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THE ROLE OF MILITARY POLICE IN THE SLOVAK SYSTEM OF INTERNAL SECURITY. RESEARCH REPORT

Summary:

The aim of the paper is to present results of research on social and expert perception of Military Police in the Slovak Republic. In addition to the research results the paper also features detailed description of the Slovak internal security system including all its formations, history and modern structure.

Key words: *Military Police, the Slovak Republic, security, research report*

Introduction

For each modern, dynamically developing country providing security of its citizens as well as sovereignty and inviolability of borders are top priorities. Contemporary societies dispose of a number of separate, highly specialised uniformed public services such as the Army, Police and other guards¹. A very important role in the system of security of the Slovak defence system is played by Military Police, which is one of the youngest formations in the structures of Armed Forces of the country. The formation's existence and activities are regulated by the Act of the Federal Assembly of Czechoslovakia no 124 of 5 March 1992 on Military Police².

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¹ J. Maciejewski, *Grupy dyspozycyjne społeczeństwa polskiego*, Wrocław 2006, wyd. UW, pp. 11-14.

² Act of the Federal Assembly of Czechoslovakia no 124 of 5 March 1992 on Military Police (Coll. of laws 1992, No 30, pp. 735-747).

The paper is an elaboration on the issue of the role of Military Police in the internal security system of the Slovak Republic. It presents the results of a study into how various groups of society perceive this formation. The authors questioned ordinary people, experts as well as Military Police officers in service in different units across Slovakia. The paper is intended for security experts, crisis management specialists and managers in uniformed services. Those scientifically or professionally interested in the subject matter of uniformed services functioning in EU member states will find on these pages vast amount of recent, unpublished information about Slovak Military Police whose officers safeguard security in the field which was assigned to them by the legislator. The text should be also counted as useful for students of Internal Security, National Security, European Studies and Criminology.

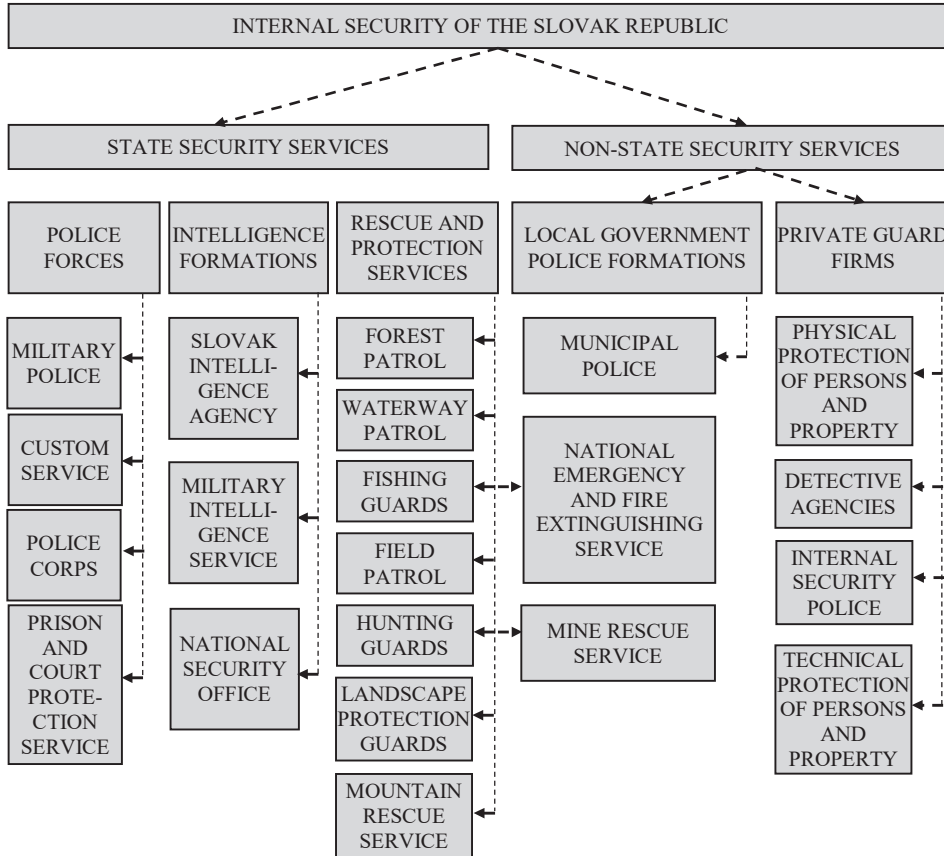
1. Classification of formations responsible for internal security on the territory of Slovak Republic

Uniformed law enforcement services are vital for protection of life, health and property of citizens. Functionaries of these services in order to efficiently perform their tasks dispose of a range of powers and resources³. In each European country, also in Slovakia, functioning of each uniformed service must be regulated by a separate legal act which, in turn, is complemented with/by specific regulations in the form of resolutions, decisions etc.

In Slovakian system there are two groups of uniformed formations in the internal security system. The first group consists of state formations, the second of entities of non-state character (private services or services belonging to local government units). State formations report to applicable ministry relevant for their scope of activities and additionally, to organs of central administration and lower local administration units. Those who serve in state formations are in official relationship with the country as functionaries or civil servants of pertinent department of state administration. The diagram below presents state, local government and private formations involved in execution of internal security tasks in the territory of the Slovak Republic.

³ J. Dworzecki, *Policja w Polsce. Wybrane zagadnienia*, Kraków 2011, EAS, p. 9.

Diagram 1. Formations executing internal security tasks in the Slovak Republic.



Source: authors' own work based on data from the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic.

The pillar of the state security system consists of: the Police Corps (operate pursuant to Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 6 June 1993 on the Police Corps)⁴, Military Police (operates pursuant to Act of the of the Federal Assembly of Czechoslovakia of 5 March 1992 on Military Police)⁵, the National Emergency and Fire Extinguishing Service (operates pursuant to Act of the National Council

⁴ Act no 171 National Council of the Slovak Republic of 6 June 1993 on the Police Corps (Coll. of laws 1993 Part 46, p. 770-784).

⁵ Act no 124 National Council of the Slovak Republic of 5 March 1992 on Military Police (Coll. of laws 1992 Part 30, p. 736-742).

of the Slovak Republic of 2 July 2001 on the National Emergency and Fire Extinguishing Service)⁶, Custom Service (operates pursuant to Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 26 October 2004 on custom organs of state administration)⁷, Prison Guards and Court Guards (operate pursuant to Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 5 December 2000 on Prison Guards and Court Guards)⁸ and Slovak Intelligence Agency (operates pursuant to Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 21 January 1993 on Slovak Intelligence Agency)⁹ and National Security Office (operates pursuant to Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 11 March 2004 on protection of classified information)¹⁰. Moreover, within this group there are also state guards and services performing specific, peripheral tasks assigned to them by the legislator¹¹. In this sector the most active are: Forest Patrol (operates pursuant to Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 23 June 2005 on forests)¹², Field Patrol (operates pursuant to Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 24 August 1994 on Field Patrol)¹³, Waterway Patrol (operates pursuant to Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 13 May 2004 on national waters)¹⁴, Nature and Landscape Protection Guards (operates pursuant to Act of National Council of the Slovak Republic of 25 June 2002 on Protection

⁶ Act no 315 National Council of the Slovak Republic of 2 July 2001 on National Emergency and Fire Extinguishing (Coll. of laws 2001 Part 132, p. 3439-3485).

