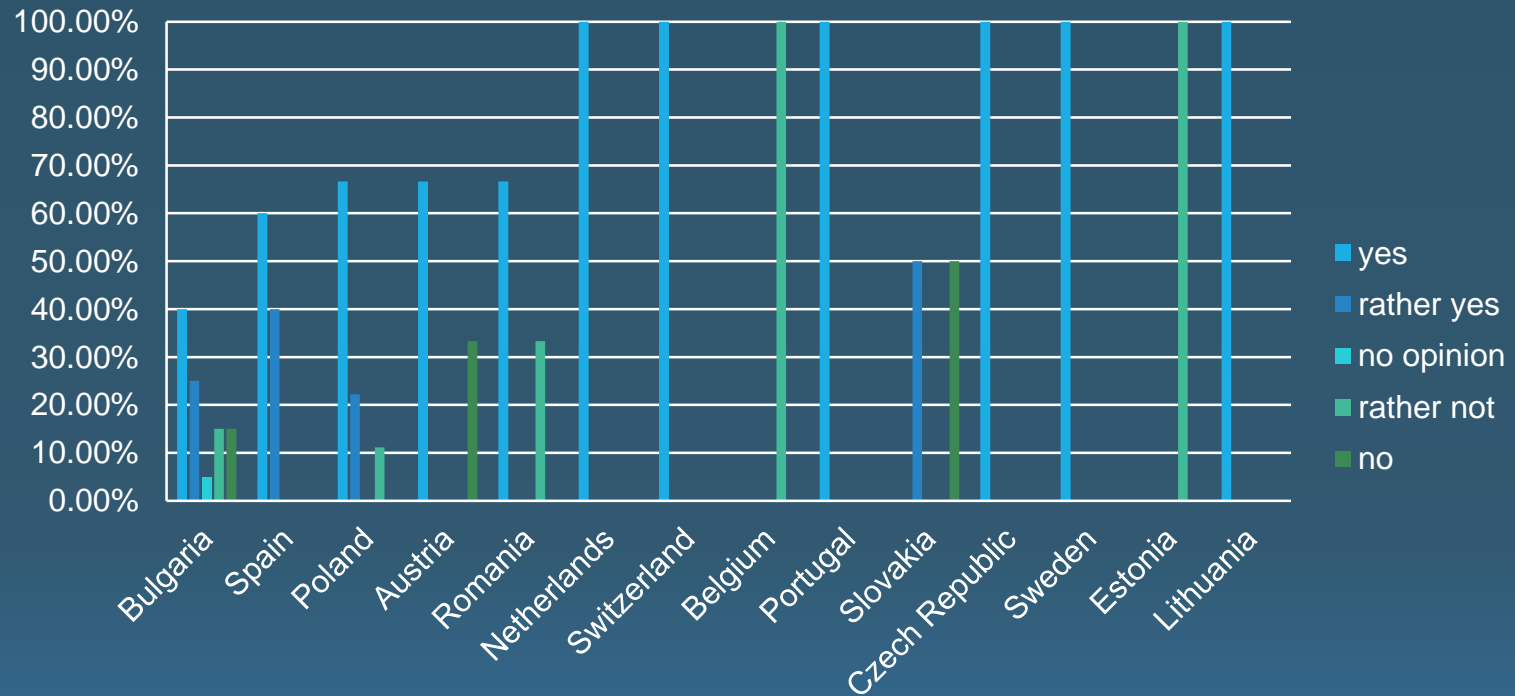


# Module One. Performance of learners in the training process.



**M1Q2 Do students/cadets initiate activities to develop their personal and professional qualities and skills? Europe**

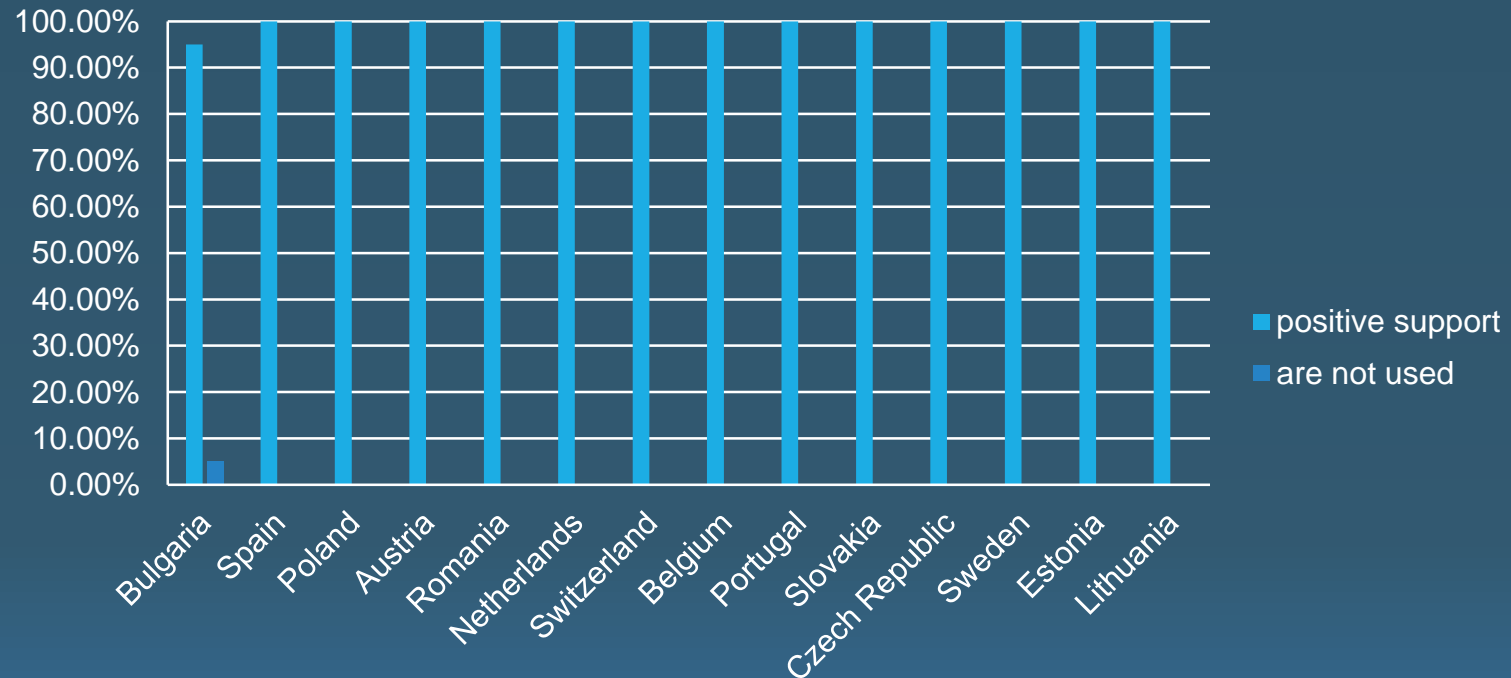
