



Sodobni vojaški izzivi

Contemporary Military Challenges

Znanstveno-strokovna publikacija Slovenske vojske



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DRUŽINA KOT NEVIDNI STEBER VOJAŠKEGA POKLICA

*»Zadovoljni posamezniki ustvarjajo zadovoljne družine
in zadovoljne družine ustvarjajo zadovoljne pripadnike in
pripadnice (slovenske) vojske.«*

*Janja Vuga Beršnak,
Vojaško specifični dejavniki tveganja za zdravje in dobrobit
vojaških družin*

MILITARY FAMILIES: THE PROFESSION'S INVISIBLE BACKBONE

*»Happy individuals create happy families and happy families
create satisfied members of the (Slovenian) armed forces.«*

*Janja Vuga Beršnak,
Military specific risk and protective factors for military family
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UVODNIK

DRUŽINA KOT NEVIDNI STEBER VOJAŠKEGA POKLICIA

V zadnji lanski številki Sodobnih vojaških izzivov, ki smo jo posvetili organizacijski kulturi, smo objavili tudi članka, v katerih so avtorice objavile rezultate raziskave o zanimanju mladih za vojaški poklic. Gre za zelo aktualno temo, saj se Slovenska vojska v zadnjem desetletju spoprijema z manjšim zanimanjem za vojaški poklic, kar se kaže v postopnem zmanjševanju njenih vrst, čeprav država svojih interesov v povezavi z dejavnostmi vojske ne zmanjšuje. Prav nasprotno. Slovenska vojska ima poleg rednih nalog od začetka evropske migrantske krize leta 2015 dodatne pri varovanju schengenske meje, prav tako pa je bila zelo dejavna v času epidemije COVID-19.

Nataša Troha in Nuša Gorenak iz Slovenske vojske sta opravili raziskavo na vzorcu 7418 srednješolcev ter rezultate opisali v prispevku z naslovom Značilnosti dela skozi oči generacije mladih: raziskava mladi in motivi za vojaški poklic.

Tudi Nina Rosulnik in Janja Vuga Beršnak sta opravili raziskavo pri 221 študentkah in študentih, rezultate pa predstavili v prispevku z naslovom Kaj pritegne mladostnike 21. stoletja, da se zaposlijo v vojaški organizaciji.

Rezultati obeh raziskav so zanimivi in zelo koristni za vse, ki si prizadevajo popolniti Slovensko vojsko. Njihova naloga ni lahka, razlogov za to pa je veliko. Eden glavnih je, da popolnjevanje Slovenske vojske ni le izziv za SV, temveč za slovensko državo, njeno vlado in državno upravo. Gre za sistemski izziv, ki se ga je treba tako tudi lotiti. Zanimivo je, da je na primer Policiji uspelo ohraniti enako število zaposlenih, kot ga je imela pred leti, vojski pa ne. V čem je torej razlika med policijskim in vojaškim poklicem? Včasih se nam zdita podobna, spet drugič ugotavljamo, da sploh nista primerljiva. V znanstvenem smislu med drugim tudi ta izziv preučuje vojaška sociologija.

Če se vrnemo k raziskavi naših štirih avtoric in njihovim ugotovitvam, izvemo, da je za mlade, ki še nimajo družin, pojem družine kot vrednote zelo pomemben dejavnik, ki vpliva na njihovo izbiro poklica. Troha in Gorenak sta ugotovili, da so dijaki po prioritetah med 24 trditvami na drugo mesto razvrstili s povprečno oceno 3,3 trditev, da bi jih motilo, če bi bili zaradi dela dalj časa odsotni od družine in prijateljev. Rosulnik in Vuga Beršnak sta ugotovili, da je med vrednotami, ki so mladim študentom najpomembnejše, družina na prvem mestu. Navedeno je razlog več, da se je treba vsebinam, povezanimi z vojaškimi družinami, bolj posvetiti.

Za sodelovanje pri pripravi naše tokratne tematske številke smo se zato dogovorili s predavateljico in raziskovalko na Fakulteti za družbene vede Janjo Vuga Beršnak, ki je vodja projekta z naslovom *Vojaško specifični dejavniki tveganja za dobrobit vojaških družin (J5 1786)*, financira pa ga Agencija Republike Slovenije za raziskovalno dejavnost.

Res je, da se v zgodovini Sodobnih vojaških izzivov tokrat prvič tematsko posvečamo vojaškim družinam, v vojaški sociologiji pa jih to vsebino veliko raziskuje že dolgo. Vojaške družine so zelo pomemben, čeprav pogosto neviden steber delovanja vsake vojske. Za kakšen pristop pri skrbi za vojaške družine se odloči posamezna država, vojska ali njen poveljnik, je odvisno od različnih dejavnikov, o katerih bomo izvedeli več v prispevkih.

O splošnih družbenih spremembah, ki vplivajo na nastanek družine, vlogo mater, očetov, rojstvo otrok v sodobni družbi in na delovanje družine, nas seznanja **Alenka Švab** v prispevku *Družine v vrtincu poznomodernih družbenih sprememb*. Izvemo tudi tisto bistveno, kar nas zanima v razpravi o vojaških družinah, in to je, v čem se vojaška družina razlikuje od drugih sodobnih družin.

V prispevku *Vojaško specifični dejavniki tveganja in zaščite za zdravje in dobrobit vojaških družin: razvijanje modela* **Janja Vuga Beršnak** pravi, da sta tako družina kot vojska pohlepni instituciji, ki od posameznika pričakujeta veliko odrekovanja in popolno predanost. V prizadevanjih posameznika, da bi ustregel pričakovanjem obeh, se ta pogosto znajde v stiski, ki lahko ogrozi zdravje posameznika in njegove družine.

Ljubica Jelušič, Julija Jelušič Južnič in **Jelena Juvan** v prispevku *Pomembnost vojaških družin za vojaške organizacije in vojaško sociologijo* pojasnijo razvoj znanstvene misli na tem področju ter okoliščine, ki so privedle do tega, da so vojaške družine postale zanimive za raziskovanje v vojaški sociologiji. Predstavijo zgodovinski pregled, aktualno dogajanje in dinamiko razvoja vojaške sociologije. Presenetljivo je, kako veliko je že bilo narejeno na tem raziskovalnem področju tako v mednarodnem okolju kot v Sloveniji.

Z navedenim se strinjajo tudi **Kairi Kasearu**, **Ann-Margreth E. Olsson**, **Andres Siplane** in **Janja Vuga Beršnak**, ki pa poudarjajo, da je v sicer veliko mednarodnih raziskavah in študijah razmeroma malo raziskano v primerjalnih analizah med državami, saj je poseben izziv izbira držav v vzorcu. V prispevku *Vojaške družine v Estoniji, na Švedskem in v Sloveniji: podobnosti in razlike* lahko izvemo več o možnih novih rešitvah v prihodnosti ter tudi o tistih, ki jih v nekaterih državah ni mogoče uresničiti.

O eni takih piše **Donabelle C. Hess**, ki nam v prispevku *Pripravljenost vojaških družin: podporna vloga vojaške skupnosti pri krepitvi odpornosti družin in njihove dobrobiti* predstavi podporno vlogo vojaške skupnosti v primerih, ko na napotitev v tujino skupaj s pripadnico ali pripadnikom oboroženih sil odide tudi družina. V zavezništvu, ki povezuje veliko držav, njihovih pripadnikov in družin, kultur ter organizacijskih pristopov, je to pomembna naloga in velika priložnost.

O skrbi za vojaške družine piše **Matej Jakopič** v prispevku *Urejenost podpore vojaškim družinam v Združenem kraljestvu, Nemčiji in Sloveniji* in tako prispeva k še eni primerjalni analizi na tem področju. Ta Slovenijo primerja z večjima državama z bistveno daljšo vojaško tradicijo in zgodovino ter tako odkriva nekatere slovenske posebnosti. Predstavlja tudi vlogo religiozne in duhovne oskrbe za pripadnike Slovenske vojske.