⁷ Act no 652 National Council of the Slovak Republic of 26 October 2004 on Custom Organs of Public Administration (Coll. of laws 2004 Part 276, p. 6464-6484).

⁸ Act no 4 National Council of the Slovak Republic of 5 December 2000 on Prison and Court Protection Service (Coll. of laws 2001 Part 2, p. 10-23).

⁹ Act no 46 National Council of the Slovak Republic of 21 January 1993 on Slovak Intelligence Agency (Coll. of laws 1993 Part 11, p. 252-256).

¹⁰ Act no National Council of the Slovak Republic of 11 March 2004 on Protection of Classified Information (Coll. of laws 2004 Part 93, p. 2206-2236).

¹¹ Š. Kočan, P. Selinger, *Bezpečnostné služby v Slovenskej Republike*, Bratislava 2013, Academy of the Police Corps, pp. 204-243.

¹² Act no 326 of National Council of the Slovak Republic of 23 June 2005 on Forests (Coll. of laws 2005 Part 138, p. 3326-3359).

¹³ Act no 255 National Council of the Slovak Republic of 24 August 1994 on Field Patrol (Coll. of laws 1994 Part 74, p. 1270-1272).

¹⁴ Act no 364 National Council of the Slovak Republic of 13 May 2004 on National Waterways (Coll. of laws 2004 Part 153, p. 3530-3578).

of Nature and Landscape)¹⁵ and Mountain Rescue Service (operates pursuant to Act of National Council of the Slovak Republic of 10 July 2002 on Mountain Rescue Services)¹⁶ and Mine Rescue Services (operate pursuant to Act of National Council of the Slovak Republic of 1 July 2002 on Integrated Rescue System and to Act of National Council of the Slovak Republic of 20 March 2002 on Counteracting Industrial Disasters)¹⁷.

Non-state formations belonging to the internal security sector include private entities providing services in physical and technical protection of persons and property (operate pursuant to Act of National Council of the Slovak Republic of 3 December 1997 on Functioning of Private Security Services)¹⁸ and detective agencies and commune police forces – in towns and cities referred to as Municipal Police (operate pursuant to Act of National Council of the Slovak Republic of 3 December 1991 on Municipal Services)¹⁹.

The activities undertaken by the above mentioned entities in internal security system of the Slovak Republic are diversified. This stems from the fact that combating widely understood crime is in the interest of all citizens, and key role in this respect is played by a specially appointed state administration institution. Apart from the above state institutions which constitute the pillar of Slovak security system, one should not overlook courts and prosecutor's offices. All entities mentioned above are immanent elements of internal security system of the Slovak Republic. They execute the tasks in many fields of social life legally assigned to them by the legislator facing a whole range of dangers and threats that have a direct impact on the life of citizens.

¹⁵ Act no 543 National Council of the Slovak Republic of 25 June 2002 on Nature and Landscape Protection (Coll. of laws 2002 Part 212, pp. 5410-5465).

¹⁶ Act no 544 National Council of the Slovak Republic of 10 July 2002 on Mountain Rescue Service (Coll. of laws 2002 Part 212, pp. 5466-5469).

¹⁷ Act no 129 of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 1 July 2002 on Integrated Rescue System (Coll. of law 2002 Part 57, pp. 1454-1459); Act no 261 of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 20 March 2002 on Counteracting Industrial Disasters (Coll. of laws 2002, part 112, pp. 2498-2522).

¹⁸ Act no 379 of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 3 December 1997 on Functioning of Private Security Services (Coll. of law 1997, part 145, pp. 3494-3511).

¹⁹ Act no 564 of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 3 December 1991 on Municipal Police (Coll. of laws 1991, part 107, pp. 2810-2814).

2. Organisation and functioning of the Slovak Military Police

The origins of a police formation in the armed forces in Slovakia go back to the turn of 19th and 20th century. During the times of Austro-Hungarian monarchy the tasks of today's Military Police were performed by regiments of Chetniks. In 1919-1920 foot units of Military Police were created but they were dissolved after two years. In the times of the first Slovak Republic (14 March 1939- 5 April 1945) within the structures of the Slovakian Army there was a unit of field Chetniks. Similar regiments were also a part of the armies of Czech Republic and Carpathian Ruthenia. After WWII the tasks of police character in the Slovakian army were taken over by other military units.

Next wave of change did not come until 1989. At that time the organisational structure of Military Police in the Czechoslovak Army consisted of the organisational units and command organs listed below:

- Military Police Intelligence Service located in the General Staff of the Czechoslovak Army. Operational activities were supported by a cell called Security Department of the Military Police of the Czechoslovak Army;
- Military Police Command of Western Military District;
- Military Police Command of Eastern Military District;
- Command and operational groups of the Military Police of the Czechoslovak Army deployed in field outlets in Prague, Bratislava, Brno, Liptovsky Mikulas and Koshice;
- Field operational outlet of the Military Police deployed in the structures of self-contained flight unit no 1;
- Field operational cells of the Military Police deployed in the following structures: 3, 14 and 20 the Motorized Rifle Divisions; 1, 3 and 13 Armoured Divisions; 15 Mechanised Division as well as 2 and 3 Air Defence Divisions.

In field, the superiors of military police officers in organisational sense were commanders of tactical military units within which the Military Police cells were deployed.

On 5 March 1992 the Federal Assembly of Czech and Slovak Federative Republic passed an Act no 124 of 5 March 1992 on Military Police, in force since 1 May 1992. It was the first legal act in the new post-communist reality regulating activities of this formation, scope of competences, tasks, duties and the powers of military police officers.

Next, the Chief of General Staff of the Czechoslovak Army issued command no 31 of 23 June 1992, which regulated the organisational structure of Military Police and other internal regulations regarding the service.

As of 1 January 1993 Czech and Slovak Federative Republic was dissolved and, as a consequence, two politically independent states i.e. Czech Republic and Slovak Republic were formed. Following establishment of a new independent Slovak organism, the new army of the Slovak Republic was formed together with its organisational component - Military Police.

Political transformations of the 1990s obliged the Slovak Parliament to pass a number of acts regulating all spheres of public life including state security. One of the legal acts directly referring to Military Police was the Act on Military Police which entered into legislative process in March 1993. Due to issues of procedural and content-based nature as well as other minor reasons, the act was not put to the vote in 1993 by the National Council of the Slovak Republic. It was a year later, on 4 August 1994, that works on the wording of the act were resumed. The parliamentary Committee on Legal Protection and Security recommended inclusion of the draft act on the agenda of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, but this, unfortunately, did not happen.