# Module One. Performance of learners in the training process.



**M1Q3 Do you think that learning outcomes reflect students'/cadets' actual intellectual efforts?**

## Module Two. Methods used to motivate learners

19



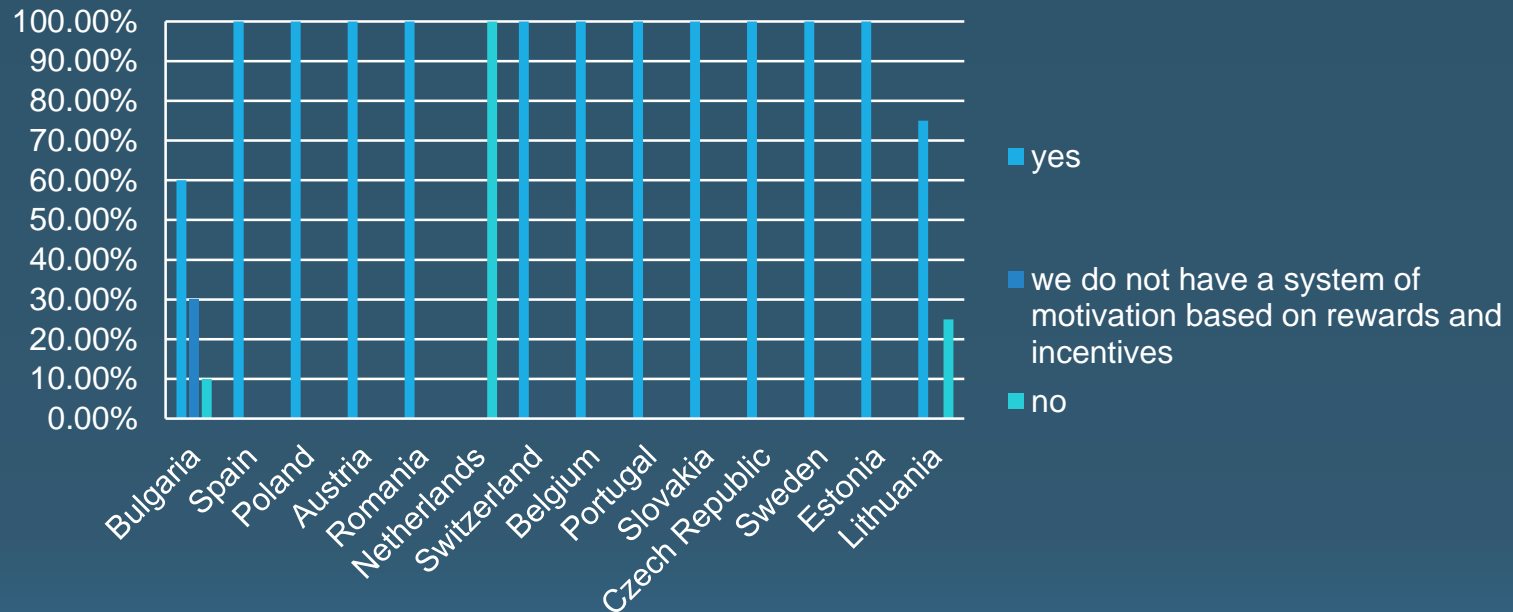
**M2Q1** What methods are used to motivate students/cadets at your educational institution?

