

THE CZECH ARMY MECHANIZED BRIGADE TO STAY OR TO LEAVE?

IAMPS 2019, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Cpt. Romana Plchová, PhD.

+ team of the HR Expert Services Department

Prague, Czech Republic

HR EXPERT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

(A) RESEARCH

- quantitative research
- questionnaires
- actual and crucial issues in the Czech Armed Forces
- information/feedback to the soldiers and commanders in chief

(B) EDUCATION

- social science methodology
- research-informed decision making

RESEARCH TARGET

7th MECHANIZED BRIGADE

CZECH LAND FORCES: Combat Forces

(1) 4th quick reaction brigade

(2) 7th mechanized brigade

▪ 4 BATTALIONS and HQ

mechanized battalion 2x, light motorised battalion, tank battalion

- ✓ localized in eastern part, close to the second biggest city in the Czech Republic
- ✓ national territory defence
- ✓ part of operation task force of the allied joint force (crises, event of hostilities)

RESEARCH DESIGN

RESEARCH GOAL

- the reasons for quitting the military service exploration and the military service conditions description

(analogous to the previous *4th quick reaction brigade* research in 2017; IAMPS 2018 research)

METHODOLOGY

- quantitative, questionnaires, analyzed via SPSS

SAMPLE

- **522 soldiers** of the 7th mechanized brigade

65 % more than 5 years of duty

94 % male

20 % commanders

35 % less than 5 years of duty

6 % female

80 % „non-commanding“ soldiers

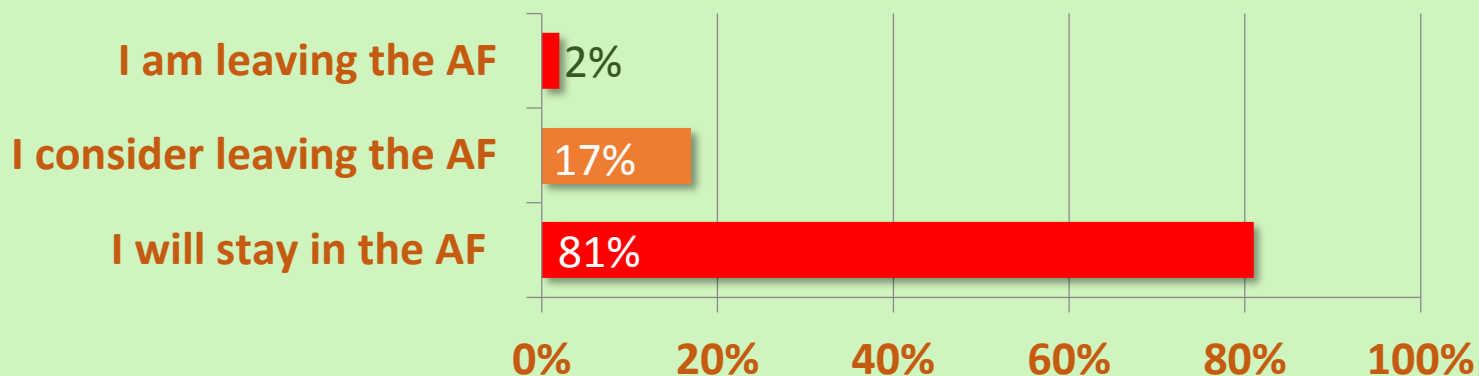
DATA COLLECTION

- July and August 2018 (one battalion earlier in 2017)

