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The Importance of the Zrínyi 2026 Defence and Military Development Program

Význam programu rozvoje maďarských ozbrojených sil Zrínyi 2026

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Abstract:

The present article expresses the importance of the Zrínyi 2026 Hungarian government medium-term modernization program and its impact on military security in the region. Migration crisis, hybrid warfare treatments and withdrawal from the INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces) treaty were the main reasons for the enactment of the Zrínyi 2026 program. Comparing the Polish and Hungarian Defence Forces, the article analyses the significance of military security in Central Europe. The analysis explores organizational and legal changes and the purchase of armaments. The Hungarian program's objectives are to change not only the equipment but also the structure and organization. The Commander of the Hungarian Defence Forces was separated from the Ministry of Defence. The Hungarian program has declared the increase in the number of reserve forces to twenty thousand and the active duty personnel to roughly thirty-eight thousand.

Abstrakt:

Článek pojednává o významu střednědobého modernizačního programu maďarské vlády Zrínyi 2026 a jeho dopadu na vojenskou bezpečnost v regionu. Hlavními důvody pro přijetí programu Zrínyi 2026 jsou migrační krize, hrozby hybridní války a odstoupení od smlouvy INF (Smlouva o likvidaci raket středního a kratšího doletu). Na základě srovnání polských a maďarských obranných sil analyzuje článek význam vojenské bezpečnosti ve střední Evropě. Analýza se zabývá organizačními a právní změnami a nákupem výzbroje. Cílem maďarského programu je změnit nejen vybavení, ale i strukturu a organizaci. Velitel maďarských obranných sil byl oddělen od ministerstva obrany. Maďarský program deklaruje zvýšení počtu rezervních sil na dvacet tisíc a počtu personálu v aktivní službě přibližně na třicet osm tisíc.

Keywords:

Defence Forces; Hungary; Poland; Security; Transformation; Zrínyi 2026.

Klíčová slova:

Obranné síly; Maďarsko; Polsko; bezpečnost; transformace; Zrínyi 2026.

INTRODUCTION

The economic crisis and the transition of national economies from centrally planned to the free-market economies have caused a medium-term collapse and crisis of the military system in the Central European countries. The number of military personnel was decreased drastically and the military security role in the security policy was underestimated. Due to the Ukrainian-Russian conflict and the migration crisis the politicians of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary have realized that their countries should increase their military capabilities. From the Hungarian side, the Zrínyi 2026 Hungarian government medium-term military modernization program tried to seek an answer to the above-mentioned situation.

The modernization of the armed forces in most of the Central European countries started earlier than in Hungary, see, for example, the Polish modernization program for 2013-2022. There is a difference between the two programs in their nature. The Hungarian program's objectives are to change not only the equipment but also the structure and organization of the armed forces to increase their capabilities. In order to demonstrate the importance of the Hungarian program, the study will compare the changes in these two countries and their role for the meaning of military security.

1 REASONS FOR STARTING THE MODERNIZATION PROGRAM

In the period after 2007, the economic crisis led to a decreased importance of military security in the world. The European countries - following the Russian-Georgian war, the civil wars in the Middle-East and in eastern Ukraine - realized that they could prevent an external aggression and NATO would not help them if they did not start to develop their military forces and play a bigger role by increasing their defence budgets. The first step was the Wales Summit in 2014 when the NATO countries declared to increase their military expenditures to 2% GDP.¹ The Central European countries had to consider further military measures.

For Hungary, the migration crisis and the situation in Ukraine – described as a hybrid warfare treatment - were the main reasons to launch the Zrínyi 2026 program. The crisis which was caused by a huge number of migrants trying to enter Europe showed that the Hungarian Police forces² were unable to handle the situation and maintain the security. By the novelization of the armed forces' law, the Hungarian Government broadened the competences of the armed forces and assigned them the tasks of defending the border

1 NATO. *Summit Guide*. (On line). Brussels 2018. p. 310. Access date 09.04.2019. Available at https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_07/20180718_180711-summit-guide-brussels.pdf

2 In 2008, the Border Guard as a separate service was dissolved and its competences were handed over to the Police.

in the event that the forces and means of security services are inadequate to maintain security and public order.

The biggest strike for Europe was the decision of US President Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, that the United States will suspend its obligations under the INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces) Treaty and the formal declaration of withdrawal from the treaty³ as well. The answer of the Russian Federation was the same which could mean a present-day arms race in the 21st century. The meaning of this decision will change the attitude of European countries to security. Most of the security researches agree that this treaty was the biggest step to end the Cold War. It should be assumed that the withdrawal from this treaty will change the attitude of military security and long-term armament in Europe.