"First of all, it's a matter of attitude. You cannot win a battle if you think it's impossible. Obtaining this university degree is not easy, it is a difficult war, and the key to success is to persevere, to get up even when you fall and ask for help from partners or to hand your hand to others when it is needed. These and other military values are the basis of everything, and so learners are motivated even after five or maybe six years when they become lieutenants. "

Expert at the Spanish Army Military Academy

## Module Two. Methods used to motivate learners

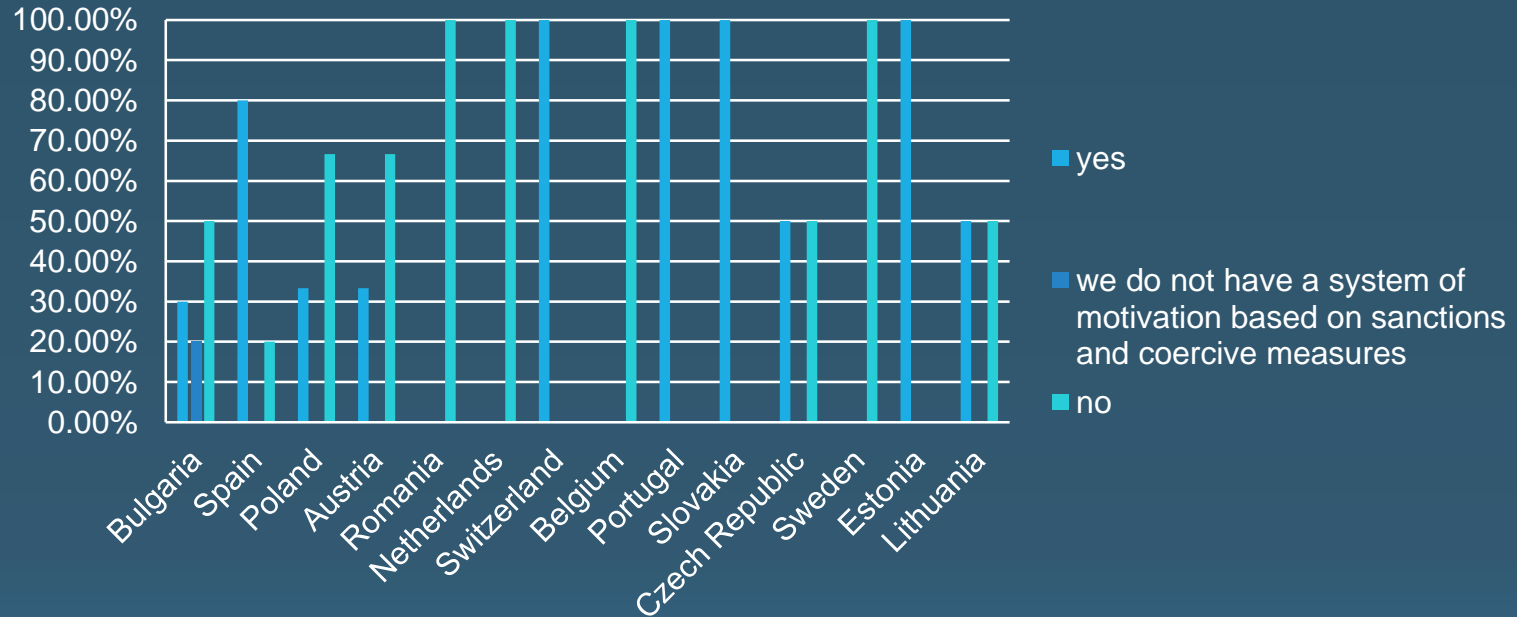
21



**M2Q2 . Do you use motivation based on rewards and incentives? If yes, please describe.**

According to National Defense University Carol I in Romania "The term stimulus is inappropriate to describe our approach because it may mean that our learners concentrate their efforts solely on personal gain rather than on personal development. Our approach focuses on the understanding of our learners that their continued development will not make them better officers "individually", but exceptional associates of their colleagues in the relevant units."