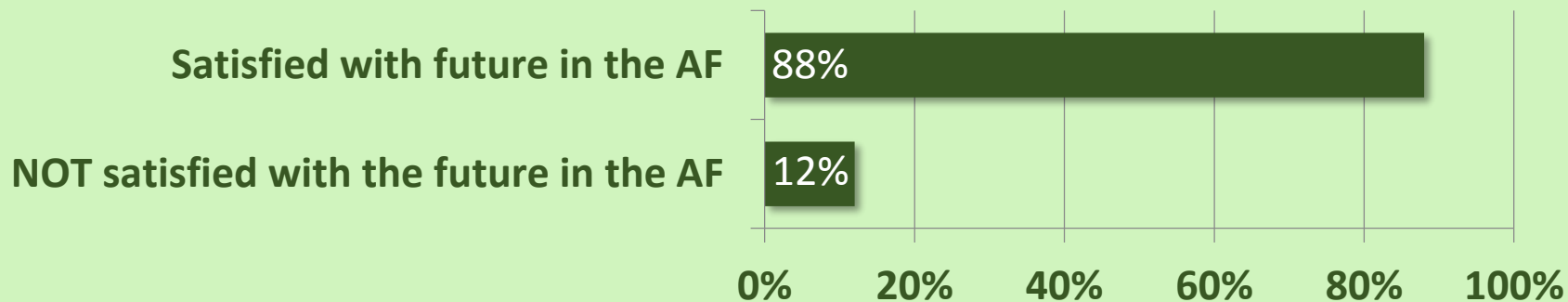
THE FUTURE IN THE CZECH AF

7th MB SOLDIERS

To stay or to leave?



Satisfaction in the AF



TOP 5 INCENTIVES TO JOIN THE CZECH AF

- “I wanted to do an interesting job” **98 %**
- “I wanted to do a useful job” **92 %**
- “I wanted to participate in the protection of our country” **92 %**
- “Friendship and team spirit” **90 %**
- “Social security benefits” **89 %**

NOT ATTRACTED BY PARTICIPATING IN THE PROTECTION OF OUR COUNTRY?

„Who“ are these quite specific 8 % of soldiers? Are they soldiers at all?

▪ **THOSE WHO SIGNIFICANTLY LESS**

- wished to do an interesting job
- wished to do a useful job
- wished to have a career
- felt attracted by the option to attend the military mission
- felt attracted by discipline and organization of military life
- felt attracted by the option to work with the military equipment

▪ **THOSE WHO A LITTLE BIT MORE WISHED (NOT SIGNIFICANTLY)**

- to avoid unemployment
- to earn more money than a civilian

THE SECOND LEVEL INCENTIVES TO JOIN THE CZECH AF

- “The option to attend a military mission” **82 %**
- “I liked military discipline and the organization of military life” **81 %**
- “I wanted to work with military equipment” **81 %**
- “To achieve something and to do a career” **80 %**

NOT ATTRACTED BY MILITARY LIFE AND DISCIPLINE?

„Who“ are these almost 20 % of soldiers?

▪ **THOSE, WHO SIGNIFICANTLY LESS**

- wished to participate in the protection of our country
- felt attracted by working with military equipment
- felt attracted by a particular military specialization
- wished to become soldiers since childhood
- wished a military career

▪ **NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES IN CATEGORIES**

- to avoid unemployment; to earn more money than a civilian
- to achieve social security benefits → **however, high numbers for both groups in this category!**

THE THIRD LEVEL INCENTIVES TO JOIN THE AF

- “I felt attracted by a particular military specialization.” **64 %**
- “I wished to earn more money than I would earn as a civilian.” **60 %**
- “Since I was a child I wished to become a soldier.” **58 %**
- “I wished to avoid unemployment” **28 %**