2 THE POLISH AND HUNGARIAN ARMED FORCES BEFORE 2016

The Hungarian Armed Forces is a small army. Because of the lack of sea border Hungary has only two types of forces: land forces and air forces. The integration of the two happened on 1 January, 2007 when the Hungarian Defence Forces Joint Force Command was established. Until 2016, the biggest technical changes in Hungarian Defence Forces occurred by phasing out the Mig-29 aircrafts from service and their replacement with JAS Gripen fighter aircrafts. There were some minor changes in the military equipment, yet not as important as the aircraft change in the air forces. The Hungarian Defence Forces military equipment was procured in the years of 1970-1990, such as the Mi-24 and Mi-17 helicopters which needed renovation or replacement. The land forces are not capable to serve in international operations on a long scale, that is why only the contingents serving in foreign military operations had newer equipment whereas the homeland army kept using the Soviet and Russian technology. Even the aircraft capability was not able to serve the needs of the Hungarian army. In this case the An-26 transport aircraft was unable to transport the Hungarian contingents to Iraq and Afghanistan. Between 1991 and 2015, we could observe structural and organizational changes. The biggest change was the establishment of the Hungarian Defence Forces Joint Forces Command in Székesfehérvár. There were many programs and projects aimed at increasing the capabilities of military measures but most of the governments between 1991-2015 decided to cut the costs of upkeeping the armed forces. Most of the projects were not completed, the objectives were not sensible or had little significance for the military security of Hungary.

After the political changes, Poland was in the same situation as Hungary. They possessed a huge army and a lot of useless armament. The Polish Defence Forces (PDF) were in a better condition than the Hungarian Defence Forces, because Poland, as a central country between Germany and Russia, always had their military security in a central

³ Arms Control Association. (On line). (2012). Access date 09.04.2019. Available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/INFtreaty>

place. After 2001 - the terrorist attacks against the WTC and Washington D.C. - Poland also realized that they should stop decreasing the military capabilities and that their armament was old and overused. In 2001-2013, they focused on buying the F-16 assault aircraft, production of Rosomak transport vehicles (AMV XC-360P from 2003) and SPIKE anti-tank rockets. The biggest success was the production of different types of Rosomak. It should be declared that the Polish Defence Forces have more possibilities than Hungarian Defence Forces because of the size of their country, which results in economic technical differences between the two countries. The numbers show that the participation of Polish contingents in Afghanistan and Iraq was much higher than of Hungarian ones. Between 2003-2008, more than 9000 soldiers served in the Polish contingent in Iraq. As a comparison, the Hungarian contingents had around 150 soldiers between 2004-2006.⁴

The biggest structural changes happened in 2013 when the command structure of the Polish Defence Forces changed. Under the new command structure, two commands were established: the Armed Forces General Command and the Armed Forces Operational Command. That means that the General Staff's competencies were decreased. The Operational Command's tasks were commanding the Polish contingents abroad and planning the use of armed forces in case of military and non-military crisis situations. The Armed Forces General Command's tasks were preparing and planning the Polish Defence Forces to defend the country and to ensure the security of citizens and support for international peace as a part of allied commitments.

In both, Hungary and Poland the command structures have been changed. Every change in the army structures means a long-term procedure to prepare the headquarters and make a new command structure. For defence forces it is the most important that each commander should know their competencies and tasks in case of war. That is why every change in command structure is decreasing the military readiness. It is estimated that after every change in the command structure the war readiness is achieved 4-5 years later.

3 LEGAL AND STRUCTURAL CHANGES FROM 2016

Analysing the Hungarian Law of Defence Forces, the biggest changes were made in 1990, when the democratic control of armed forces became the basis of defence forces. The new law from 1993 completely upset the socialist tradition and the 1973 law. Thanks to this amendment, the civil and democratic control of the armed forces were achieved. The new changes took place in 2004, when Hungary became a member of the European Union and we had to remember that in 1999 our country joined the NATO Alliance. In 2011, a new task was assigned among the defence forces competencies, namely, reaction in crisis situations (it had been a task of the army, but it was extended). In order to stop the influx of migrants and refugees into the country in 2015-2017, the amended Act

⁴ Földesi, F., Kiss, Z., Isaszegi, J. *Quarter of the Hungarian Army (A Magyar Honvédség negyedszázada)*. Budapest 2016. p. 194.

of Armed Forces extended the competencies of army to maintain the public order and defend the state border. The amendment has expanded the importance of internal functions - preserving national security. Significant structural and legal changes were made in this period. For instance, to support the police in cases when their forces and resources are insufficient, the Hungarian Defence Forces can support them - this was experienced at the borders of Hungary during the migration crisis.