At the Netherlands Defense Academy, they do not use such methods, having one prize for best bachelor theses. This is the "thinking soldier" status, their bachelor level metaphor.



**M2Q3 Do you use motivation based on sanctions and coercive measures?  
If yes, please describe.**

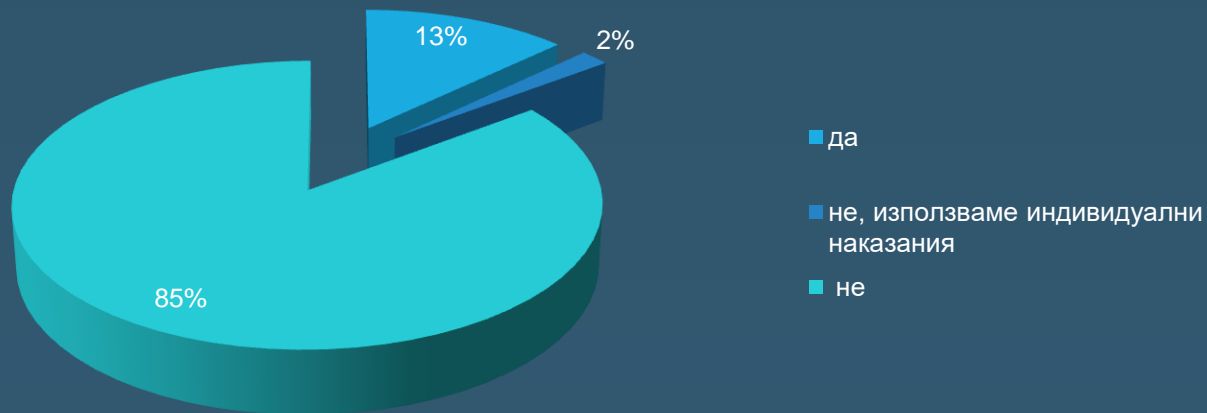
At the Theresian Military Academy, Austria, students can be punished for bad behavior as soldiers, knowing that they may lose their military service.

At the National Defense University, Carol I in Romania the experts consider that coercive measures are ineffective, and if a cadet/ student does not manage well at some point, he / she should be helped to reach his / her full potential and not sanctioned. These are the wrong methods. They are not related to the process of personality development.

At the Military Academy of Portugal, the penalties to be applied for breaching the obligations and responsibilities set out in the Ordinance are the following:

- Censure;
- Severe censure;
- Prohibition to leave the school;
- Expulsion.