On 1 September 1994 the General Staff of the Army of the Slovak Republic was created. Upon creation of this central institution the organisational structure of the Slovak Army changed and so did the Military Police. Organisational units of Military Police which used to be deployed in various military units, as the result of the amendments introduced to the criminal code and due to necessity to provide procedural independence in legal proceedings, were put under direct professional subordination of the Head of Military Police Intelligence. At the same time a command of the Head of the General Staff no 1/1995 defined the guidelines of Military Police's cooperation with other military units and police formations in the country. The command also defined territorial range of respective Military Police divisions.

Reorganisation of the Military Police was correlated with redefinition of tasks assigned for this formation especially with respect to provision of physical security of the newly created General Staff of the Slovak Army, provision of internal security in military units deployed around the country, provision of security of objects of the Ministry of Defence and protection of the Slovak military contingent whose soldiers

served abroad. In the first five years of the 1990s, the Military Police actively participated in military exercises organised by the Slovak Army or in international exercises such as Trimigrant and Hexagrant. The functional and organisational changes that occurred in the structures of the Slovak Military Police were a kind of reaction to the evolution of the security level in Slovakia.

Social and political transformations of 1980s and 1990s in countries of central and eastern Europe unwittingly generated increase in threats to public security including the crime rate. The completion of geopolitical transformation and entering on the democratic path in the post-cold war reality generated dynamic development of all spheres of life and triggered changes of organisational, legal cultural and social nature. Simultaneously to these changes sudden increase in the crime rate was observed. Slovakia strongly felt consequences of this specific social evolution. Since the division of Czechoslovakia in 1989 into two separate organisms, Slovakia recorded record increase in all indexed categories of criminal offences. The number of crimes classified in Slovakian criminal code rose from 46 389 to 146 125²⁰.

Significant deterioration of the levels of discipline could also be observed in the ranks of the Slovak army which was also under influence of the changes the country was coming through at that time. The reforms in functioning of the Military Police aimed at neutralising criminal threats through undertaking active detective and counteracting steps and preparing Military Police to functioning in new European and global security structures.

As of 1995 Military Police initiated closer cooperation with other national formations from the security sector. Bilateral agreements were signed with the Police Corps of Slovakia, the Corps of Prison and Court Protection Service and with Railway Police. Moreover, cooperation with foreign institutions of security and public order was intensified and this close cooperation resulted in implementation of a number of new organisational and legislative solutions into the existing doctrine of the Slovak Military Police.

²⁰ J. Dworzecki, M. Ondicová, J. Mlýnek, *Słowacy wobec wybranych patologii społecznych*, Pszczyna 2013, Oficyna Drukarska, pp. 63-119.

In the years that followed Military Police took over the role of a coordinator of a number of programmes related to preventing and combating crime such as:

- Regulation of the Slovak Government no 482 from 1999 on Criminal Prevention Strategy;
- Regulation of the Slovak Government no 483 from 1999 on Comprehensive Programme of Crime Prevention;
- Regulation of the Slovak Government no 493 from 1999 on Preventive Activities Undertaken in the Fight Against Terrorism on the Territory of the Slovak Republic;
- Regulation of the Slovak Government no 513 from 1999 entitled Schedule of Implementation of the Assumptions of the Treaty on Counteracting Organised Crime and Coordination of Integrated Security Systems of the Ministry of Defence.

Military Police took an active part in preparation and implementation of the reform of the Slovak defence system of 2000-2002. The reform was forced by Slovakia's intended accession into NATO. The reforms within the Military Police itself included remodelling of the top management structures and organisational and functional change of the Security Department in Trenčín, which was renamed Department of Technical and Operational Activities.

Since 1 January 2000 the Military Police has been functioning as an independent uniformed service reporting directly to the Head of General Staff of the Slovak Army. The organisational structure consists of the General Command and local units which cover the whole territory of the country.

An important impulse to intensify the presence of the Slovak Military Police on the international arena was signing the following documents: *Preparation programme of the Slovak Republic to NATO Membership* and *Joint objectives for 2000-2006*. In accordance with the instructions written down in the above mentioned documents, Slovak Military Police was obliged to create an independent tactical unit prepared for participation in stabilisation and peacekeeping missions by the end of 2001. In order to obtain necessary information which could facilitate implementation of solutions which are applied in similar units around the world, close collaboration was started with countries such as: the USA, Germany, France and Great Britain.

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The reform of the Slovakian army referred not only to tactic linear units but there were also changes in other military formations, entities and institutions e.g. the Military Intelligence Service, military research institutes and military academies²¹, the changes also reached the Military Police.

On 1 October 2001 Military Police units in Trenčín, Liptovský Mikuláš and Košice were dissolved. The Department of Technical and Operational Activities of the Military Police was moved to Bratislava and incorporated into the Military Police Command. The changes led to liquidation of many managerial positions which were recalculated budget-wise and allowed for increase in the number of lower rank positions in the formation. Due to organisational changes available human resources and equipment could be utilized more rationally and efficiently. All organisational transformations of the Slovak Military Police were completed by 1 January 2002.

In the analyzed period, Military Police was not only under active reorganisation, the formation undertook important initiatives in the internal security area as well as on international scale. Among preventive, dissemination or educational initiatives of the Slovak Military Police the most notable are: celebration of anniversaries of creation of the formation (often organised jointly with the Military Diplomatic Corps), organisation of open shooting tournaments and other sport competitions in individual and team sports. Furthermore, joint Czech and Slovak Rapid Reaction Force was created, whose officers served in international NATO peacekeeping forces in Joint Guardian (*KFOR – Kosovo Force*). Thanks to close cooperation with the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, a whole new range of mechanisms for identifying and counteracting crimes of terrorist nature was implemented.

Outside Slovakia, Slovakian Military Police officers served in UNFICYP (United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus), on Golan Heights (UNDOF) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force and UNMEE (United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea) where they protected military bases and performed other tasks of police nature.

Next wave of fundamental changes regarding the execution of tasks by the Military Police was brought about by amendments to Act 141

²¹Source: interview with professor Josef Reitšpís, (reserve colonel) Chair of the Railway Infrastructure Modernisation Department (1996-2001), University of Transport and Communications in Žilina [obtained on 26.02.2016].

from 1961 on Code of Criminal Proceedings. Implementation of these changes to the Slovak legal system resulted in extending of process activities that could be performed by the Military Police officers. As of 1 October 2002 they acquired mandate to carry on shortened preparatory proceedings including evidence finding activities against soldiers committing offences carrying penalty of liberty limitation or deprivation of up to 3 years.

