



EUROMIL aisbl (*European Organisation of Military Associations and Trade Unions*)

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EUROMIL Position on Recruitment & Retention¹

About EUROMIL

The European Organisation of Military Associations (EUROMIL) is an umbrella organisation composed of 34 military associations and trade unions from 22 countries, representing 500.000 soldiers and their families. It is the main Europe-wide forum for cooperation among professional military associations on issues of common concern. EUROMIL strives to secure and advance the human rights, fundamental freedoms and socio-professional interests of military personnel of all ranks in Europe and promotes the concept of "Citizen in Uniform". As such, a soldier is entitled to the same rights and obligations as any other citizen. EUROMIL particularly calls for recognition of the right of servicemen and -women to form and join trade unions and independent associations and for their inclusion in a regular social dialogue by the authorities.

Background

Several trends have influenced the recruitment of personnel of the European armed forces during the last years.

Firstly, during the last decades, European armed forces were steadily downsized. In the context of the so-called peace-dividend which was expected after the end of the Cold War, European governments reduced their defence budgets which resulted in less and less personnel serving in the armed forces. However, European armed forces are still needed and perform an ever-widening range of tasks, many of them outside of the European continent. Hence, more personnel is needed.

Secondly, European societies as a whole are demographically changing: the number of your students graduating from school and looking for a job is decreasing, leading to a more and more competitive labour market. The armed forces are only one out of several employment options for young people.

Thirdly, modern technologies, digitalisation and new threats such as hybrid and cyber challenges are changing the very nature of the soldiers' job. Consequently, the skills and talents recruiters are looking for are changing as well.

Recruitment

Against this background, EUROMIL has a concrete position on recruitment efforts of the armed forces.

¹ As approved by the Presidium Meeting in Bucharest, Romania on 12 April 2019.



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With regards to *short term careers*, EUROMIL wants to highlight the following items, which should be considered as minimum standards:

- Short term military careers must entail the option of receiving support from the authorities to integrate in civilian labour market after the military career. Actual measures should be in place to implement existing legal provisions.
- Such measures could entail training and preparation courses for outgoing military personnel.
- Armed Forces should establish connections with employers on the labour market, in the public or private sector, to know which kind of jobs and positions workers should be trained for.
- Service terms for personnel joining and remaining in the armed forces should be transparent, subjective (where possible) and reasonably necessary. Cognizance should be taken by States to the obligations which come with demobilisation of personnel, and their duty to ensure that former / ex- military personnel reintegrates to society and the workforce in as seamless a manner as possible.
- Commitments about the duration of the contract and the support after the end of the contract should be clear from the start.

With regards to *life-time careers*, EUROMIL wants to highlight the following items, which should be considered as minimum standards:

- As armed forces need both, young, operational personnel as well as people with experience in the military for managerial positions, a portion of the military personnel should remain in the armed forces for their entire career.
- Career paths for life-long serving personnel should be attractive in terms of salaries and promotions, taking into account the professional experience of the years of service.
- attractiveness of career paths (in terms of salary and promotions).
- The career plans should take the general rise of the pension age all over Europe in account (see also EUROMIL Position on Military Pensions).

Retention

Closely linked to recruitment is of course the issue of retention. In order to retain the recruited personnel in the armed forces, they must be an "attractive" employer. Here, EUROMIL advocates to:

- Implement the necessary steps to achieve a satisfying work-life balance whenever possible.
- Take diversity and inclusion seriously and implement concrete measures to enhance and promote a diverse and inclusive working environment,
- Offer lifelong-learning and mental fitness opportunities to personnel.
- Offer attractive pension systems (see also EUROMIL Position on Military Pensions).