Družina je zelo pomemben dejavnik pri odločanju za vojaški poklic pri mladih. Pri tistih, ki so že zaposleni v vojski, še posebno v primerih, ko sta oba starša pripadnika obrambnih sil, pa je pojem vojaške družine eksistencialnega pomena.

EDITORIAL

MILITARY FAMILIES: THE PROFESSION'S INVISIBLE BACKBONE

Last year's final issue of *Contemporary Military Challenges*, which was dedicated to organizational culture, also included two articles publishing the results of a survey on young people's interest in the military profession. This is a very topical issue as, in the last decade, the Slovenian Armed Forces has been facing a decreasing interest in the military. This is reflected in the gradual reduction in the number of personnel, although the interests of the state in terms of military activities are not reducing – quite the contrary. Ever since the beginning of the European migrant crisis in 2015, the Slovenian Armed Forces has been combining its regular functions with additional tasks assigned within the protection of the Schengen border, and recently has been actively involved in the activities around the Covid-19 epidemic.

Nataša Troha and Nuša Gorenak from the Slovenian Armed Forces conducted a survey on a sample of 7,418 high school students and described the results in their article entitled *Job characteristics through the eyes of the young generation: survey research "Youth and their motives for the military profession"*.

Nina Rosulnik and Janja Vuga Beršnak also conducted a survey of 221 male and female students, and presented the results in an article entitled *What motivates the young people of the 21st century to join the military?*

The results of both surveys are interesting and very useful for all those involved in the Slovenian Armed Forces' manning efforts. Their task is not easy for a number of reasons. One of the main ones is that the manning of the Slovenian Armed Forces is not only a challenge for the military, but also for the Slovenian state, its government and the state administration. It is a systemic challenge and it should be tackled as such. Interestingly enough, the police have managed to retain the number of their employees compared to previous years, while the Slovenian Armed Forces has not. So, what is the difference between the police and the military as professions? At times

they seem similar, but again, at other times, we find them completely incomparable. Scientifically, this challenge, among others, is examined by military sociology.

Returning to the research of our four authors and their findings we learn that for young people who do not yet have their own families, the notion of family as a value is a very important factor influencing their choice of profession. Troha and Gorenak established that, from a total of 24 statements, the question of whether it would bother them to be away from family and friends for a long period of time due to work ranked second among high-school students' priorities, with an average score of 3.3 out of 5. Rosulnik and Vuga Beršnak, on the other hand, found that family ranks first among the values that are most important to young students. These facts provide yet another reason to devote more attention to issues related to military families.

In the preparation of our thematic issue, we consequently agreed on a collaboration with Janja Vuga Beršnak, a lecturer and researcher at the Faculty of Social Sciences in Ljubljana, who is project manager of a research project entitled *Military specific risk and protective factors for military family health outcomes* (J5 1786), funded by the Slovenian Research Agency.

It is true that we are focusing on military families for the first time in the history of Contemporary Military Challenges; however, in military sociology, this has been a long-researched topic. Military families are a very important, though often invisible, pillar of the functioning of every armed forces. The approach to military families is decided by each country, army or commander individually, depending on a variety of factors which will be revealed in more detail in the articles.

In the article *Families in the maelstrom of late-modern social changes*, **Alenka Švab** informs us about the general social changes that affect the formation of the family, the roles of mother and father, the birth of children in modern society, and the functioning of the family. We also learn about what essentially interests us in the discussion about military families – how does a military family differ from other modern families?

In the article *Military-specific risk and protective factors for military family health outcomes: developing the model*, **Janja Vuga Beršnak** states that both the family and the military are greedy institutions which expect a lot of sacrifice and full-time commitment from the individual. In an individual's efforts to meet the expectations of both, they often find themselves in distress that can jeopardize the health of the individual and his or her family.

In the article *The relevance of military families for military organizations and military sociology*, **Ljubica Jelušič**, **Julija Jelušič Južnič** and **Jelena Juvan** explain the development of scientific thought in this field and the circumstances that have led to military families attracting research interest in military sociology. They present a historical overview, the current developments, and the dynamics of the

development of military sociology. It is surprising how much has already been done in this research area, both in the international environment and in Slovenia.

Kairi Kasearu, Ann-Margreth E. Olsson, Andres Siplane and Janja Vuga Beršnak agree with all of the above; however, they point out that the numerous international research studies include relatively little comparative analysis between countries, as it is a particular challenge to select which countries should be included in a sample. In the article *Military families in Estonia, Slovenia and Sweden – similarities and differences*, we can learn more about possible new solutions in the future, as well as about those that cannot be implemented in some countries.

One of these cases is described by **Donabelle C. Hess**. In her article, *Military family readiness: the importance of building familial resilience and increasing family well-being through military community support and services*, she presents the supporting role of the military community when the entire family moves with a service member to be stationed overseas. In the Alliance, which brings together many countries, service members and their families, cultures and organizational approaches, this is an important task and a great opportunity.

Matej Jakopič writes about the support for military families in his article *Structure of the support system for military families in the United Kingdom, Germany and Slovenia*, providing another comparative analysis in this area. In his analysis, he compares Slovenia with two larger countries with a much longer military tradition and history, thus revealing some Slovenian peculiarities. He also presents the role of religious and spiritual care for members of the Slovenian Armed Forces.

Family is an extremely important factor that young people consider seriously when deciding to enter a military profession. For those, however, who are already employed in the military, especially in cases where both parents are members of the defence forces, the notion of a military family is of existential importance.

UVODNIK GOSTUJOČE UREDNICE

Uvodne misli si bom drznila začiniti z nekaj humorja. Še pred dobrimi sto leti v avstro-ogrski vojski ni bilo zaželeno, da se mladi častniki prekmalu poročijo in ustvarijo družino. Njihove misli so morale ostati bistre in njihovo srce na pravi strani, pri državi in ne dekletu. Slovenski vojak in vojakinja sta danes zato lahko zadovoljna, da se smeta poročiti in imeti družino. Naj bo to bežen in humoren zgodovinski komentar, ki se dotika tudi vsebin, ki so natančneje in resneje opisane na naslednjih straneh te posebne številke.

Vojaške družine so že vsaj 50 let pomembna tema različnih znanosti po svetu, v Sloveniji pa orjemo ledino tako s popisom dosedanjih spoznanj kot tudi s celovitim pristopom k preučevanju vojaških družin. Fakulteta za družbene vede Univerze v Ljubljani s sodelovanjem Mirovnega inštituta od julija 2019 izvaja projekt *Vojaško specifični dejavniki tveganja za dobrobit in zdravje vojaških družin* ob podpori Javne agencije za raziskovalno dejavnost Republike Slovenije. Raziskovalci smo zelo hvaležni, ker nas pri raziskovalnih prizadevanjih organizacijsko podpira Slovenska vojska in ker je bilo uredništvo revije *Sodobni vojaški izzivi* pripravljeno podpreti naše delo tako, da je namenilo celotno številko tej pomembni temi, ki pa, to moramo priznati, z vidika vojske predstavlja podporno dejavnost, vendar ob vseh drugih izzivih morda obrobno tematiko. Vemo pa tudi, da je za vsak boj podpora zelo pomembna in morda lahko pomembno pripomore k zmagi.

V uvodu naj opredelim predmet preučevanja te številke revije. Družino umeščamo v civilno okolje. Kam pa umeščamo in kako razumemo vojaško družino? V Sloveniji ni vojaških baz, v katerih bi bile družine podvržene vojaški socializaciji, ni prepletanja vojaške hierarhije z družbenim položajem družine. V državi blaginje, za kakršno imamo Slovenijo, vojaškim družinam niso ponujene posebne ugodnosti, ki bi jih v civilnem okolju ločevale od drugih. V ZDA, na primer, so vojaške družine velikokrat

fizično ločene od civilnega okolja in podrejene vojaškim zahtevam, v Estoniji se termin vojaška družina povezuje z nekdanjimi sovjetskimi častniškimi družinami, na Švedskem tega termina ne poznajo in ne uporabljajo. Pa v Sloveniji?