As far as initiatives aiming at raising the level of professionalism are concerned, the educational and training infrastructure was expanded, a number of professional, physical and language trainings was conducted especially for officers who were to take part in peace keeping missions abroad. At least once a year on the grounds of the training centre in the town of Lešť a big exercise event with other kinds of military and uniformed formations was organised. Within the process of integration with their counterparts in other countries, in 2001-2003 the Slovak Military Police organised international courses called CENCOOP, for officers and soldiers representing units from twelve European countries.

In the field of preventive activities undertaken by the Slovak Army, the officers of Military Police initiated a number of preventive programmes addressed most of all to the compulsory military service soldiers. A cyclical scientific conference *Criminal Prevention versus Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic – model 2010* whose first edition took place on 14 May 2002 in The Soldiers' Hall in Trenčín, received positive reception and nationwide recognition. The legacy of the conference was adoption of a new programme for the period 2003-2006 aiming at improving discipline levels and reducing criminal acts conducted by soldiers. Moreover, the assumptions of the programme referred to the following issues: raising efficiency of guard duty in military objects and units, counteracting and fighting terrorism, combating organised crime, reducing and eliminating incidents of alcohol overuse and related hooliganism committed by functionaries of armed forces, protection against passive smoking, combating addiction to drugs and protection of rights and vital interests of soldiers.

Year 2003 saw execution of tasks resulting from NATO and EU accession processes. The real workload for the Military Police fell on the patrol service and preventive activities conducted on the premises of military objects under auspices of the Ministry of Defence.

A year later the Slovak Republic became a full member of the North Atlantic Treaty. At that time Military Police was equipped in state of the

art transport equipment and in individual, bulletproof tactic gear. The military exercises undertaken by the Military Police within peacekeeping and stabilising missions abroad were intensified. A good example of such exercise was SLOVIT 2004, an exercise conducted on the grounds of Lešť training centre with guest appearance of Italian carabinieri. The fundamental aim of this exercise was improvement in interoperability of the Slovak Military Police officers, unification of internal procedures with NATO procedures in complex tactic conditions and establishing contacts with counterparts from other NATO members. Among other events of preventive, educational, cultural or sport character organised by the Slovak Military Police the following are worth mentioning:

- international exhibition of military technology IDEE in Trenčín;
- international air fest days SIAD in Bratislava and on military airfield in Sliači;
- celebration of a national holiday – the Slovak National Uprising and the end of the Second World War;
- providing protection during the NATO summit in Bratislava.

Act no 240 of 10 May 2005 amending the Act on Military Police corrected the way of functioning of this formation and put it under direct supervision of the Slovak Minister of Defence. The establishment of the formation was increased as of 1 July 2005. Despite the fact that establishment is given high classification one may risk a rough calculation based on available and credible sources. According to former Head of Slovak Military Police (currently the top position in the formation is referred to as the Commandant)²², the establishment of Slovak Military Police constitutes 2.5% of all jobs in Slovakian armed forces (13,450 jobs in total) with 97% of vacancies filled. Thus, relying on the information cited above, in the Slovak Military Police there is work for 336 officers and currently (as for February 2016) 325 vacancies are filled (the gender distribution is 15% female and 85% male staff).

Next legal act which changed functioning of the Military Police was Act 346 of 23 June 2005 on National Service of Professional Soldiers in Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic forces and amending certain acts

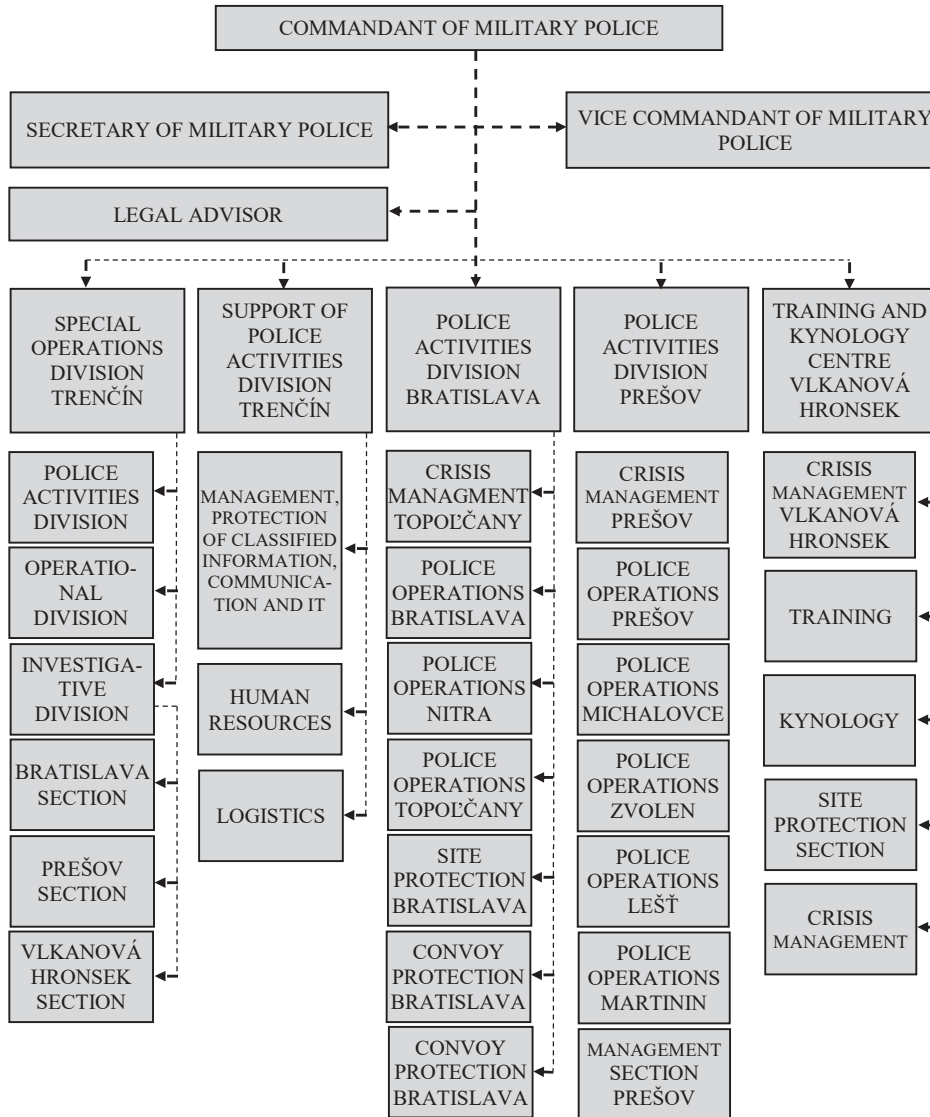
²²Source: interview with professor Libor Gašpierik PhD, (reserve colonel) first head of the reformed Military Police of the Slovak Army (1994-2001) [obtained on 10.02.2016].

as amended²³. This legal act regulated the issue of sending soldiers to conflict regions, established the Military Police badge as well as systematised monetary bonuses for soldiers serving in conditions of imminent threat to life.