In 2018, the Hungarian Defence Minister PhD Tibor Benkő - in 2010-2018, the Chief of General Staff of the Hungarian Defence Forces - submitted the proposal to change the command structure of the Hungarian Defence Forces. The changes came into force from the beginning of 2019 by the amendment of the Act of Armed Forces. The objective of the change was to integrate the command structure. A new position was established: the Commander of the Hungarian Defence Forces. By this alteration, the positions of the Chief of the General Staff and the Commander of Joint Forces became integrated. This means one-arm command structure in the military and a significant separation of this function from the Ministry of National Defence. Thanks to these legislative changes in the structure, the Ministry will manage the Hungarian Defence Forces and the Commander will command the defence forces. The Hungarian Defence Forces Command was established also in Székesfehérvár, where the Command of Joint Task Forces was renamed. The objective of these changes was also to relocate all the strategic headquarters from Budapest.⁵

Comparing to the Hungarian military command, the structure of the Polish one is more complicated. After the amendment (in December 2018) to the Law of Polish Defence Forces, the role of Chief of General Staff was strengthened and its competencies were extended. The Chief of General Staff became the first soldier with the Armed Forces General Command and the Armed Forces Operational Command subordinated to him. In case of war, the Chief of General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces will be the Commander until the Supreme Commander of the Polish Armed Forces will be nominated. According to the Defence Minister, Mr. Mariusz Błaszczak, the changes introduced in 2018 eliminated the competence chaos and established a one-man responsibility for the command.⁶ In 2016, the establishment of Territorial Defence Forces in Poland created the fifth military branch of the Polish Defence Forces. The aim of the new type of forces is to reach the size of fifty-three thousand personnel in 2021. The Territorial Defence Forces should cooperate with the operational forces and support the non-military system in crisis management. This force is under the governance of the Ministry of Defence and subordinated to the Commander of Territorial Defence Forces. It is planned that the Territorial Defence Forces will be subordinated to Voivodes - governmental representatives at the governor administration level.

⁵ Wolters Kluwer. *Hungarian Defence Forces and Measures Taken During the Crisis States*. (On line). 2011. CXIII. National Defence Act. §46-47. Access date 17.12.2018. Available at <https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1100113.TV>

⁶ Portalgov.pl. *MoD*. (On line). 2019. Access date 19.04.2019. Available at <https://www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa/system-dowodzenia-w-wojsku-polskim-musi-byc-przejrzysty>

The Hungarian government, in order to support the participation in reserve services, has created a Territorial Defence Reserve System, similar to the Polish one. In October 2018, the number of reservists reached eight thousand.⁷ The plans are to increase the number of reservists to twenty thousand. From 1 January, 2017, the organizational framework of 197 district companies was established. „*In the Volunteer Territorial Defence Reserve - which is the third element of the reserve system, besides the systems of Volunteer Defence Reserve and Volunteer Operational Reserve - training for the applicants is provided in the training companies, and a sports company has also been set up to support sporting activities.*”⁸

4 THE MILITARY POTENTIAL OF HUNGARY AND POLAND

After the military policy changes the Hungarian government has been increasing the number of service personnel in defence forces. I have to emphasize that there is a difference between the legal and the real numbers of personnel. The Table 1 below describes the legal numbers resulting from two decisions of the Hungarian National Assembly.

Table 1: Anticipated composition of the Hungarian Defence Forces based on the Decisions of the National Assembly from 2013 and project from 2018

Service positions	Numbers by the Decision from 2013	Project of the new Decision from 2018	Percentage of all official positions in the Armed Forces
Officers	5690	6600	-
Non-commissioned officers (NCO)	8845	10200	At most 33% of all
Enlisted personnel	7895	13200	At most 30% of all
Cadets	500	800	-
NCO cadets	100	250	-
Civil personnel	6670	6600	At most 25% of all
All	29700	37650	

Based on: 35/2013 Decision of the National Assembly of 16 May, 2013 on the numbers and composition of the Hungarian Defence Forces, <https://mkogy.jogtar.hu> and the project, <http://www.parlament.hu/irom41/02163/02163.pdf> access date 18. 04. 2019

⁷ Zoltán, H. *The new Territorial Defence Regiment has been established. (Megalakult az új területvédelmi ezred).* (On line). 2018. Access date 19.04.2019. Available at <http://www.kormanyhivatal.hu/hu/baranya/hirek/megalakult-az-uj-teruletvedelmi-ezred>

⁸ Végh, F. *The Hungarian Armed Forces 1989-2017. (A Magyar Honvédség 1989-2017),* (edit.) J. F. Holló, J. Isaszegi, L. Négyesi, *A Magyar Honvédség 170 éve*, Wyd. Zrínyi, Budapest 2018, ISBN 978-963-327-758-4, p. 337.

Table 1 demonstrates that the legal number of serving personnel has been increased by eight thousand without changing the number of civil personnel. Of course, this number is the legal number established in legislative decisions but the real numerical status is lower. Hungary's population is around 9.7 million citizens. In case of war, around 2.2 million people shall serve in compulsory military service. In 2018, the age for compulsory military service was increased to 50-year old people.⁹ Analysing the legal numbers of serving personnel by adding the planned number of reservists (twenty thousand), the defence forces will reach about fifty-seven thousand that would be 0.6% of the citizens of the country.