Zakon o službi v Slovenski vojski, sprejet leta 2007, ki je pomembno prispeval k uzakonitvi celostne podpore za pripadnike in pripadnice Slovenske vojske, je vojaške družine definiral posredno, z naštevanjem, kdo vse je upravičen do celostne skrbi poleg pripadnika SV.

Naše dosedanje raziskovanje kaže, da se vojaška družina razume kot družina, v kateri je vsaj en družinski član zaposlen v Slovenski vojski. Pri tem govorimo o različnih oblikah vojaških družin, lahko gre za starša ali za otroka zaposlenega v SV, lahko gre za jedrno ali večgeneracijsko družino, za družino, v kateri sta oba starša zaposlena v SV, ali družino, v kateri je vojaške škornje obul oče ali mati. Vojaška družina je več kot zakonsko definirana jedrna družina pripadnika ali pripadnice SV. Gre za vprašanje identitete in vojaške kulture, ki se prenaša (ali pa ne) na ožjo oziroma širšo družino. Kot se na družino prenašajo tudi izzivi in težave, s katerimi se spoprijemajo pripadniki in pripadnice SV ter lahko vodijo v psihične, čustvene in fizične zdravstvene težave ter slabe medosebne partnerske odnose ter odnose med starši in otroki. Različni dejavniki tveganja so prisotni tudi v širši družbi, ne le v vojski, a vojaški poklic je še posebno zahteven.

Morda se po mnenju dela civilne družbe s tveganjem spoprijemajo ljudje v številnih poklicih, v katerih morajo starši velikokrat na službeno pot in tudi delovne nadobremenitve niso v današnjem času nič posebnega. Posebnost vojaškega poklica pa je, da tu starši niso na službeni poti le nekaj dni, temveč so odsotni več mesecev, pri čemer gre lahko celo za ponavljajoče se odsotnosti. Naloge, ki jih morajo v času odsotnosti opravljati vojaški starši, niso vsakodnevne rutinske obveznosti, temveč so pogosto povezane s povečano stopnjo ogroženosti in tudi možnostjo poškodbe ali celo smrti. Nič nenavadnega ni, če so starši odsotni v času rojstva otroka in morda ga prvič vidijo, ko ni več novorojenček. Delovna nadobremenitev se ne meri v dveh urah dela čez delovni čas, temveč v dveh tednih na terenu, v blatu, mrazu, vetru, vročini in drugih neugodnih razmerah. Tveganje pri delu pa ni definirano kot možnost nesreče pri delu, temveč zavestna odločitev posameznika ali posameznice, ki je pripravljen izgubiti življenje pri opravljanju nalog za doseganje ciljev naše skupne države. Na tem mestu bi težko rekli, da vse naštetu vpliva le na pripadnika ali pripadnico SV. Vse naštetu pomembno vpliva na celotno družino. Odpovedovanje, usklajevanje, stres, strah pred izgubo družinskega člana in paleta čustev so prisotni v celotni vojaški družini, od otrok in partnerjev do starih staršev.

V času pisanja teh vrstic se pripadniki in pripadnice SV spoprijemajo z novim izzivom, saj predstavljajo enega od najpomembnejših elementov spopada z epidemijo zaradi virusa SARS-CoV-2. Pri projektu *Vojaško specifični dejavniki tveganja za dobrobit in zdravje vojaških družin* smo aprila 2020 izvedli presečno študijo, v kateri smo ugotavljali, kako so vojaške družine prilagodile svoje vsakdanje življenje tem izjemno

nevsakdanjim okoliščinam. Če izhajamo iz mnenj respondentov, lahko sklepamo, da so vojaške družine precej odporne in prilagodljive. Niso pa neuničljive in včasih bi bile vesele podpore, pa naj pride od prijateljev, sodelavcev ali pa v obliki formalne podpore SV ali državnih ukrepov. Še posebno so ranljive družine s predšolskimi in mlajšimi šoloobveznimi otroki, za katere so bili ukrepi v času epidemije najmanj ustrezni. V času karantene in družbene samoizolacije, ob odsotnosti vrtcev, šol in brez podpore starih staršev lahko vojaške aktivnosti, na primer večdnevne odsotnosti in vojaške vaje, za družino pomenijo težko obvladljiv izziv, ki lahko vodi tudi v zdravstvene težave.

Zadovoljne in zdrave vojaške družine so gotovo dobra podlaga za uspešno in predano delo pripadnikov in pripadnic, najverjetneje pa tudi pomemben dejavnik pri odločanju za nadaljevanje poklicne poti v Slovenski vojski.

Nikar ne zamerite, če vas ob koncu naslovim neposredno, pripadniki in pripadnice Slovenske vojske. V službi domovine niste le vi, temveč velikokrat tudi vaše družine, ki vas čustveno, logistično, organizacijsko in še kako drugače podpirajo, se v vsakdanjem življenju prilagajajo vašim delovnim zahtevam, vašemu vojaškemu poslanstvu podrejajo svojo kariero, vam ne očitajo, ko ste v mednarodnih operacijah in na misijah ravno takrat, ko vaš otrok praznuje rojstni dan ali potrebuje tolažbo, ker je umrl hišni ljubljencek. Vedno znova pokončno, čeprav včasih z grenkobo, sprejemajo vaše odhode in prihode, saj se zavedajo, da je vojak mirnejši, uspešnejši, samozavestnejši pri opravljanju nalog in posledično varnejši, če ve, da ga doma podpira družina, nevidni steber vojaškega poklica.

GUEST EDITOR'S EDITORIAL

I will begin my introductory thoughts with a touch of humour. Just over a hundred years ago in the Austro-Hungarian army, it was not desirable for young officers to marry too soon and start a family. Their thoughts had to stay clear and their hearts in the right place – with the country not with the girl. A Slovenian soldier today can thus be happy to be able to marry and have a family. This cursory and humorous historical comment also touches on the content described in more detail and more seriously in the following pages of this special issue.

Military families have been an important topic in different fields of science around the world for at least 50 years, while Slovenia is breaking new ground by putting down what is currently known and taking a comprehensive approach to studying military families. Since July 2019, the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Ljubljana, with the cooperation of The Peace Institute, has been carrying out the project Military Specific Risk and Protective Factors for Military Family Health Outcomes with the support of the Slovenian Research Agency. The researchers are very grateful to the Slovenian Armed Forces for providing organizational support in these research efforts, and to the editorial board of Contemporary Military Challenges for being ready to devote the entire issue to this important topic which, we have to admit, represents a support activity, which may, however, still seem marginal given other military challenges. We are also aware, however, that support is very important in any fight, and may significantly contribute to victory.

I will begin by identifying the study subject of this issue of the publication. Family is placed in a civilian environment, but where do we place and how do we understand a military family? There are no military bases in Slovenia in which families are subject to military socialization; there is no intertwining of the military hierarchy with the social status of a family. In a welfare state which Slovenia is considered to

be, military families are not offered any special benefits that would set them apart from other families in the civilian environment. In the United States, for example, military families are often physically separated from the civilian environment and subject to military requirements; in Estonia, the term military family is associated with former Soviet officer families; in Sweden, the term is neither known nor used. And in Slovenia?

The Service in the Slovenian Armed Forces Act, adopted in 2007, which significantly contributed to the legalization of comprehensive support for members of the Slovenian Armed Forces, defined military families indirectly by listing those who, in addition to SAF members, are entitled to comprehensive care.