Last wave of organisational transformations came in 2014. The organisational units of Military Police were matched to respective local military units which was hoped to improve the level of reactivity, to shorten reaction time to extraordinary occurrences and to reduce costs of exploiting of transport equipment. The cooperation with the Police Corps of the Slovak Republic was tightened. The diagram below presents the most recent organisational structure of the Slovak Military Police.

²³Act 346 of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 23 June 2005 on National Service of Professional Soldiers and on amending certain acts as amended (Coll. of laws 2005, part 148, pp. 3530-3596).

Diagram 2. Organisational structure of Slovak Military Police (as of 30 June 2016).



Source: Own work based on data available on: <http://mp.mil.sk/12198> [access 30.06.2016].

Current catalogue of official tasks of Military Police pursuant to Act no 124 of 5 March 1992 on Military Police and Act no 321 of 23 May 2002 on Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic²⁴, includes:

- supervision over professional discipline and compliance with law in military units, military objects and on exercise fields;
- supervision over correct execution of tasks performed by soldiers for the benefit of the Slovak society;
- conducting investigative activities with respect to crimes committed by professional soldiers, undertaking preventive initiatives;
- reacting to offences against regulations in force;
- searching for persons, possessions, military equipment etc. being a property of the State Treasury;
- activities aiming at protection of military equipment, ammunition, explosives, locations and property belonging to the State Treasury and having a significance for national security of the Republic;
- protection of state secrets and classified information;
- providing security of all road traffic participants during military convoys and transports which take place on public roads;
- providing security during military transports conducted by rail, air and waterways;
- conducting training courses for drivers of military vehicles;
- keeping register of military vehicles and supervision over periodic technical inspection of these vehicles;
- keeping register and statistics indispensable for smooth functioning of the formation;
- providing personal security for the Minister of Defence;
- providing personal security for persons designated by the Minister of Defence;
- execution of tasks commissioned by the Minister of Defence in event of an armed conflict, martial law, state of national emergency or natural disaster in the Slovak Republic;
- protection of national borders within the scope defined by the Minister of Defence;
- protection of buildings and construction sites or installations important for the national security;

²⁴ Act no 321 of the National Council of the Slovak Republic of 23 May 2002 on Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic (Coll. of laws z 2002, part 136, pp. 3247-3254).

- dealing with consequences of natural disasters and preventing activities;
- combating terrorism;
- rescue actions in aircrafts and searching for victims of air accidents and disasters;
- providing personal security to constitutional civil servants during their journey by air;
- providing security to air medical transport;
- providing security to flight navigation services in military transports.

3. Methodology of research

The critical aim of the statutory research²⁵, whose results are (briefly) presented herein, was obtaining assessment of the Slovakian Military Police as viewed by the society. Another aim was to identify the needs and expectations of MP officers whose satisfaction would have considerable impact on efficiency of tasks executed by the formation. The author claims that achievement of the above objectives holds both cognitive and practical merit as it enables to examine the opinion the Slovak citizens on MP and at the same time provides space for implementation of best possible utilitarian solutions for efficiency improvement in the functioning of the Military Police.

The critical aim mentioned above is completed by a number of detailed objectives such as:

- identification of factors impacting social perception of the studied formation;
- determination of the role of Military Police in Slovakian internal security system;
- identification of technical shortcomings which have a negative influence on efficiency of MP officers;
- identification of the weakest functional links whose restructuring will improve efficiency of the formation's activities.

²⁵ The research was conducted by the author of the paper with cooperation from associated professor Libora Gašpírik between October 2015 and May 2016 within statutory research initiative affiliated at State Security Institute at Pomeranian Academy in Słupsk.

The author's main motivation behind undertaking this particular research topic apart from cognitive and practical aspects, was his own professional and scientific interests. Thus, the objective of the research was formulated in such a way so that the obtained results could become beneficial for the decision makers as well as ordinary MP officers.

3.1. Research issues and hypotheses

The essence of conducting the academic research is the drive for knowledge which may help solve existing theoretical and practical cognitive issues. The main research issue which is also the aim of the present empirical activity is a statement that despite fulfilling an important role in the national internal security, Slovak Military Police is a formation in need of organisational and technological reforms. The main issue was completed by the following detailed problems:

Detailed problem 1

- what factors impact social perception of Military Police?

Detailed problem 2

- what role in the Slovak internal security system is played by Military Police?

Detailed problem 3

- which limitations and drawbacks of technical nature influence the efficiency of activities undertaken by MP officers?

Detailed problem 4

- which functional links must be modified to improve efficiency of MP?

With respect to the aforementioned issues the following research hypotheses may be put forward:

Main hypothesis:

[...] Military Police of the Slovak Republic plays an important role in the internal security system of the country but its activities are hindered by organisational and technical drawbacks.

Detailed hypothesis 1

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- Social perception of the Slovak Military Police is influenced by factors correlated with the level of internal security and public order in the country.

Detailed hypothesis 2

- Military Police is one of the pillars of the Slovak system of internal security.

Detailed hypothesis 3

- Shortage of state-of-the-art equipment such as armoured infantry mobility vehicles MRAP (resistant to landmines and improvised munitions) as well as optoelectronic equipment allowing for continuous observations of the activity area is the biggest technical limitation impacting efficiency of tasks performed by the Slovak MP.

Detailed hypothesis 4

- In order to improve efficiency of operations of the Slovak MP the vertical structure of the organisation must be modified with respect to the scope of specialised units of operational technology and observation (Operations Department) and site protection (Site Protection Section).

3.2. Research methods and techniques

While preparing and conducting this scientific research the following methods and techniques were applied: *diagnostic survey*: questionnaires, expert opinion surveys and document analysis. The questionnaire was filled in anonymously by citizens of the Slovak Republic (students, functionaries, soldiers, administrative and local government staff and randomly selected respondents). *The questionnaire* included statistical part and the main part with closed questions²⁶. The respondents were not in direct contact with the pollster. *The expert opinion survey* was conducted as a guided conversation based on a previously prepared scenario. The document analysis included quantitative analysis (with use

²⁶ The questionnaire was divided into two parts and included 9 questions in total. The first contained 3 statistical questions about respondents (sex, age, education) the second part included 6 questions related to subject matter of research, namely social perception of the Slovak Military Police. In case of two questions the respondents could add their own suggestions.

of an analysis sheet) and qualitative analysis (with use of computer software), analysis of the literature on the subject (from domestic and foreign sources); examination of source data (statistics, documents, legal acts in force and internal regulations such as orders, commands, instructions, decisions etc.).