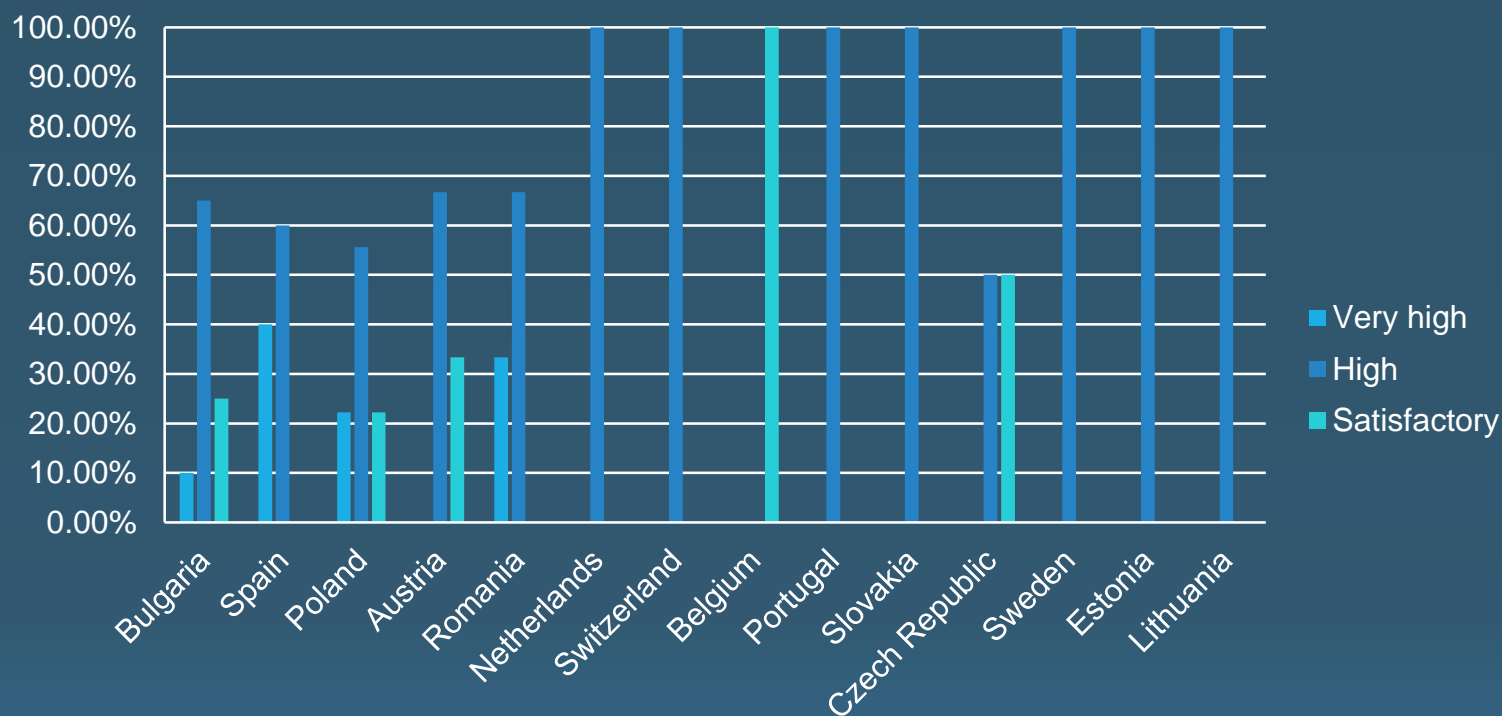




M2Q4 Do you apply collective punishment? Europe

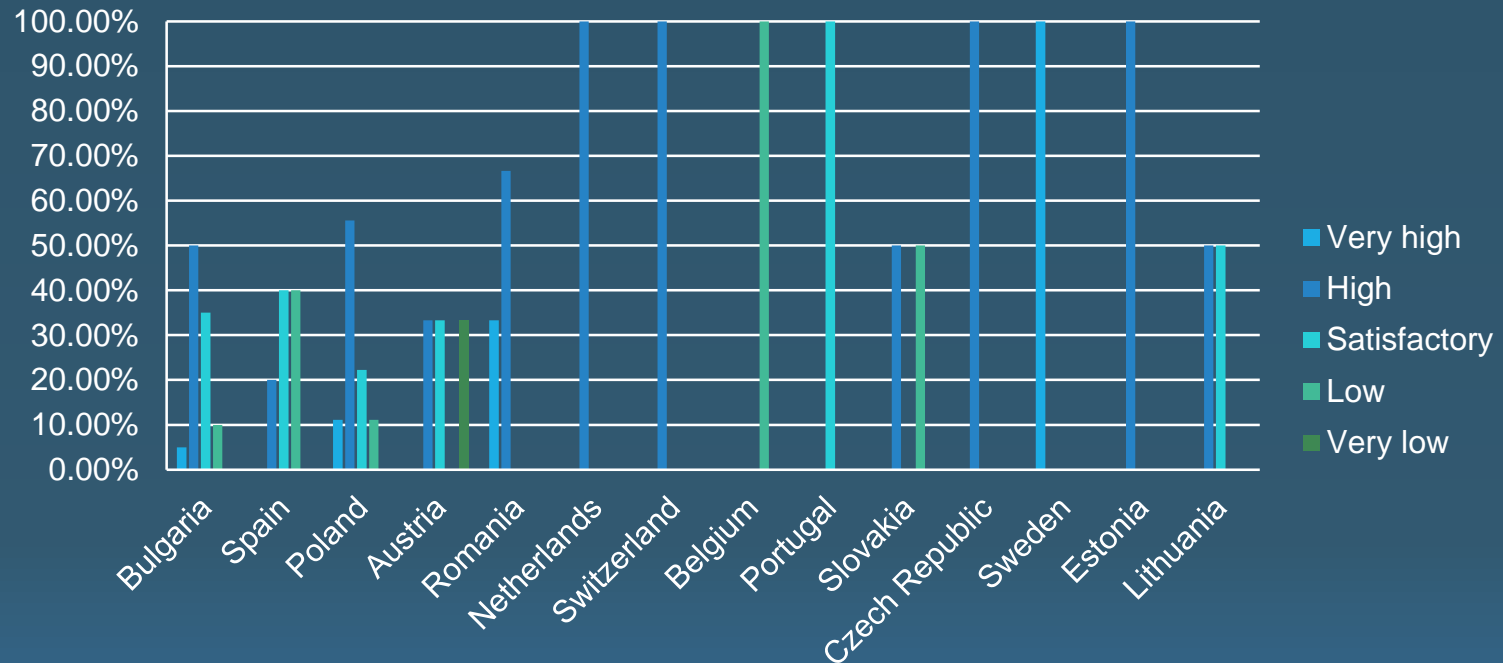
## Module Three. General satisfaction of the trainees in the institutions