In Poland the numbers are more complicated. As far as the statistics are concerned, the numbers are as follows: around twenty thousand officers, around forty thousand non-commissioned officers, forty thousand enlisted personnel. In 2018, the personnel of the Polish Armed Forces with the Territorial Defence Forces totalled around one hundred and twenty thousand. According to the plans of the Polish Ministry of Defence, the number of military personnel should reach one hundred and fifty thousand by 2025. Poland has about thirty-eight million inhabitants, which means that 0.3% of the citizens was serving in the armed forces in 2018 and in 2025 the rate will increase to 0.4%.

Comparing the two planned numbers of military personnel, the Hungarian Defence Forces with the number of reservists will reach 0.6%. That is 0.2% more than in the plans of the Polish Defence Forces. It means that when the plans are reached, Hungary will be statistically more militarized country than Poland.

The military potential is very difficult to define. For presenting it, military expenditures are one of the most reliable data. At the Wales Summit it was declared and at the Warsaw Summit in 2016 it was confirmed that NATO member countries should allocate 2% of their GDP on military expenditures. Poland has already reached it but Hungary is still below this figure. After the political reorientation in 2016, the military budget in Hungary started to increase drastically. According to governmental sources, in 2018, the Hungarian military budget has reached 1.4% GDP,¹⁰ but by the NATO statistics it is just 1.15% GDP.¹¹ The Hungarian Ministry of Defence declared that Hungary can reach 2% GDP military expenditures by 2024. Before the parliamentary elections in 2016, the government planned to reach this figure only in 2026. Raising the defence expenditures will be a challenge for the national economy but according the statement of the Defence Minister and the economic growth figures, the 2% can be achieved in 2024-2026.

As the chart below shows, most NATO countries are below 2% and sometimes even under 1% GDP military spend. Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary's military budgets are around 1% of their GDP which means that these countries can expect huge changes if they want to develop their military potential. President Trump declared many

⁹ Data is from the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. (On line). 2011. Access date 19.04.2019. Available at http://www.ksh.hu/nepszamlalas/tablak_demografia

¹⁰ *Figyelő 2019/16*. Reportage with the Defence Minister. 2019. p. 12.

¹¹ NATO. *The Secretary General's Annual Report 2018*. (On line). 2019. p. 126. Access date 19.04.2019. Available at https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_publications/20190315_sgar2018-en.pdf

times that the USA would not defend those countries which did not invest in the military capabilities according the Alliance's needs. This year, it will show how the Alliance members will deal with this challenge and if their national economies are ready to increase their defence expenditures.

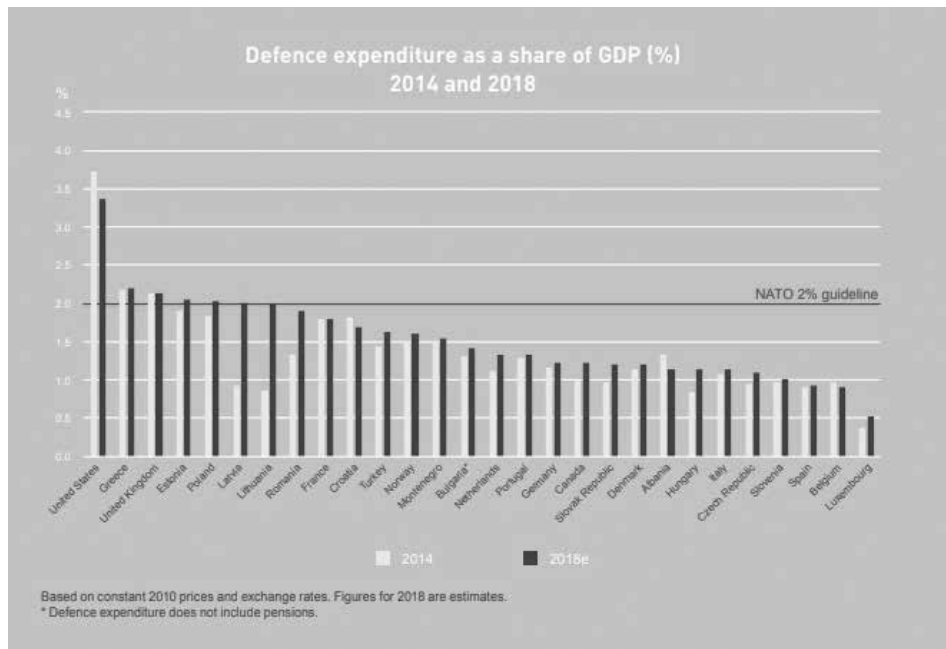


Figure 1: Defence expenditure as a share of GDP (%) 2014 and 2018

Source: NATO The Secretary General's Annual Report 2018

5 MILITARY SECURITY MEASURES IN CENTRAL EUROPE

According to Barry Buzan, military threats can affect all the elements of the state.¹² It follows from this that the basic objective of a state is to be capable of defending its inhabitants in the event of a military aggression. After the Cold War, the importance of military security was decreased and most of the countries which became members of the Alliance felt no threat from another countries. They underestimated the meaning of this kind of security. The level and objectives of military threats take on different level of impact. The fact that countries involve their armed forces puts this category to a special level, which has a huge impact on state security just when the military threat is being realized. „*Military actions not only strike at the very essence of the state's basic protective functions but also threaten damage deep down through the layer of social and individual*

¹² Barry Buzan. *People, States and Fear*. Wheatsheaf Books LTD. 1983. p. 75. ISBN 0-7108-0101-7.