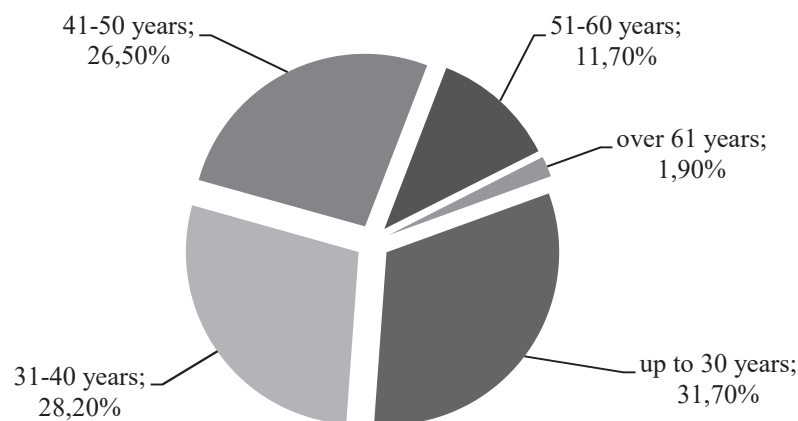
The methods and tools applied in the study did not require pre-testing as they have been successfully used for years in many social sciences (management, security sciences etc.).

With respect to the allowed volume of the paper the authors were only able to present results from the survey conducted within the diagnostic poll. Full research report will be presented in the form of a monograph.

3.3. Research group

The questionnaire was distributed among randomly selected citizens of the Slovak Republic. Total number of respondents was 118 (91 men i.e. 77.1% and 27 women – 22.9%). 107 of all distributed questionnaires were filled in correctly which allowed authors to conduct a reliable analysis of the gathered data. In the statistical part respondents had to tick one of five suggested age groups. The most numerous age category of respondents was below 30 (31.7% respondents). The pie chart below shows distribution of answers with respect to age of the respondents.

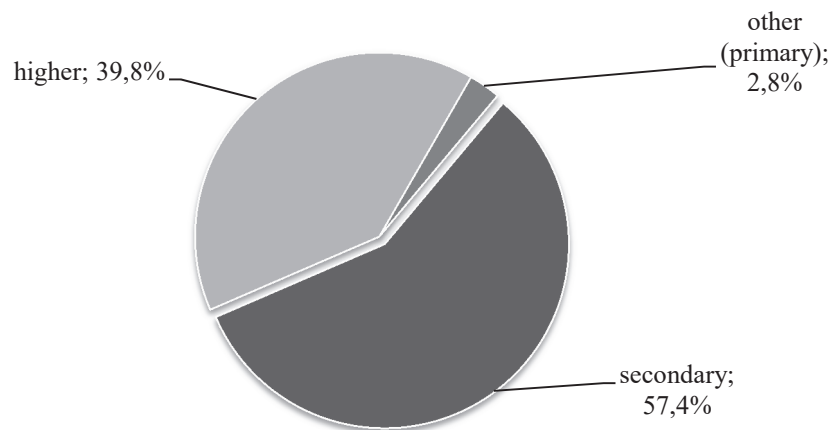
Chart no 1. Age of respondents (%).



Source: Author's own work.

57.4% of respondents were secondary school graduates, 39.8% were holders of university diplomas, 2.8% ticked the box *Other* (i.e. elementary or junior high school education).

Chart no 2. Education of respondents (%).



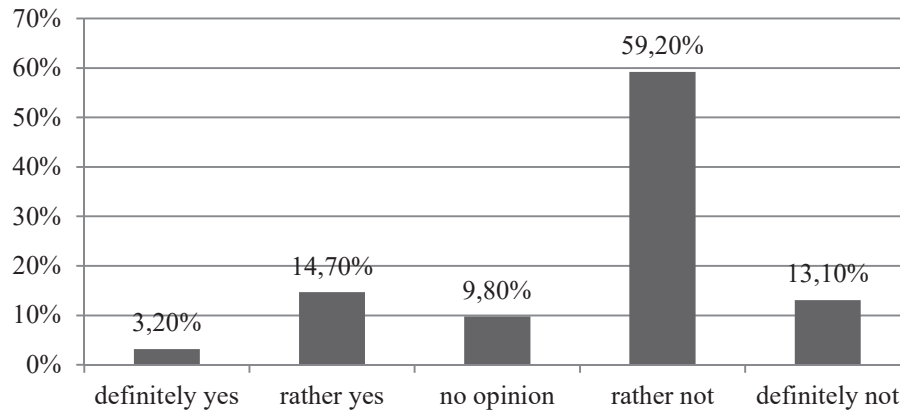
Source: Author's own work.

3.4. Analysis of research results

The main body of the questionnaire which was addressed to members of Slovak society consisted of 6 questions (including altogether 30 possibilities to tick or complete) corresponding to all above research issues and hypotheses.

The first question was connected with the role of the Slovak Military Police in the internal security system of the country.

Chart no 3. Answers provided by respondents to Question 1: Do Military Police of the Slovak armed forces play a leading role in the national system of internal security?

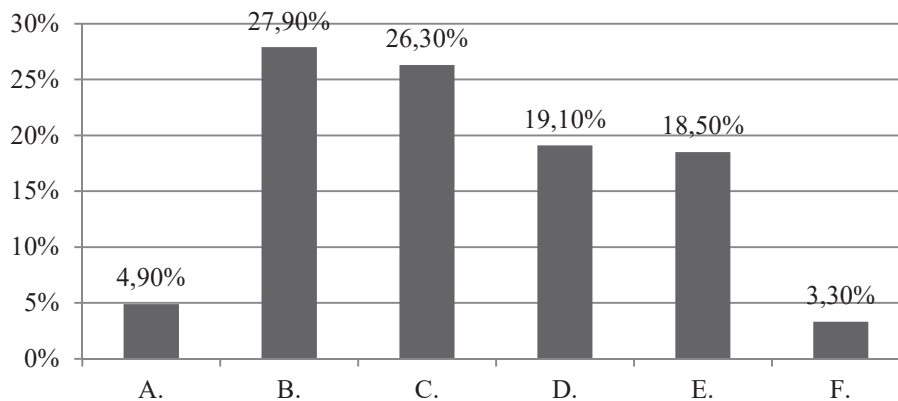


Source: Author's own work.

The chart shows that vast majority of respondents see MP as a minor entity in the national system of internal security. Such opinion may be explained by the formation's lack of activity in the protection of national security and public order which is, to a certain extent, justified by the specificity of this formation whose tasks focus on protection of military property, sites and facilities and upholding discipline in the Slovak armed forces.

In question 2 the respondents were asked to point to factors which influence social perception of Military Police. They were offered six options to choose from.

Chart no 4. Answers provided by respondents to Question 2: What factors impact the social perception of the Military Police of the Slovak armed forces?