26

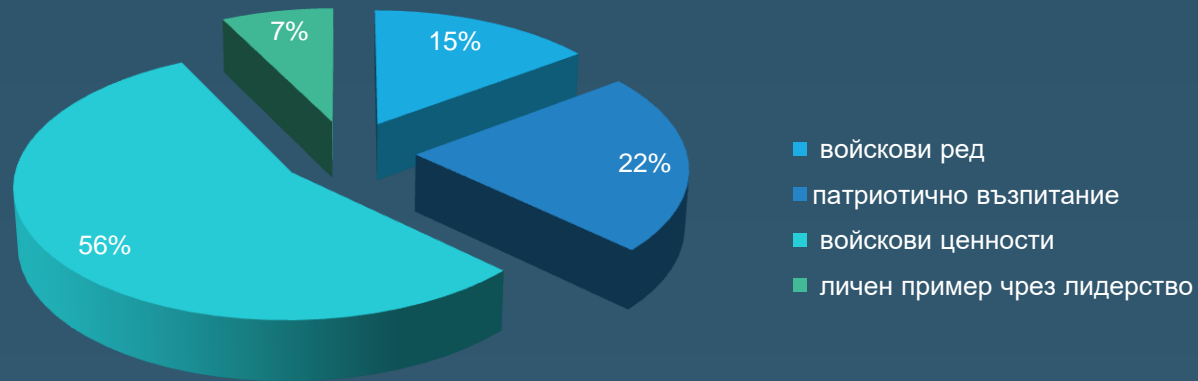


**M3Q1** What is the overall students'/cadets' satisfaction of their selection of the institution that you represent for education?

# Module Three. General satisfaction of the trainees in the institutions



**M3Q3 What is the overall students'/cadets' satisfaction from academic hours spent on general military training and academic hours devoted to specialized disciplines?**



**M4Q1 Identify the components of military organizational culture, including values, norms, symbols, rules and traditions, typical for the institution that you represent and how they affect the performance of learners. Europe**