*interest which underline and are more permanent than the state's superstructures.*¹³ It must be underlined that every sector has an impact on each other but the consequences of losing military security are more drastic, which can cause death of a huge number of citizens. The military security is the highest priority in the national security policy. Without it, the country could lose its sovereignty and independence.

Military security has an important meaning in Central Europe because of the numbers of historical conflicts in the region. The wars in the Balkans at the end of the 20th century showed that Europe cannot avoid wars in the continent. However, the EU membership of countries decreased the possibility of a military conflict in Europe, but conflicts of national, ethnical or religious nature are not avoided for sure. The southern border of Hungary will always be one of the most labile and the country should never allow such situations as happened at the end of the 20th century. For Hungary and Poland, the Ukrainian civil war and crisis are among of the factors, which showed the governments that military measures are important for the countries. Hungary is a small country with limited capabilities but as the example of Switzerland shows, even a neutral country cannot be neutral in a military conflict when it does not have military forces to deter the enemy. Because of their geopolitical location, Poland and Hungary will never be neutral countries and the military measure is important to secure the countries' integrity and sovereignty.

According to Eric Herring, within the framework of the military security agenda the means can be divided into non-military means and military means that may have military objectives or non-military objectives. In order to present this theory, the table below was added to the article:

Table 2: Military security agenda

Military means, military objectives for instance: military aggression to occupy the neighbouring country	Military means, non-military objectives for instance: use of defence forces to react to a crisis like flood
Non-military means, military objectives for instance: economic sanctions to weaken the military potential	Non-military means, non-military objectives for instance: economic sanctions to enforce human rights

Source: Péter Márton, István Balogh, Péter Rada. Biztonsági tanulmányok Új fogalmi keretek és tanulságok a visegrádi országok számára, Antall József Tudásközpont. Budapest 2015. p. 188. ISBN 978-615-80092-9-4.

As far as the recent military security of Hungary and Poland is concerned, the possible threat of military aggression with military objectives is very low. However, as the Yugoslavian wars and the Ukrainian civil war demonstrated, military conflicts can appear

¹³ Ibidem.

near the border. The escalation of conflicts in other countries can cause escalation as it happened at the beginning of World War I in 1914. Nowadays, most of the elements forming the military security are non-military means but might possess military and non-military objectives. The military strategies declare that the other states are not enemies of Poland or Hungary. However, they indicate that the Russian policy could become a challenge for military security in the region. The possibility of a military crisis in Central Europe is small but should not be excluded completely.

The V4 countries, in order to demonstrate their power, have established the Visegrád EU Battle Group led by Poland. It was on standby from 1 January to 30 June 2016.¹⁴ The members included not only the V4 countries' soldiers but also a small group from the Ukrainian Defence Forces. The main combat forces were Polish ones, logistics forces, a helicopter unit, an electronic warfare team and a medical unit were made up of the Czech contingent, a combat engineer squad and a CIMIC unit were from Hungary and units for protection against weapons of ABC were Slovak. This battle group is one of the examples of military cooperation in the area by the V4 countries. The EU battle group is planned to be on duty/standby from 1 July to 31 December this year (2019). It must be underlined that it has never been used up to now.

6 ZRÍNYI 2026 MEDIUM-TERM MODERNIZATION PROGRAM

The program was named after Miklós Zrínyi, a military leader, a poet and a statesman from the 17th century. He was a member of a Hungarian-Croatian noble family. His great-grandfather was the heroic defender of Szigetvár in 1566. Miklós Zrínyi fought in Croatia against the Ottoman Empire's army, and thanks to his skills the Hungarian-Habsburg army stopped the Turkish expansion in 1664. Honouring his military skills, his name was borne by the Military University in Budapest between 2000-2012 (and before that also by the Military College).