- A. *Efficiency of investigative work with respect to offences committed by perpetrators from armed forces.*
- B. *Involvement in preventive actions directed to general public (events, campaigns, programmes).*
- C. *Professionalism in execution of statutory tasks on the territory of Slovakia (protection of military sites and facilities, protection of VIPs, protection of events of political, sport and cultural character).*
- D. *Professionalism in execution of tasks performed outside the territory of Slovakia (police and stabilization missions in the areas of armed conflicts).*
- E. *Level of security and public order in the country.*
- F. *Other factors (please specify).*

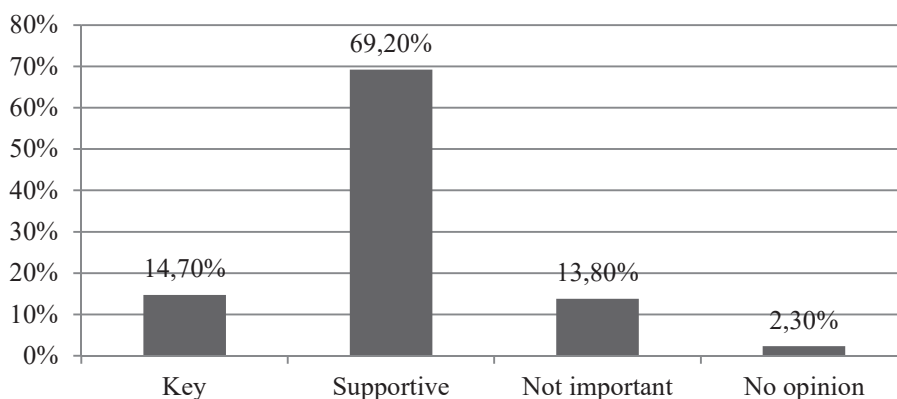
Source: Author's own work.

In light of the answers provided by the respondents to the above question, it should be noticed that there are two factors the respondents chose the most frequently. Involvement of the formation in preventive activities (27.9%) and execution of tasks in the territory of Slovakia (26.3%) are the factors with the most positive impact on the image of Military Police. That is why boost in activity on domestic grounds with respect to security and public order should be put on the top of the formation's agenda. Almost a fifth of respondents thought that activeness of the Slovak MP officers outside the borders of the Republic (19.1%) and level of security and public order (18.5%) are the factors that determine the opinion of citizens about the formation. The respondents could also complete the catalogue of factors with their own suggestions. The respondents proposed for example organising cyclical educational initiatives in cooperation with schools or other educational institutions or

creation of a department responsible for contacts with media. There were also voices that Military Police should be incorporated in the Police Corps of the Slovak Republic because current organisational and legal conditioning hinder the efficiency of the formation.

Question 3 was closely correlated with two previous questions whose aim of was to obtain the opinion of respondents with respect to the role of MP in the national system of internal security.

Chart no 5. Answers provided by respondents to Question 3: What role in the national system of internal security is played by the Military Police of the Slovak armed forces?

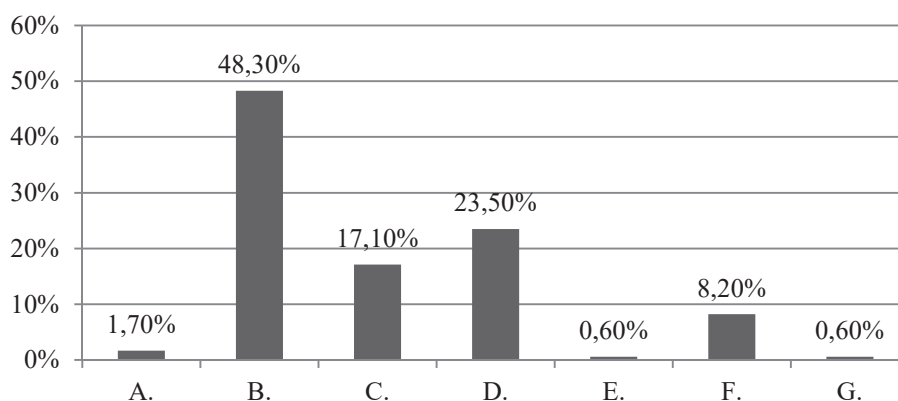


Source: Author's own work.

Vast majority of respondents (69.2%) pointed to auxiliary role of MP with respect to other uniformed formations of internal security system of the country. Only 15% of respondents represented the opinion that MP is the pillar of Slovak operational service of internal security and public order system.

In the fourth question respondents were asked about steps that should be undertaken by the Slovak Military Police to strengthen its position in the internal security system. In this question one of seven options could be selected.

Chart no 6. Answers provided by respondents to Question 4: What activities should be undertaken by the Slovak Military Police in order to strengthen its position in the system of internal security of the country?

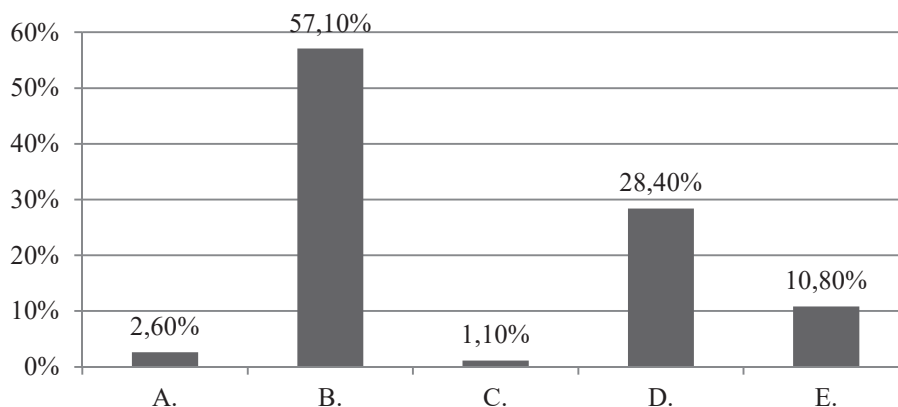


- A. *Improving efficiency of investigative works.*
- B. *Intensification of preventing activities for the benefit of the Slovak society.*
- C. *Extension of operational structures concentrated on fighting organised crime and terrorism.*
- D. *Extension of protection division in order to safeguard the borders of the country in the legally assigned scope.*
- E. *Improving communication with other security formations in the country.*
- F. *Improving the image of the formation and intensification of PR activities.*
- G. *Other activities (please specify).*

As shown in the above chart the main factor which, in the opinion of respondents, may strengthen the position of the Military Police in the Slovak system of internal security, was intensification of efforts with respect to soft prevention (48.3%). The second most popular initiative (23.5%) was extension of protection division aimed at safeguarding the feeling of security of citizens. The third factor which may influence the position of Slovak MP in the national internal security system, according to respondents, was extension of operational structures concentrated on fighting organised crime and terrorism (17.1%). The answers provided by the respondents are a genuine reflection of Slovakian pragmatic approach with respect to the phenomenon of social maladjustment and fear of uncontrolled inflow of war refugees on the EU territory. The Slovak citizens are openly in opposition to the EU-imposed quotas of refugees and immigrants. Nationalistic attitudes in this country are getting stronger year by year and they are also visible in the current policy of the country. In the context of terrorism, Slovak services quickly react to any

information about potential threats or suspicious persons remaining in the territory of the Slovak Republic. And such threats do exist if one takes into account a few months stay of Salah Abdeslam - an alleged coordinator of the terrorist attack in Paris on 13 November 2015, in the city of Nitra (he stayed there between March and May 2015). Thanks to the information obtained by the Slovak Intelligence Agency, the French and Belgian special services could undertake steps towards identification and detention of persons possibly connected with the above mentioned terrorist attack.