Our research shows that a military family is understood as a family in which at least one family member is employed by the Slovenian Armed Forces. Here, we refer to different forms of military families such as a parent or a child employed by the SAF; a nuclear or a multigenerational family; a family in which both parents are employed by the SAF; or a family in which the military boots are worn by either the father or the mother. A military family is more than the legally defined core family of an SAF member. It is a question of identity and military culture which is passed (or not) on to the immediate or extended family. Likewise, the challenges and problems faced by SAF members are passed on to the family and may lead to mental, emotional and physical health problems, as well as poor interpersonal partner relationships and relationships between parents and children. Different risk factors are also present in the wider society, not just the military, yet the military profession is particularly demanding.

Part of the civil society might argue that people face risks in many different professions in which parents are often away on business trips; moreover, work overload today is very common. A peculiarity of the military profession, however, is that parents are not away on temporary duty for only a few days, but are absent for several months, sometimes repeatedly. The tasks that military parents must perform during their absences are not daily routine obligations, but are often associated with an increased level of threat and the possibility of injury or even death. It is not uncommon for parents to be absent at the time of their child's birth, and perhaps see the children for the first time when they are no longer newborns. Their work overload is not measured by two hours of overtime but by two weeks in the field, mud, cold, wind, heat, and other adverse conditions. Work risk is not defined as the possibility of a work accident, but is a conscious decision of an individual who is prepared to lose their life while performing tasks to achieve the goals of our nation.

At this point, it would be difficult to say that all of the above only affects SAF members. It significantly affects their entire families. Sacrifice, coordination, stress, fear of losing a family member, and a range of other emotions are present in the entire military family, from children and partners to grandparents.

At the time of writing this editorial, SAF members are facing a new challenge, as they represent one of the most important elements in the fight against the SARS-CoV-2 virus epidemic. Within the project Military Specific Risk and Protective Factors for Military Family Health Outcomes, a cross-sectional study was conducted in April 2020, in which it was determined how military families have adapted their daily lives to these extremely unusual circumstances. Based on the opinions of the respondents, it can be concluded that military families are quite resilient and adaptable.

However, they are not indestructible, and would sometimes welcome support, whether coming from friends, colleagues, or in the form of formal support from the SAF or the state. Particularly vulnerable are families with pre-school and young school-age children for whom measures at the time of the epidemic were least suitable and appropriate. In a time of quarantine and social self-isolation, during the closure of kindergartens and schools, and without the support of grandparents, military activities, such as several days of absence and military exercises, can be a difficult challenge for a family and can even lead to health problems.

Satisfied and healthy military families are certainly a good basis for the successful and dedicated work of SAF members. Most likely, this is an important factor in deciding to continue one's career in the Slovenian Armed Forces.

Please do not take offense, dear members of the Slovenian Armed Forces, if I conclude by addressing you directly. It is not just you who are serving the homeland, but many a time also entire families who support you emotionally, logistically, organizationally, and in other ways; who adapt their everyday lives to your work requirements; subordinate their careers to your military mission; do not blame you when you are away on international operations and missions just when your child is celebrating their birthday or needs comfort because their pet has died. Again and again, in an upright manner, although sometimes with bitterness, they accept your departures and arrivals, being aware that soldiers are calmer, more successful, more confident in performing their tasks, and consequently safer by knowing they are supported by their families, an invisible backbone of the military profession.

DRUŽINE V VRTINCU POZNOMODERNIH DRUŽBENIH SPREMEMB

FAMILIES IN THE MAELSTROM OF LATE-MODERN SOCIAL CHANGES

Povzetek V članku so obravnavane značilnosti družinskega življenja v kontekstu poznomodernih družbenih sprememb in predstavljeni različni izzivi, s katerimi se družine srečujejo v vsakdanjem življenju (delitev družinskega dela, usklajevanje družine in dela idr.). Predstavljena so vprašanja s posebnim poudarkom na slovenskem kontekstu in posebnostih, kot so dobro razvite sorodstvene podporne mreže, tradicija zaposlitve žensk za polni delovni čas ipd. Avtorica obravnava nekatere značilnosti vojaških družin in izpostavlja, da bi morale raziskave o vojaških družinah upoštevati poseben odnos med vojaško organizacijo in družino ter tudi družbene okoliščine, ki so v zadnjih desetletjih bistveno spremenile družinsko življenje, ter predlaga vpeljavo koncepta družinske prakse.

Ključne besede *Družine, pozna modernost, starševanje, vojaške družine, Slovenija.*

Abstract This article deals with the characteristics of family life in the context of late-modern social changes, and presents various challenges that families are consequently facing in everyday life (among others, the division of family labour and the reconciliation of family and work). The author addresses these issues with a special emphasis on Slovenia, taking into account the specificities of the country. The main characteristics of military families are also presented. The author argues that research into military families should take into account the specific relationship between the military organization and the family, as well as the social circumstances that have shaped family life significantly in recent decades.

Key words *Families, late modernity, parenting, military families, Slovenia.*

Introduction

Western societies have been experiencing significant transformations in family life for the past five decades, and the trends of pluralization of family forms and lifestyles challenge the idea of monolithic patterns of family life. According to family sociologists, these changes are so intense that the family has changed both structurally and in terms of form, and the changes are recognized as irreversible, resulting in a diversity of family life (Švab, 2001).

The aim of this article is to contribute a sociological explanation of these changes and their implications for military families. Just like all other family forms, military families have also been subject to these social changes, and it is therefore important to research how they have adapted to the new, late-modern social contexts. At the same time, I want to show that their specificities also need to be addressed and researched in order to identify their specific needs and the challenges and problems they face, especially in performing their vital social functions in everyday life.

In this article I claim that military families (where the military context influences the family life of all members) should be researched in concrete social contexts. In other words, both the particularities of military families and the general characteristics of late-modern family life are closely interconnected and should be researched as such.

At the same time it should be recognized that military families are not a monolithic social category, but are differentiated by various objective and subjective factors, primarily socio-demographic characteristics and the material circumstances in which they live, the family type, and also the type of employment one or both partners has within the military structure. From this perspective, I suggest applying the concept of family practices (Cheal, 2002; Morgan, 2011a, 2011b) which is already used in sociological research into family life; however, it has not been used in research into military families before. I see the concept of family practices as having great potential for offering an innovative way of researching aspects of everyday life which have not yet been studied, family dynamics, and the challenges that members of military families face.

When talking about everyday life, special attention should be paid not only to formal forms of support (specifically provided by the military organization, and also by the state institutions through family and social policy), but also to informal forms of support provided in everyday life in order to overcome the obstacles and challenges of modern life (in the sphere of family and work), e.g. various sources of paid (nannies, housekeepers) and unpaid services (grandparents, relatives, neighbours, friends). This is especially relevant for Slovenia, where previous research (Rener et al., 2006; 2008) has shown that strong kinship support networks play a key role in childcare, reconciling work and family responsibilities, and so on. It could be argued that, in the case of military families, such support is of extreme importance because of the specific nature and demands of military service, and that kinship networks may be a vital source of material, care and psychosocial support.

1 THE BROADER SOCIAL CONTEXT OF LATE-MODERN FAMILY LIFE: DEMOGRAPHIC AND FAMILY TRENDS

Changes in family life can be most systematically observed through official statistics. These are an established and internationally comparable means of measuring the current state of family life, as well as changes over several decades.

According to statistics in the field of demography and families, Slovenia can be placed in the group of Western countries (Švab, Rener, & Kuhar, 2012) that have the following trends: 1. pluralization of family forms and family life; 2. decreasing marriage rates and (slightly) increasing divorce rates; 3. decreasing (with slight increases in recent years) fertility rates etc.

Let us first look at these trends in general.