The program was adopted in 2016, and its main objective was to increase the Hungarian Defence Forces capabilities and establish a significant force in the region. In order to reach this main objective, a lot of goals were created. The Hungarian politicians discovered that without their domestically-produced technologies in the long term, Hungary is unable to grant the needs of the army. It can help not only to increase the national economy but also to decrease the time of supporting the armed forces. Domestic production may be more expensive than producing in a country with better capabilities and better experienced and qualified workers, but this also means capital emigration from the country. This goal has been introduced from the beginning of the program. First, the well-known Ikarus factories started the production of buses for the defence forces. However, the factory was bankrupted after a few years of working. The opening

¹⁴ Defence policy. *Visegrad EU Battlegroup Has Completed Duty.* (Wyszehradzka Grupa Bojowa UE zakończyła dyżur). (On line). (2017). Access date 18.03.2018. Available at <https://www.defence24.pl/wyszehradzka-grupa-bojowa-ue-zakonczyła-dyżur>

of a new factory in Kiskunfélegyháza seems to be another successful step to revive the Hungarian military industry. This factory will produce small arms under Czech licenses, such as the CZ Scorpion EVO 3 submachine-gun, CZ P-09 pistol and CZ Bren 2 assault rifle. The real production will be started in the second half of 2019 but the assembling of previously produced parts has already been started there.¹⁵ This cooperation started in 2018 and the production will be profitable for our country. After testing the firearms, the Hungarian military experts and personnel have classified these weapons as good quality armament.

Other goals have been described in detail in earlier sections of the article, that is why they will be only mentioned. Because of the launch of weapons race all over the world, the government has decided to increase the number of reservists to twenty thousand and the active duty personnel to roughly thirty-eight thousand. In order to reach this goal, the government started to create a new career model for soldiers not only by increasing their salary. The barracks and workplaces were renewed, the government provided extensive aids for soldiers. Additionally, the government started the recruitment on a huge scale in the country. The most important goal is to reach 2% GDP military expenditures by 2024. The program includes the modernization of the whole defence forces, not only the equipment but the uniforms have already been changed and there are plans to equip the soldiers with modern digital means. The goals also include the modernization of such military technical systems like radars, EW systems and CIS systems. The cyber defence is also emphasized in the program, but there is no exact information on the command structure and government plans. After the realization of these goals, the Hungarian Defence Forces should possess 21st century up-to-date capabilities.

The first step to increase the Hungarian Defence Forces capabilities was the purchase of two Airbus A319 airplanes to replace the old and overused An-26. During the war in Afghanistan and Iraq, the An-26 aircraft was not capable of transporting the Hungarian contingent directly, it had to stop in Turkey and subsequently other countries' air forces transported our soldiers to those missions. That is why the purchase of new transport planes was an inevitable task for the new modernization program. A small plane was also purchased, namely a Dassault Falcon 7X, which is used for diplomatic missions. The use of military air transporters by politicians and diplomatic groups is also a means of military security. In case of crisis and conflict, first, the diplomatic measures should try to work on the solution, and military force should be used only if unavoidable. (Here we should mention that after the bankruptcy of MALÉV in 2012, Hungary lost its own air transport company.) This step showed to the Alliance and to the Hungarian society that this program wants to really increase the capabilities. Since 2019, the air forces will have 3 Airbus A319 and 2 Dassault Falcon 7X aircraft.¹⁶ In the meantime, the government has decided to renovate the Mi-17 and Mi-24 helicopters in the Russian Federation. All

¹⁵ Szabolcs N. *New Weapons for Hungarian Soldiers*. (On line). 2018. Access date 25.04.2019. Available at https://honvedelem.hu/cikk/113828_uj_fegyverek_a_magyar_katonaknak

¹⁶ *A third Airbus and additional aircraft bought by the army. (Egy harmadik Airbust és további repülőket is vesz a honvédség)*. (2018). (On line). Access date 25.04.2019. Available at https://index.hu/belfold/2018/12/11/egy_harmadik_airbust_es_tovabbi_repuloket_is_vesz_a_honvedseg/. Access date 25.04.2019

the helicopters are ready to serve from 2019 to 2023-2024 when the new helicopters purchased from Airbus should arrive. The first contract with Airbus was the purchase of aircraft, followed by ordering 20 Airbus H135M helicopters for Special Forces.¹⁷ These helicopters will be used in crisis management and in scouting missions. The last contract which aims to increase the air force capabilities is the purchase of Airbus 225M multi-task helicopters.¹⁸ The contract was signed in December 2018 and these helicopters will be attached to the air forces in 2023. These multi-task helicopters will replace the old Soviet technologies. These new purchases mean not only new technologies for the Hungarian Defence Forces but also a huge amount of responsibility. The purchase is one of the steps, the pilots should undergo intensive training to learn to pilot the aircraft and helicopters. That is why achieving the military readiness of these new technologies will take certain time. The last element of air forces is the Saab JAS39 Gripen assault aircraft, leased by the Hungarian Defence Forces. In 2018, this aircraft has been modified and the contracts for lease were extended to 2026. This contract gives time to the government to make a decision if they will purchase the newer versions of Gripen or purchase F-35 as mentioned by the Defence Minister. Summarizing, the Hungarian Air Force capabilities and possibilities have been clearly increasing since the launch of the modernization program. Such kind of purchases has never been seen in the Hungarian military history since the political reorientations.