MOTIVATION TO JOIN THE AF

FREE RESPONSES

- Only 13 answers in total

- 4 clusters

- (1) Family and traditions

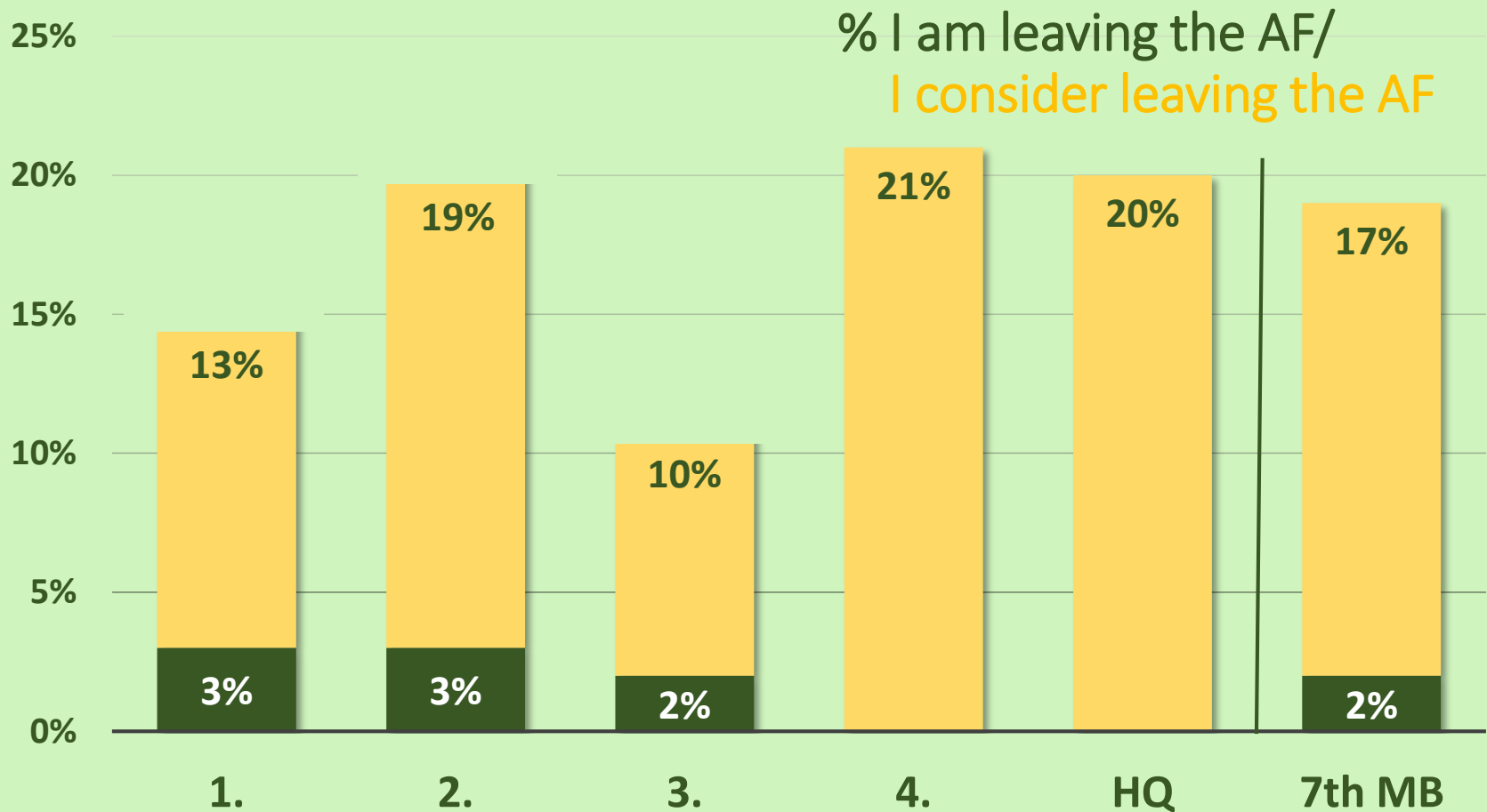
- (2) Self-development/challenge

- (3) Security protection/patriotism

- (4) Social security

TO LEAVE THE CZECH ARMED FORCES?

4 batallions / HQ / the whole 7th brigade



INFLUENTIAL FACTORS

for quitting the Armed Forces

TOP 3

- still having a chance to get a job outside the AF
- uncertainty regarding the work conditions and regarding the size of the military allowance
- the overall situation within the AF

INFLUENTIAL FACTORS

for quitting the Armed Forces

- relationships with those soldiers/officers who stand higher in the hierarchy
- the quality of inclusion of the new soldiers into the unit
1/3 new soldiers (not accepted) consider quitting the AF
- services for families and significant others
- satisfaction with one's future in the AF
- uncertainty regarding the future career

QUITTING THE AF?

FREE RESPONSES

- *„I want to do my own bussiness. Unfortunately, when you work as a soldier, it is difficult to measure the results, our results can be interpreted in various ways and it is often based on the relationships with those people who make the judgements.“*
- *„No option to educate myself, to attend the appropriate courses, no support from my superior.“*
- *„Uncertainty with regard to the pesonnel management within the Czech Armed Forces.“*

Recommendations

- **transparency within the personnel policy/management**

→ providing feedback to the management of the personnel agency of the Czech AF

(shifting soldiers from one function to another → consolidation of the career development etc.)

- **smoother inclusion of the new soldiers into the AF**

→ providing more information (about their military training; about their career; about the plans on being or not being deployed etc.)