## Module Four. Organizational culture

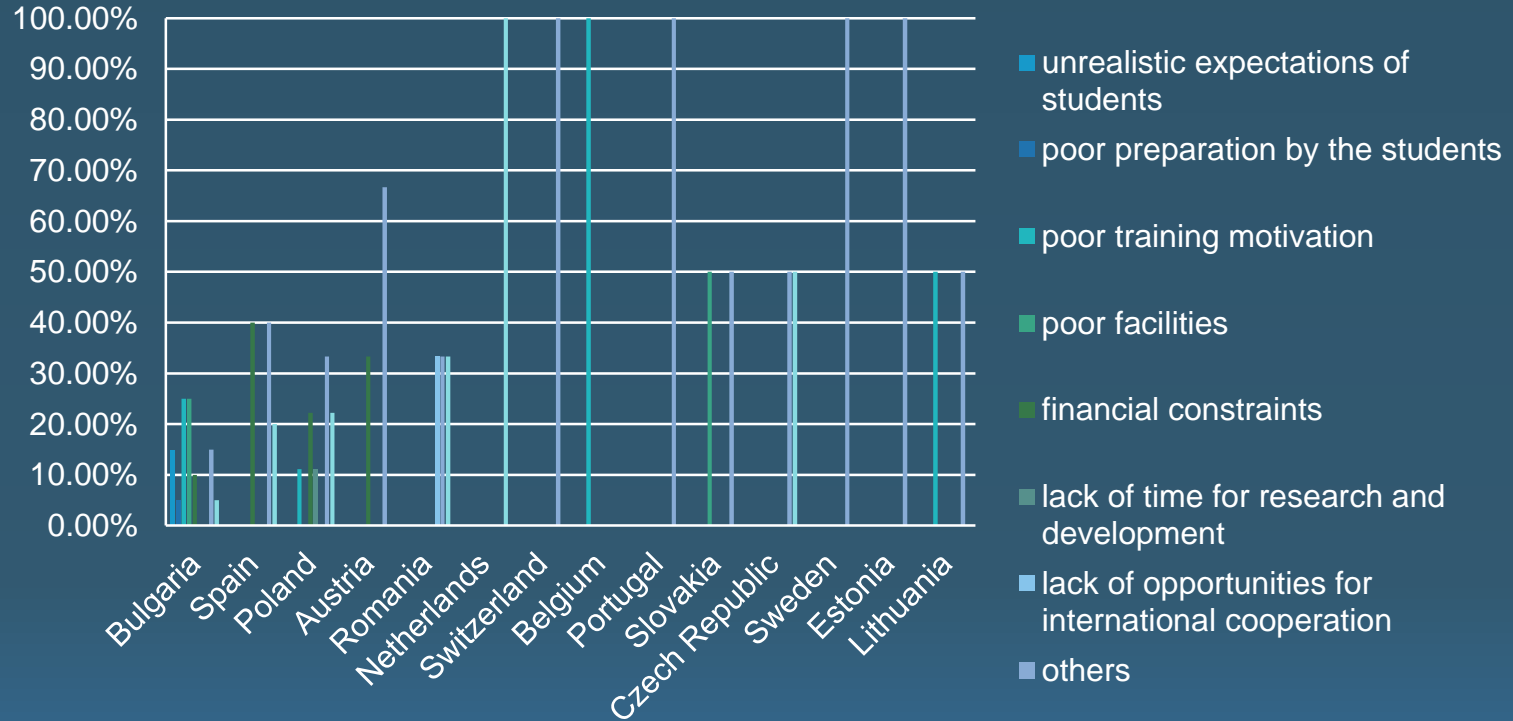
29

- "All the values and traditions of our institution improve the effectiveness of learners. Honor, partnership, sacrifice, and so on. ... to make them more responsible and help them overcome the problems and difficult situations. Knowing the traditions and meaning of the symbols makes them proud of their choice and showing them how important it is to respect the traditions and symbols of not only the Spanish army but also other institutions and countries."
- "The experience and the personal example are fundamental in setting a course model for the students in the future - the experience, as many of the lecturers and commanders have served in units regarded as elite in the Spanish army, and the personal example, as the behavior and the way action must be corrective in all cases."

Military Academy of the Spanish Army

- The University of Public and Private Security in Poland is based on a combination of the Eastern Tradition of the Japanese Samurai ( ushido Code) and the best traditions of Western uniformed officers, starting from philosophy, psychology and logic, through general and useful methods related to physical education, techniques and tactics needed for effective action in special formations. All this affects the effectiveness of learners.
- Patriotism, the sense of pride and loyalty is derived from the membership of the officers to the Romanian Army, the sense of belonging to the Carol I National Defense University, impeccable ethics and morality, as well as the objectivity in the assessment and the educational system oriented towards objectives are components of the military organizational culture.

# Module Five. Problems in academic practice when working with learners



**M5Q2 What are the main problems you encounter in academic practice in the field of motivation for education and some typical military activities at the institution that you represent?**

## Module Six. Opportunities for increasing the motivation and academic achievement of the learners

32

- 5% of the experts have reported the support of individual contribution,
- 4% of the experts indicate the competitive basis of training and teaching,
- 17% of the experts point out the improvement of the quality of the training, upgrading of the facilities is indicated by 11% of the experts,
- 9% of the experts point the need of more practice in a real environment,
- 6% of the experts point out the refinement of the studied disciplines,
- observation and preservation of the main components of the military organizational culture indicate 4% of the experts,
- 13% of the experts point participation in various forms of international co-operation research, projects, forums,
- 31% indicate answer "others". In order to refine the answer "others", the experts' comments were also suggested.



## Module Six. Opportunities for increasing the motivation and academic achievement of the learners

33

- "Because there are already high achievements (according to the accreditation organization), I think we are on the right track."

Netherlands Defense Academy

- The Swiss Military Academy in Zurich says they have achieved exceptionally good academic achievements. The students receive a Bachelor's degree from the Swiss Military Academy in Zurich. The Academy is, depending on the rankings - the eighth <http://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/world-university-rankings/2016> or the ninth best university in the world [https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2016/world-ranking#!/page/0/length/25/sort\\_by/rank/sort\\_order/asc/cols/stats](https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2016/world-ranking#!/page/0/length/25/sort_by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/stats), which is a great motivator for students.

## Module Six. Opportunities for increasing the motivation and academic achievement of the learners

34

M6Q2 "What would increase the motivation for education and military activities of cadets at the institution that you represent?".