Because of the lack of sea border, there is no need for navy. Hungarian Defence Forces have a regiment of engineers and river guard. The basic tasks of these forces are to scout for bombs and explosives from World War II and deactivate them. The military potential of these forces is not significant, that is why this regiment is part of the land forces.

The capabilities of the land forces were below the NATO average standards. The equipment was from the second half of the 20th century and was overused and old. The renovation of these vehicles and armaments is not profitable. The BTR-80 armoured vehicles, T-72 tanks and D-20 type 152 mm artillery were purchased during the Cold War and they are not suitable in a modern conflict. The first step was to change the wheeled vehicles including buses and cars for everyday usage and transport vehicles. As it has been mentioned before, most of this equipment was too old to be used nowadays. In the years 2016-2018, plenty of those types of vehicles were purchased and given to the army. To increase the special land forces' capabilities, some special equipment was purchased, such as Polaris MRZR 4 ultralight vehicles. The advantages of these cars are their high speed and manoeuvrability. Thanks to them the special forces are ready to serve not only in plain but also in difficult terrain. The next step for land forces is to increase

¹⁷ Honvedelem.HU *Force Development continues - new military helicopters will be acquired by the Army. (Folytatódik a haderő fejlesztése – új katonai helikoptereket szerez be a honvédség).* (On line). 2018. Access date 25.04.2019. Available at https://honvedelem.hu/cikk/111144_folytatodik_a_hadero_fejlesztese_uj_katonai_helikoptereket_szerez_be_a_honvedseg

¹⁸ *Helicopters are expanding from 2023 to the Army's aerial fleet is moving on to the Force development. (Újabb helikopterekkel bővül 2023-tól a honvédség légiflottája Töretlenül halad a haderőfejlesztési).* (On line). 2018. Access date 25.04.2019. Available at https://honvedelem.hu/cikk/113884_ujabb_helikopterekkel_bovul_2023_tol_a_honvedseg_legiflottaja

the land force firepower. It was a big surprise when, according to media sources, the Defence Minister announced the purchase of new tanks and artillery. The last months of 2018 were declared as one of the most eventful in the modern history of the Hungarian army. On the 19th December, 2018, an agreement was signed with the Krauss-Maffrei Wegman Corporation on the purchase of 44 items of Leopard 2A7+ and 24 items of PzH 2000 self-propelled artillery.¹⁹ These two purchases should definitely increase the firepower. Leopard 2A7+ is the newest version of one of the best tanks in the world. Leopard tanks possess not only huge firepower, but they are safe and technologically a miracle of the German armament. This agreement means that the newest versions will arrive in 2025 and will be part of the heavy division in Hungary which is planned to be established in 2028. Until that time, 10 Leopard 2A4 tanks will be leased to train the operators.²⁰ Another purchase with the goal to increase the firepower was the that of Carl Gustav M4 anti-tank weapons. As the Ministry declared, the government is planning to buy the newest versions of armament which can increase the power of the defence forces. Thanks to these procurements, the Hungarian soldier becomes a real 21st century soldier. Of course, there are still a lot of tasks waiting to be accomplished. The Hungarian air missile system is old and requires improvement. The purchase of American air missile systems in Romania - as an ally in NATO - could be enough to defend Hungary against missiles. However, without their own air missile system, none of the countries can reach a secure level of military security.

If comparing the Hungarian modernization program with the Polish plans we acknowledge that our Polish allies are planning to develop their armed forces similarly. In 2017, the Polish military modernization program for the years 2013-2022 was extended to 2026. It might be caused by the extension of new technologies purchases, the change of government and election to the Polish Parliament. This program includes 14 operational points on what tasks the Polish Defence Forces should face. In 2016, another point was added to develop the capabilities of cyber defence. We can declare that the objective of this program is to develop ground, air and navy forces so that soldiers can resist contemporary threats. There were many obstacles in the years, such as a denouement of the agreement on purchasing the Airbus H225M Caracal helicopters in 2015. Also, there have been problems with reaching an agreement with the US government about the purchase of air missile systems. The Ministry of Defence searched for other solutions which could replace these gaps in the program. This means that the Polish Armed Forces will receive the new multi-task helicopters only after 2022. The Polish ground forces already use Leopard tanks, but an older version than Hungary is planning to purchase. The Leopard 2A4 tanks from 1985-1986 – despite already having undergone a renovation process - should be renovated again shortly. This renovation is included in the modernization plan. Poland has T-72 and PT-91 Twardy (Tough) tanks. Some of

¹⁹ Portfolio. *MTI buy new tanks in Hungary - so they might look. MTI, Új harckocsikat vesz Magyarország – így nézhetnek ki.* (On line). 2018. Access date 25.04.2019. Available at <https://www.portfolio.hu/vallalatok/uj-harckocsikat-vesz-magyarorszag-igy-nezhetnek-ki.308333.html>

²⁰ Infostart. *Report with the Defence Minister.* (On line). 2018. Access date 23.04.2019. Available at <https://infostart.hu/belfold/2019/01/04/benko-tibor-elarulta-mi-mindent-vesz-a-honvedseg-2028-ig/amp>

them are planned to be renovated, the other part will be replaced by new purchases. In order to support the Polish military industry, Poland has been trying to renovate its military equipment in domestic companies. Thanks to domestic companies, Poland's biggest success was the modification of the AMV XC-360P armoured vehicles to the Rosomak type. As Brigadier General Adam Duda, PhD. in reserve concludes, the weakness of the program is its long-term planning and production.²¹ Even if they are efficient in the field, they become old and require renovation.