1.1 Pluralization of family forms and ways of family life

In the first decades after World War II, the nuclear family (a married couple with children, with strict gender division of labour) was considered to be dominant, socially desirable and also functional, best-suited to industrial-modern society (Parsons, Bales, 1955). However, by the end of the 1960s these ideas gradually began to crumble because of the intense social changes of the time, which also influenced family life. The statistics increasingly showed new trends towards pluralization and diversity of family life. Over the next decades it became apparent that through pluralization the family had adapted to the new, late-modern social circumstances, thus proving how socially important and vital this social institution is (Švab, 2001). It turned out that the predictions about the collapse and crisis of the family (that were especially present in the 1970s) were completely wrong, and that diversity, also based on changes in family roles and the division of work in the family, has become a fundamental feature of late-modern family life.

Consequently, the so-called nuclear family has increasingly become only one of the family forms among several others, such as single parent families, reorganized families, same-sex families and so on. It should be stressed that sociologists of families in general and military family studies today recognize this fact, and that research focuses on different aspects of the lives of different military families in the new social circumstances (for an extensive up-to-date review of studies see Moelker et al., 2019a).

Official statistics on family types in Slovenia are, however, only available to a limited extent, as the official statistics did not collect data for all family types and some were added only recently (e.g. reorganized and same-sex families). Data on two-parent families (whether married or unmarried) and single-parent families have been collected since the 1981 Census.

The prevalent family form in Slovenia is still a married couple with children. However, its share is decreasing in favour of other family forms, mainly single-parent families and unmarried couples. The proportion of married couples with children in the structure of two-parent (married and unmarried couples) and single-parent families was 74.46% in 1991, decreasing to 55.26% in 2011, 52.25% in 2015, and 50.79% in 2018.

At the same time, there has been an increase in the proportion of unmarried couples with children (from 2.84% in 1991, to 14.41% in 2015 and 15.05% in 2018), and in the proportion of single parent families (from 22.71% in 1991 to 33.34% in 2015 and 34.20% in 2018) (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia – SORS).

According to data on family size and the composition of families, the number of family members has been decreasing in the last few decades, from 3.36 in 1971 (3.2 in 1981, 3.0 in 1991, 3.06 in 2002) to 2.9 in 2011 (the last available data) (SORS). In 2018 55% of the families had one child, and 36% had two children.

1.2 Marital changes

Similarly to other Western countries, Slovenia is also experiencing significant changes in the area of marriage and divorce rates. The first important feature is an ongoing decrease in marriage rates as a consequence of the general decline in the social importance of marriage, a typical characteristic of late-modern Western countries, as well as the Slovenia-specific legal changes from 1976 that put married and unmarried couples in an equal legal position. In comparison to other European countries, Slovenia thus belongs to the group of those with the lowest marriage rates.

While there were 9.2 marriages per 1000 inhabitants in 1955, that number has been decreasing since 1970 (8.3 per 1000 inhabitants), through the seventies and the eighties (6.5 in 1980), and the nineties (4.3 in 1990 and 3.6 in 2000). According to the latest data from 2018, there were 3.5 marriages per 1,000 inhabitants (SORS).

Along with this trend, the age of women at first marriage is steadily increasing. In this respect Slovenia belongs to the group of (the majority of) Western countries where individuals are getting married later in their lives, while maintaining typical gender differences, i.e. men marry at a slightly older age than women. During the seventies the average age of women at first marriage remained approximately the same (23.1 in 1970 and 22.5 in 1975), but began to increase in the eighties (22.5 in 1980), and continued to increase throughout the nineties and in the first two decades of the new millennium (23.7 in 1990, 26.7 in 2000, 28.2 in 2005). According to the latest available data for 2018, the bride's age at first marriage is 30.5 years and the groom's is 32.6 years (SORS).

Another trend in this respect is the rising divorce rate, which has also been recorded in Western countries since the late 1960s. This trend is linked, among other things, to the mass entry of women into the labour market, through which they gained

financial independence and, consequently, more autonomy in decision-making about their lives. However, mass employment of women is certainly not the only reason. At least equally important are the changes in values brought about by the broader social changes of late modernity, including the democratization of relationships in the private sphere (see Giddens, 2000).

Here, the Slovenian situation is slightly different from that of other Western countries, since divorce rates have remained almost unchanged for decades. For example, there were 1.1 cases of divorce per 1000 inhabitants in 1965 and 1970, and 1.2 in 1975 and 1980. There was a slight decrease in divorce rates in the first half of the 1990s, which could be explained by societal transition and increased levels of social insecurity (e.g. increase in unemployment etc.). In 2000 the divorce rate increased again to 1.1 and to 1.2 during the second half of the 2000s, while it was again 1.1 in 2018 (SORS). Although the divorce rate in Slovenia is among the lowest in Europe, this does not necessarily mean that couples are not increasingly getting divorced. Since marriage rates are decreasing we could speculate that official statistics are not sufficient in completely assessing trends in divorce rates, especially as the statistics for unmarried couples (and consequently 'divorce' rates in this group) are not available.

1.3 Changes in fertility rates

One trend that is similar to other Western countries is the steady decrease in fertility rates, which has been continual in the last few decades; Slovenia has one of the lowest fertility rates in Europe. While there was a decrease in total fertility rates during the fifties (from 2.80 in 1953 to 2.18 in 1960), the second half of the sixties found an increase (from 2.18 in 1960 to 2.48 in 1966), and the fertility rate was still relatively high in comparison with today's rates (SORS). In the second half of the sixties and during the seventies there was a trend of decreasing fertility rates (from 2.48 in 1966 to 2.21 in 1970, 2.16 in 1975 and 2.11 in 1980). The natural increase reached the negative point (i.e. more people died than were born) for the first time in 1993 (-0.1). The lowest fertility rates were in 1999 and in 2003 (1.2); however, we are now witnessing an increase in fertility rates in the second half of the present decade. In 2008 the fertility rate was 1.53, rising to 1.61 in 2018 (SORS).

This increase is predominantly due to delayed childbearing or the "tempo effect", i.e. an increase in fertility rates in the cohort of women who have been delaying the decision to have children until their late thirties and are now at the end of their fertility period. However, according to demographic and sociological estimates (Švab, Žakelj, 2008), this turn is only of a temporary nature and it may slow down or even decline.

One of the important changes in the life course of individuals is the postponement of various events in family life. Besides the already mentioned increase in age at first marriage, there has also been an increase in the age of women at first birth. In 1965 the average age of a mother at first birth was 26.2 years. Over the next ten years it decreased, reaching its lowest value in 1975 with an average of 22.8 years. Since

then it has been increasing. The average age of women at first birth during the first half of the 1990s was 24.3 years, and during the second half 25.6 years. In 2008, the average age was 28.4, and it even increased to 29.5 in 2018 (SORS).

The postponement of the birth of the first child is due to several reasons: a prolonged time spent in education, the insecure situation in the labour market along with high unemployment rates, and inadequate housing policies for young people, among other things.

There has also been an increase in the number of children born “out of wedlock”. This share has been increasing for decades. While in 1954 only around one tenth of children were born outside marriage, in 2005 this proportion rose to 47%. During the 1960s and the early 1970s, the percentage did not essentially change; it even decreased; during the 1960s, 9.1% of children were born outside marriage, and in 1970 this figure was even smaller – 8.5%. These data suggest that during the 1960s the ideology of the nuclear family, which favoured marriage as a precondition of family life, was prevalent in Slovenia, much as in other Western countries. It began to lose importance in the 1970s – for example, in 1975, 10% of children were born outside marriage, while during the 1980s this percentage increased to 13.1. It has been increasing steeply ever since, to 46.7% in 2005. In 2007, for the first time, more than half of the births were out of marriage (50.8%), and according to the latest data the share of children born out of wedlock was 58.6% in 2016, though it decreased slightly to 57.7% in 2018 (SORS).

2 STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE FAMILY

Family sociologists agree that one of the key aspects of late-modern family change is the changing family structure, especially family roles and the division of family labour.