- Emphasis is placed on the need to take into account the personal contribution of the trainees, to observe and to preserve the main components of the military organizational culture, the personal example of the academic and command staff, more practical lessons, increasing opportunities for international cooperation, increasing opportunities for participation in projects, increasing opportunities for participation in research, raising the status and reputation of the officer, and others.

# GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of the results obtained from experimental study on motivational salience of student satisfaction and learning in European educational institutions in the field of security and defense based on available expertise found: 36

- The trainees of the 19 European educational institutions surveyed are **actively involved** in the seminars and exercises and initiate extra activities themselves in order to develop their personal and professional qualities and skills in a sufficient level.
- There is a **correlation between the intellectual effort that learners make and the results** they receive, with 76% of the experts considering that learning outcomes really reflect the intellectual effort that learners make.
- Using methods to provoke higher motivational awareness by learners are mainly **positive reinforcements**, with 82% of experts using motivation based on awards and incentives. Sanctions and coercive measures are also used simultaneously with positive reinforcements of 41% of the experts in order to exert influence on the motivational salience. Collectively negative reinforcement is applied by 13% of experts as the ultimate measure of influence.
- The **overall satisfaction** of the trainees in the studied 19 studied European institutions **is high** and at a very high level, according to 81% of the experts.
- The overall **satisfaction with the choice** of the learners of their chosen military specialty is high and at a very high level, according to 83% of the experts.
- The overall satisfaction of the learners in the hours spent on general military training and the hours spent on specialized disciplines is high and at a very high level, according to 78% of the experts.
- The **strictness of the program at the university/academy has a positive impact** on the academic achievements of the learners according to 74% of the experts.
- Major components of military organizational culture are army values, patriotic upbringing, army order, and personal example through leadership.
- Experts unanimously support the claim that academia and military training at the academy / university are helping creating the learners as future military leaders.

The main *problems* encountered by the experts in their academic practice in working with learners are mainly: poor training of the students in the secondary education, obsolete equipment, lack of individual motivation and interest in learning, difficulties in updating the academic plan and programs, difficulties due to financial insecurity, lack of time for research. The main problems that experts encounter in their academic practice in the field of learner motivation are mainly: unrealistic expectations of learners, poor training by learners, poor motivation for training, poor material base, financial constraints, lack of time for conducting research and scientific development, lack of opportunities for international cooperation.

## GRATITUDE

*The realization of the current research was supported by major-general Vasile Roman, Romania; Commander of the National Defense University - Brigadier General Professor Ph.D Gheorghe Calopareanu, Romania; experts of the Military Academy-Portugal, Chief of the Office of the Military Academy Commander; experts of the Swiss Military Academy at the ETH Zurich, Switzerland; the management of Swedish Defense University; Dr. Bernhard Kaiser MSc MBA MSD - Scientific Research Coordination of Fachhochschulstudiengang "Military Leadership", Austria; Col. Mariusz Gontarczyk, Head of the Department of International Cooperation, Poland; Luminita Giurgiu, Vice-Rector of "Nicolae Balcescu" Land Forces Academy Sibiu, Romania; Maj. Risco Salso, Academia General Militar Spain, Dean of Academics; Col. Ales Binar, Vice-Dean for Public Relations and Development, University of Defense-Brno; Rector of the University of Public and Individual Security (Poland); Col. Vladan Holcner, Language Center Director, University of Defense-Brno; Dr. Piotr Gawliczek, Poland; experts from Lithuania MRU, Faculty of Public Security; experts from War Studies University, Poland; Prof. dr. Myriame Bollen, Faculty of Military Sciences, Netherlands Defense Academy; experts from Academia General Militar Spain; experts from the Military University of Technology, Poland; experts from Armed Forces Academy in L.Mikuláš, Slovakia; Lepinoy Anouk, Militair Repeater, Koninklijke Militaire School, Department of Gedragwetenschappen - Leerstoel Psychologie, Brussels, Belgium; Associate Professor Aida Alvinus, Department of Security, Strategy and Leadership, Försvarshögskolan, Karlstad / Swedish Defense University (SEDU).*

*The author would like to express special thanks to General Tsvetan Harizanov, Prof. DSc. Sevdalina Dimitrova, who give permission for the beginning of the study, to Col. Assoc. Prof. Nevena Atanasova-Krasteva, with whom the research was realized among the target group at the National Military University and the Prof. DSc. Stoyko Stoykov and Prof. PhD Dimitar Tsvetkov for scientific assistance, consultancy and support.*

**Thank you for  
your attention!**

**Most sincerely I wish success to the forum.  
Together!**