Part of the Polish modernization program has been completed successfully, but as it is the case with Hungary, there are still a lot of things to do in the near future. Poland is also planning to increase their air force capabilities. Some of the Polish media sources announced that Poland would like to purchase Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning stealth multirole fighters. These fighters are known as the newest generation of aircraft and could be an appropriate choice, of course, depending on the agreement. The newest aircraft requires new technologies. Buying this aircraft means - not just for Poland, but also for Hungary - a long-term agreement for spare parts and repair with Lockheed Martin Corporation.

CONCLUSION

With the analysis of the Hungarian and Polish modernization programs, the Central European countries' military security can be at least partly assessed. The home conflicts in border regions and the withdrawal from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty - which can cause a 21st century arms race - resulted in increasing the military measures. Some analyses have already mentioned these events as the start of a modern cold war with other bodies and means. That is why the above-mentioned changes in the structure and armament were inevitable in order to maintain the security of the two countries. The 2% GDP for military expenditures is a challenge for small countries like Hungary, but in the opinion of the Defence Minister, the country will reach this level in 2024 as it was declared during the Wales Summit.

After the political changes, the tendency of militarism and the number of active personnel was decreasing. The stagnation of the armed forces was stopped for a moment after the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington D.C. in 2001. The real turning point was the Russian clash in Georgia and the crisis in Ukraine. The Polish and Hungarian governments and commanders - from the lessons learned in Iraq and Afghanistan - understood that the two countries' defence forces had lacked military potential and capabilities. In response, Poland increased the air force and land force potential by purchasing F-16s and launched the production of multi-functional transport vehicles,

²¹ Stratpoints. Gen. bryg. rez. Adam Duda. *Assessment of the state of implementation of the SZ RP technical modernization plan for the years 2013-2022. Success or defeat? Ocena stanu realizacji planu modernizacji technicznej SZ RP na lata 2013-2022. Sukces czy porażka?* (Online). (2013). Access date 23.04.2019. Available at <https://www.stratpoints.eu/publikacje/ocena-stanu-realizacji-planu-modernizacji-technicznej-sz-rp-na-lata-2013-2022-sukces-czy-porazka/>

Rosomak. Hungary, instead of purchasing new equipment, leased JAS Gripen, but other significant changes did not happen. Only the command structure was changed in both countries. These changes created a NATO-compatible command structure. It is really difficult to rate these changes, because they have barely started functioning yet.

The legal changes caused integration in command structures both in Poland and Hungary. The Hungarian command structure made one step further with the separation of the Commander of Hungarian Defence Forces from the Ministry of Defence physically – moving it to Székesfehérvár from Budapest – and organizationally, as well. Poland and Hungary started to revive their territorial defence systems. This action was different from the other European countries. In Poland, this process started in 2015 and its impacts and goals can be already analysed. The goal for Poland is to reach fifty thousand personnel of territorial armed forces. Hungary has just started this process with aiming to reach the number of twenty thousand reservists.

Analysing the potential of both the Hungarian and Polish Defence Forces we can conclude that an increasing tendency is apparent. Hungary made significant steps to increase the number of personnel in active duty. According to the plans, in 2025 0.6% of the Hungarian population will be serving in the defence forces compared to the Polish figure of 0.4%. These numbers prove that in Hungary the arms race will have a bigger impact. However, today these numbers are much lower. It will be more interesting to see if Hungary and other countries in the region will reach 2% of GDP spent on the military. If the governmental sources are valid, thanks to the 0.3% GDP growth assigned to military expenditures in 2018, the military equipment purchases will be realised.

The conflicts in the Middle East and in Ukraine had been a real challenge for the military security. According to Barry Buzan, comparing collateral areas, military security could become the greatest danger. That is why military security should never be neglected.

Analysing the objectives of modernization programs in Hungary and Poland, we can declare that the Hungarian Defence Forces are modernizing every component of their military forces. The reason is the lack of any modernization performed earlier. In both countries a lot of agreements have been signed between armament companies and the Defence Ministries, but in practice, not all of them will be implemented. Summarizing, the military potential will be increased drastically in both air and land forces. In the future, more information will be provided about the development of cyber warfare. Nowadays, due to the lack of explicit information, this part of military defence cannot be analysed.

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