In Question 5 the respondents were asked about technical limitations which interrupt execution of tasks performed by Military Police officers.



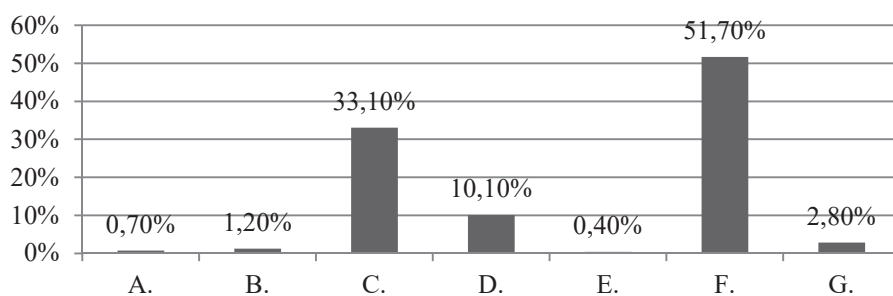
- A. *Deficiencies in modern equipment and in individual protective gear (bullet-proof vests, kevlar helmets etc.).*
- B. *Lack of state-of-the-art wheeled, armoured infantry means of transport (e.g. MRAP vehicles) which fulfil standards for conducting operations in war conditions.*
- C. *Lack of modern communication technologies (including satellite communication).*
- D. *Lack of unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) remotely controlled or performing autonomous flights for observation and recognition of the zone of operations.*
- E. *Lack of modern simulators for MP officers training process.*

The answer most frequently provided by the respondents (57.1%) referred to lack of state-of-the-art wheeled, armoured infantry means of transport necessary to perform tasks in the war zone. Currently, the Slovak MP forces use armoured vehicles called Aligator²⁷, whose

²⁷ Floating armoured vessel manufactured by a Slovakian firm Kerametal. Dimensions: length 447 cm, width 232 cm, height 238 cm; weight: 6000 kg, maximum weight 6700 kg; engine 7143 cm³, horsepower 141 kW; maximum speed on hard surface road 120

construction is not adapted to protect against improvised explosive devices. The experts interviewed in the research (the record of expert interviews will be presented in a separate paper) expect that within next three years the Slovak MP shall purchase a couple of armoured Rosomak vehicles (out of 31 ordered units) from the Polish Armaments Group. Second drawback of technical nature in view of 28.4% of respondents was not sufficient number of drones which are commonly used by police formations in other countries to protect military bases located in war zones e.g. in Afghanistan. Such equipment allows for permanent surveillance of areas directly adjacent to protected military facilities regardless of weather conditions and time of day. Third most serious deficiency according to respondents(10.8%) was lack of modern simulators necessary in the process of training of MP officers which considerably impact efficiency of the studied formation. It should be emphasized that for a couple of years Slovak services and uniformed formations has been modernizing its training and didactic base and part of these investments is subsidized from the EU funds e.g. from EU Internal Security Fund within Horizon 2020.

In Question 6 the respondents were asked to point to specialised cells within Military Police which are in need of modifications in order to improve efficiency of the formation.



- A. Logistic cell.
- B. Investigative cell.
- C. Operational and exploratory cells.
- D. Physical protection of persons and facilities cells.
- E. Training and kynology cells.
- F. Prevention and education cells.
- G. No need to change anything.

km/h, floating speed 5 km/h; fuel consumption 20 l/100 km, in water 14 litres per hour; ballistic protection against antitank missiles cal. 7,62 mm x 39 shot from 30 m.

Answers to Question 6 show that the general public expects Military Police to undertake extensive prevention programmes and initiatives of educational character (51.7% replies of respondents). Spreading awareness about potential threats to internal security of the country is also a priority task for MP in view of the participants of the survey. One third of respondents noticed that operational activities should be intensified, what obviously reflects social fears concerning the possibility of a terrorist attack in Slovakia.

In a nutshell, the obtained questionnaire results seem to confirm the main hypothesis as the respondents clearly pointed to technical and organisational limitations which impact efficiency of activities undertaken by the Slovak MP officers. Respondents presented a viewpoint that the Slovak Military Police does not constitute a key element in the national internal security system and its role is rather of subsidiary character.

As far as detailed hypotheses are concerned, they are only confirmed to a certain extent. The first detailed hypothesis which assumed that social perception of the Slovak Military Police is influenced by factors correlated with the level of internal security and public order did not get credibility. For the Slovak general public the main value-adding factors for Military Police are preventive initiatives, educational programmes and high quality service with respect to protective duties (e.g. protection of military sites and facilities, personal protection of very important persons, protection of political, cultural as well as sport and leisure events).

Second detailed hypothesis which associated Military Police with one of the main pillars of the national internal security system also did not find reflection in the answers provided by respondents in the present survey. The formation is perceived rather as an auxiliary entity in the whole sector of uniformed services responsible for provision of security and public order.

Third detailed hypothesis referred to deficiencies in armaments and equipment. This hypothesis was confirmed as a large proportion of respondents pointed to insufficient numbers of modern armoured means of transport (e.g. MRAP vehicles) or unmanned aerial vehicles (drones). It should be emphasized that currently there are steps underway to repair the shortages because in modern times a military police unit may not function in war zones without this kind of equipment.

Detailed hypothesis number 4 which stressed the need to modify organisational structure of the Slovak MP was only confirmed up to a certain point. The respondents pointed to the necessity of implementation of changes in the operational and exploratory units but as regards the Site Protection Section, its functioning was positively verified. More than a half of respondents to the survey thought that the units in most urgent need of modifications were those responsible for prevention and education (see the position of respondents with respect to detailed hypothesis number 1).

Conclusions

In the last two years the Slovak Military Police has come through a wave of thorough reorganisation which entailed implementation of standards of higher guarantee of security levels in the military sites and facilities protected by the formation. For this purpose the existing horizontal structure of managing organisational units was transformed into vertical structure which is hoped to ensure more efficient and more flexible management of the formation. The deployment of MP links was adjusted to locations of particular military units which proved to be more efficient and economical in terms of execution of MP tasks in these units.

The changes which were introduced into the organisational structure of the formation were closely correlated with long-term modernisation programme of armed forces of the Slovak Republic which are due to be completed by 2024. In order for the changes to be successful a parallel process of modernisation of MP is currently under way. Within this process the Slovak Military Police received modern equipment, armament and means of transport as well as latest IT technologies, measures of personal and property protection, communication technologies and other equipment necessary in modern systems of management of uniformed formations. Only holistic approach guarantees sustainable development of the Military Police service whose officers face new challenges related to changing times.

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