2.1 Maternity

The family role that has changed the least is motherhood. This is partly due to the social (and ideological) construction of motherhood as the primary parental role, which remains a dominant parental role and also defines the way in which fatherhood is understood and carried out. This in turn affects the division of family labour, where women still take up most of the work – household and similar tasks, as well as caring for other family members (children, partners, elderly relatives etc.).

However, in recent decades this role has also undergone some important changes with regard to reproductive decisions. Young women spend more time in education, subsequently entering the labour market later in their life course, and they enter stable intimate partnerships and therefore form a family later. The ideology of (compulsory) motherhood is also changing and is less persistent, which can be seen in the gradual increase in the proportion of women who do not opt for parenthood at all.

2.2 Fatherhood

In contrast to motherhood, fatherhood has been significantly more open to social change in recent decades. Family sociologists even talk about the new late-modern phenomenon of new or active fatherhood, thus characterizing the increasingly active role of fathers in caring for children as well as in sharing other family tasks (Rener et al., 2008).

However, studies in Slovenia also show that the division of family labour is not becoming more equal, and that fathers are participating only partially and conditionally, and are only involved in certain chores (e.g. playing with children, and taking over tasks that are less demanding and time-constrained) (see Rener et al., 2008). Fatherhood is more or less mediated through motherhood and it takes a supportive form. Thus, we can say that in Slovenia the dominant model of fatherhood is not an active fatherhood, but a model in which fathers participate and assist their female partners in child care, while women are expected to be the dominant parental figure (Rener et al., 2008).

Both subjective and objective factors can be found among those that influence the level of paternal activity, and although views on gender roles and gender equality have veered significantly in the past decades towards supporting equality, the fact remains that structural factors are those that most importantly frame paternal practices in everyday life. A more recent study on fatherhood in Slovenia (Hrženjak, 2016) further confirmed that the labour market and the position of an individual in the labour market influence how active fathers will be, and how intimate partners will coordinate obligations in the spheres of work and family.

It is worth mentioning that in Slovenia there is a specific culture of strong kinship networks, which – where available – provide an important support for parents, especially mothers, in their daily work–family reconciliation. This support primarily consists of daily or occasional childcare, services such as cooking and cleaning, and often also material and financial support, all provided mainly by grandparents (Rener et al., 2008).

2.3 Division of family labour and reconciliation of work and family

The asymmetric division of labour is one aspect of structural change in the family where the shift is very difficult and very slow. Taking into account the fact that full employment of women in Slovenia is a tradition that did not change even during the transition period (in this sense, Slovenia did not follow re-traditionalization to the extent that some other post-socialist countries, e.g. Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, did), one would expect that partners or spouses would share family work more evenly. However, as studies of the new paternity (Rener et al, 2008) note, there are not even many reasons for this. Although values have changed and today we find few people in favour of traditional gender roles, there are few changes in practice. Among the reasons for this, in addition to the already mentioned very

strong ideology of motherhood as a primary parental role, are less favourable labour market conditions, precarious employment, prolonged work schedules, and so on. Consequently partners are more likely to share family labour in a traditional way – men give priority to their careers, while women often adjust their careers to their family situation and requirements (Rener et al, 2008).

Women are therefore torn between two spheres, and a reconciliation of all requirements is thus understood to be a “women’s problem”; there are few mechanisms to encourage shifts in the more structural dimensions of the gender division of labour and roles.

When we talk about military families, we can speak of an even more specific situation in which the family and the military organization simultaneously act as two greedy institutions, that is, institutions that have very high demands on family members (Vuga, Juvan, 2013; Hannola, 2019). Qualitative research on a sample of military families in Slovenia (Vuga, Juvan, 2013) found that both institutions are somewhat greedy, although the military organization is to a far greater extent, meaning that family life is subordinated to the requirements of the military organization in which one or both partners work.

2.4 Childhood

Modern family life has brought about another significant change with respect to past generations: parenting and the perception of children and childhood. The main shift that has taken place is increasing child-centredness and the phenomenon of a protective childhood and the consequent intensification of the imperatives and norms of (good) parenting. With a protective childhood or child-centeredness (Švab 2001; 2017), a number of new requirements have emerged for parents in terms of child care. Sociologist Frank Furedi (2008) created the term “paranoid parenting” to highlight the effects of the extreme social pressures exerted on parents when it comes to child care.

It should not be overlooked that these burdens, although directed at parents in general, are also inevitably gender-based. The aforementioned ideology of motherhood as the primary parental role, together with the increasing imperatives of parenting, creates (social and psychological) pressures, primarily on mothers (Švab, 2017).

3 SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MILITARY FAMILIES

In the analysis of military family politics and the specificities of military families, Moelker and colleagues (2019b) emphasized the importance of a comprehensive analysis of the relationships between the three involved institutions – the state, the military organization and the family – and therefore the interconnection of the macro, mezzo and micro levels of analysis. A comprehensive analysis is required as these levels are intertwined and interdependent, and families play an extremely important

role. It could be said that without its support, there would be no military success (Moelker, Ronés and Andres, 2019b, p 10).

However, it should be noted that the relationship between the military family and the military organization has certainly changed dramatically in the past few decades, due to the fact that family life has undergone the series of aforementioned social changes and has radically altered, while the military organization has remained rather traditional (Raid, Kasearu, Truusa, 2019, p 87). Although much of the social change in late modernity (including family changes) is driven by the late modern form of reflexive individualism (Giddens, 2000), we should not think of the family as becoming an institution of alienated individuals who look only to their own needs. On the contrary, family in late modernity remains one of the most important communities and at the same time institutions, which (in general) meets the various needs of all its members, offers material and emotional support and shelter, and especially works as an equipoise of individualism (Švab, 2001). In this respect, we should also see military families as providing support to those family members who work in the military organization.

Studies on military families also point out and recognize that family is not a static unit (Moelker, Ronés, Andres, 2019, p 5) and that family life is dynamic, constantly changing in the context of specific social circumstances. The relationship between the family and the military organization (following the theory of Norbert Elias) could be defined as “shifting networks of living, constantly growing/aging, and socialized people who constantly do and reconstruct the family and the military in an ongoing process” (Moelker, Ronés, Andres, 2019, p 5). The emphasis here is not only on the institution, but vice versa, on the community, on the “formations/network/relationship (figurations) of interdependent people who are, according to Elias, always characterized by the interweaving processes of shifting power balances” (Moelker, Ronés, Andres, 2019, p 5).

As with all institutions, in the case of families and the military organization there are relationships in which different tensions arise, and therefore the relationships are always negotiated. Because of the specific nature of work in the military this may have negative effects on family relationships and various negative consequences for all the family members involved. These topics have been relatively well researched abroad, most often through individual studies of specific problems encountered in military families on the basis of tensions between the two institutions.

In this context, particular attention is paid to two areas. Firstly, to the typical patterns of ongoing tensions, negotiations, and redefinitions of relations between the family and the military organization, and also to the relationships between family members, i.e. to certain general and, for most military families, typical characteristics of family life, and the specific challenges and problems they face in everyday life due to the fact that one or both parents are employed in the military. The most important topics here are the following: reconciliation of work and family (for both partners); the

related division of family labour, family roles and responsibilities; gender relations; intimate partner relationships; the quality of relationships between family members; the challenges of parenting; the role of kinship and other (paid and unpaid) support networks, and so on. Secondly, attention is paid to military-specific problems (and factors), which certain families and individual family members are faced with (both in terms of health, family relationships etc.) and which require systematic support and available mechanisms to prevent and address these problems by various institutions. These problems range from intimate partner violence and conflict in general, and alcoholism and drug abuse, to specific problems that individual family members (especially children) face, divorce, suicide etc.

The analysis of the inter- and intra-family dynamics of military families above all highlights the following topics:

- Reconciliation of work and family and conflict between the family and the military organization (as well as the requirements of both institutions) (Anderson, Goldenberg, 2019; Hannola, 2019), especially during deployment (Pluut, Andres, 2019).
- Family support for a family member who is an employee in a military organization, and self-perception of the family as a “military family” (and the frequent rejection of this label) (Olsson, Olsson, 2019);
- Problems encountered by the spouse of a person employed by a military organization (Dursun, Wang, & Pullman, 2019);
- Analysis of the maintenance of family relationships and long-distance communication in the event of deployment (Andres, Moelker, 2019);
- Intimate partner violence and risk factors for violence (Siebler, Karpētis, 2019);
- Parenting in military families (Mogil, Paley, 2019);
- Family planning and the self-perception of a military employee as a parent (Reiter, 2019);
- Problems (e.g. stress) and pressures experienced in specific types of military families, such as single parent families, and the importance of support networks such as friends and family (Skomorovsky, Bullock, Wan, 2019).

Conclusion In this article, I wanted to show how family life has gone through various important changes during recent decades, resulting in the pluralization of family forms and diverse family life. In my opinion, military families are no exception in this respect, so research into this subject must focus on the new circumstances in which the families and family members live. Nevertheless, military families have certain specific characteristics which arise from the fact that one or both of the intimate partners (and therefore parents) work in a military organization. Undoubtedly, this has important consequences for all family members and the relationships between them (including the intimate partnership, as well as parent-child relationships).

At the same time, military families, just like non-military families, get on with their ordinary everyday lives, which can establish certain tensions that family members must resolve on a daily basis as well as in the long run. In order to grasp

the specificities of military families and the general characteristics of late-modern family life, research should take into account both dimensions and study them as intertwined.

As previously mentioned, researchers of military families have already recognized the importance of understanding family life as changing and fluid, and one way to grasp the diversity, dynamics and changeability of (military) family life is, in my opinion, possible by the introduction of the concept of “family practices” (Cheal, 2002; Morgan, 2011a; 2011b), which “consist of all the ordinary, everyday actions that people do, insofar as they are intended to have some effect on other family members” (Cheal, 2002, p 12).

In family research this concept serves as a tool for us to explore what families and their members do in the family milieu, as well as in other social spheres (work, school etc.), and also the relationships between them, and above all what significance they give to the family and family life. This concept has already been used in concrete studies, for example, in studies of divorced family life, non-heterosexual intimate relationships, Muslim families in Southeast Asia, and studies of families in the hotel industry (Morgan, 2011b).

In this respect, I think it could be useful for researching military families, in order to identify specific patterns of practices, relationships between family members, and the problems and challenges they face in everyday family life, with particular attention to the specifics of military families, and how work in a military organization affects family life.

Research into family practices, however, should not focus only on the micro level of everyday life as such, but must inevitably be linked to the structural location of the family and structural inequalities (including intra-familial inequalities based on the asymmetric division of family labour). In doing so, it is also important to bear in mind that people in their daily lives do not merely reproduce existing patterns of behaviour and follow social norms and rules, but – and this is precisely the innovative approach to researching family practices – in everyday life they may continuously create new practices and strategies.

This allows us to pay attention to the specific family practices that members of (military) families carry out in everyday life, including sharing family labour (especially caring), reconciling family and work, challenges in parenting and upbringing, and so on. In this respect, particular attention can also be paid as to what extent families, through different family practices, adjust to the demands of the military organization.

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VOJAŠKO SPECIFIČNI DEJAVNIKI TVEGANJA IN ZAŠČITE ZA ZDRAVJE IN DOBROBIT VOJAŠKIH DRUŽIN: RAZVIJANJE MODELA

MILITARY SPECIFIC RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR MILITARY FAMILY HEALTH OUTCOMES: DEVELOPING THE MODEL

Povzetek Vojaški poklic, ki po definiciji zahteva opravljanje nalog v imenu države, ni primerljiv z veliko drugimi poklici. Položaj vojaškega poklica v družbi je določen tudi z odnosom, ki ga vojska izkazuje vojaškim družinam. Temu ob bok postavimo dejstvo, da sta tako vojska kot tudi družina pohlepni instituciji, ki pričakujeta predanost. Usklajevanje med obema za posameznika pomeni izziv, ki lahko vodi v disfunkcije oziroma zdravstvene težave. Dejavniki tveganja in zaščite se pojavljajo na različnih socialno-ekoloških ravneh. V članku je prvič predstavljen teoretični model, ki ga je razvila avtorica. V modelu so opredeljeni vojaško specifični dejavniki tveganja in zaščite in kazalniki zdravja v vojaških družinah. Dejavniki tveganja so med drugim: dolgotrajne odsotnosti, bojne izkušnje, stres idr. Dejavniki zaščite pa so: dobra socialna mreža, podpora razširjene družine, sposobnost uspešnega usklajevanja med delom in družino idr.

Ključne besede *Vojaška družina, vojska, kazalniki zdravja, dejavniki tveganja in zaščite.*

Abstract Being a military professional and performing the job in the name of one's country is hardly comparable to other occupations. The military and the family, as greedy institutions, put high demands on their members so it can be difficult to balance between them, which can lead to dysfunctions – negative health outcomes. Every person needs to address various demands during the course of their lives, and the risk and protective factors occur at various socio-ecological levels. This article explains a theoretical model of military specific risk and protective factors which affect military family health outcomes, developed by the author of this article. As currently identified, the most influential military specific factors are: deployments, service member's gender, combat experience, social network/extended family support, effective work/family balance, and stress resilience-coping.

Key word *Military family, military, health outcomes, risk and protective factors.*

Introduction

The military as an institution, including its service members and their families, constitutes a significant part of society. Consequently, their wellbeing and health outcomes manifest at various social levels. It is important to understand that the military organization is a specific one, potentially demanding the ultimate sacrifice, namely giving human life for the survival of a community and/or country. Therefore, being a soldier, being a military professional and performing the job in the name of one's country is hardly comparable to other occupations. Coser defined both the military and the family as 'greedy' institutions. According to Coser (1974), greedy institutions 'seek exclusive and undivided loyalty and they attempt to reduce the claims of competing roles and status positions on those they wish to encompass in their boundaries'. Vuga and Juvan (2013), based on a survey of Slovenian military service personnel, established that the military does not only require the devotion of service members' devotion, but the devotion of the whole family.

Service members, as much as any other individuals, are defined by several societal roles and have various sources of identification. One of the most important values and sources of identification is one's family. The Slovenian population in general values the family very highly (e.g. Toš et al., 1999; 2009; Rosulnik and Vuga, 2019; Troha and Gorenak, 2019 etc.) and therefore the wellbeing and satisfaction of the family occupies a high position in an individual's personal life. For this reason, the wellbeing and satisfaction of family should also be important for a military organization. The influence goes both ways; the military has an impact on everyday family life, and the family has an impact on the job performance, satisfaction, motivation, and so on of soldiers.

Research into military families should be put into the wider social context of the social changes over the past fifty years (e.g. changing gender roles, parenting, concept of childhood, etc.). This enables us to explain why certain military demands are challenging for modern families.

The factors causing negative health outcomes in military families occur at various levels and in different situations. The project Military Specific Risk and Protective Factors for Military Family Health Outcomes (MilFam) will observe which and how strongly risk and protective factors arise from different socio-ecological levels, using Bronfenbrenner's classification (see Figure 1). For better understanding, the socio-ecological levels will be briefly explained further on in this article.

The purpose of the article is to outline the spectrum of direct and latent demands that military life puts on service members and their families. Further, the article will discuss certain health outcomes that military families all over the world need to cope with. But most importantly, the article strives to explain the model of risk protective factors influencing family health outcomes which I have developed over the past year and which will be tested by my research team¹ in the years to come.

¹ *MilFam is a scientific project financed by the Slovenian Research Agency (J5-1786).*

Over the next years the research team at MilFam will focus on the Slovenian military's family health and wellbeing, as well as the fundamental risk and protective factors.

1 DEVELOPING A CONCEPTUAL FRAME

1.1 Conceptual and methodological background

In previous research the different negative health outcomes have not been measured together, but have instead been observed separately. In the case of Slovenian military families, potential negative health outcomes have never been measured at all. Similarly, various risk factors have not been observed simultaneously at various socio-ecological levels.

We will apply an integrative approach to understanding the risk and protective factors for family health outcomes in the military context in Slovenia. Up to now, the risk/protective factors for health outcomes have been observed mostly at the socio-ecological individual and micro levels, but our research aims to take a step forward by identifying the risk/protective factors at the meso and macro levels. Furthermore, up to now the risk/protective factors have been mostly observed from the perspective of military sociology, or separately from the perspective of psychology. We aim to integrate the two fields and apply a comprehensive approach. Military family health outcomes are a result of external social influences, internal personality characteristics, psychological specifics, national policies and organizational priorities, among other things. We can assume that all of the above significantly affect the behaviour of family members in various situations, and influence the quality of military family life.

Moreover, current research does not give an answer to the question of whether the risk factors for negative health outcomes actually originate in the military. Our research aims to reveal whether and which of the risk/protective factors are military-specific. For this purpose, we will observe a control sample of civilian families.

The central research question in the present article is, which are the currently recognized health outcomes in military families, and which are most common risk and protective factors?

1.2 Risk and protective factors for military family health outcomes

1.2.1 Let's talk about gender when we balance between the military and the family

The relationship between military and family can be interpreted in the light of the work/family balance. In previous centuries the representation of each gender in western societies was predefined, i.e. the normative and material embedding of the 'male breadwinner' defined the position of women in the family as well as in the labour market (Crompton, 2006). Over the past decades Slovenian women have become highly present in the labour market, with over 60% of women employed

(Kanjuo Mrčela and Černigoj Sadar, 2007). However, in spite of this, various studies (e.g. Crompton, 2006; Kanjua Mrčela and Černigoj Sadar, 2007) indicate that women remain responsible for the majority of domestic chores. Young mothers especially (i.e. those with small children) feel the pressure of balancing their work obligations against family needs, and hence often face a conflict between work and the family (Kanjua Mrčela and Černigoj Sadar, 2007). Mothers with young children may be a category that requires special research attention, especially if they are members of a military organization.

Similar to trends concerning the distribution of the unpaid work in civilian families, military spouses are usually expected (and they probably meet these expectations) to carry the majority of the domestic work (Werber Castaneda and Harrell, 2007), and yet these authors established that most satisfied military families get at least one quarter of their income from outside the military. The research shows that the spouses who have interests outside the home are happier, but they feel that the military has a negative effect on their jobs (Werber Castaneda and Harrell, 2007).² Interestingly, past surveys of Slovenian military personnel (the vast majority of whom were men) revealed that they did not feel much pressure from the military towards the family, and they also did not believe that their spouses were under much stress due to military demands (Vuga and Juvan, 2013). In that context we must understand that the military organization is still the most typically male of all institutions, and the masculinity of military organizations could influence the perception of the relationships between genders (Segal 1993; 1995) and also the perception of the burden created in balancing work and family.

The gender of the service member is a predictor of military family health outcomes and wellbeing. The literature emphasizes that the negative impact of risk factors on family health outcomes is expected to differ depending on the gender of the service member. Female service members need to play multiple roles; they fulfil their professional expectations within the military and the parental role, as well as taking care of the unpaid household work. As primary caregivers, they are put in a more challenging position with regard to their relationships with their spouse and children when trying to fulfil military demands (e.g. long-term absences). On the other hand, male service members often play the role of secondary caregivers, which leaves them with more time to fulfil their military demands.

Stress due to balancing work and family influences the mother's wellbeing, and the latter is an important predictor of a child's adjustment and behavioural problems, especially during deployment (Andres and Moelker, 2011). Zellman, Gates, Moini and Suttorp (2009) established that those having the most difficulty with balancing not only work and family but also work and childcare are female service members who are also mothers, and dual military families. Additionally, we need to keep in mind the issue of mother-child separation.

² This was mostly related to the regular redeployments of the whole family to different locations.

1.2.2 The extended family and the community

As we can see, building a military family's capacity to manage stress is a process that affects people and groups at several levels; the individual, the organization and the community (Wojda et al., 2017). In the particular Slovenian case, military families have strong social support provided by extended family (Vuga et al., 2013). Metka Kuhar (2011) places Slovenian families with strong family ties and cross-generational cooperation in the Mediterranean cultural model. The majority of Slovenian families live near their extended family (Kuhar, 2011); however, when the family moves outside the family support network, problems with balancing work and family demands may occur. This is especially the case during military deployment. In such cases military families without a support system may move near their extended family to compensate for the absent service member's support (Boia, Marques, Francisco, Ribeiro, Dos Santos, 2018). Furthermore, the loss of the service member's emotional and functional support due to deployment results in higher individual responsibilities for the stay-at-home spouse (Boia, Marques, Francisco, Ribeiro, Dos Santos, 2018), and ultimately can lead to stress.

1.2.3 Parenting between field work, exercises abroad and ultimately risky deployments

The reaction of children to the long-term absence of the parent is highly dependent on the children themselves (Pincus et al., 2004); it also depends on how the stay-at-home mother or father copes with and behaves during the separation (Drummet et al., 2003). Previous research reveals that a lower level of parental stress is associated with positive parenting behaviour (Zhang, Cubbin and Ci, 2019). Parents reporting parental stress were much more likely to also report emotional problems in their children during the deployment (White, de Burgh, Fear and Iversen, 2011). Months of separation are stressful for the spouse who has stayed at home, which can also have consequences for the children. There are inconclusive results of research investigating the impact of the emotional support and caring relationship between partners on their behaviour towards their children (Zhang, Cubbin and Ci, 2019).

Among the important risk factors are deployment and parental stress, while a protective factor is the ability to effectively balance work and family.

The greatest difficulties in accepting the separation have been reported by mothers of children aged under five years old (Andres and Moelker, 2010), although White et al. (2011) established that research into the impact of the children's age is inconclusive, as well as the influence of the children's gender. It has been established that the number of deployments and the deployments' length may also affect the child's adaptation to parental absence (Barker and Berry, 2009; Chandra et al., 2009; Lester et al., 2010); however, this seems to vary between countries. Regardless, deployment is one of the key military specific risk factors influencing a decrease in children's wellbeing (Skomorovsky et al., 2018). Based on similar findings, certain countries have already incorporated preventive measures into their military family guidelines,

and limited the length of deployments to a maximum of 6 months, along with a stay-at-home period of 24 months (Skomorovsky et al., 2018).

1.2.4 Ask not (only) what you can do for your country, but also what your country offers your family in return

At the national level Slovenia has been adopting family-oriented policies over the years. The country offers basic family support such as maternity, paternity and parental leave, and the right to decline night shifts or other similar obligations until the child reaches a certain age. A strong public childcare network, for children from 11 months onwards, is also an important factor that enables and supports the employment of both parents. Beyond this, there are various formal documents which provide a normative background for the Slovenian Armed Forces to provide various types of military support.³ The question is whether these documents address only service members, or also their families? Furthermore, it should be reconsidered whether the current institutional support adequately addresses the modern military family's needs.

1.3 The health outcomes of the military family

Throughout the centuries, military organizations, much like any other institution, have been subject to evolution, and the position of the military in society has been changing as well. Service members are particularly vulnerable to behavioural and other health problems, due to the specifics of the military profession and the tasks they are required to perform (especially when abroad). Although service members face similar challenges to other professions in adjusting to work and personal difficulties, maintaining adult relationships and raising children, they also face some unique challenges, including frequent absences and (risky) deployments, both of which result in disruptions to family routines and compromised parenting (Wojda et al., 2017). Although most service members adequately cope with this, some may not. This can result in individual and familial difficulties (e.g. interpersonal violence, suicide, substance abuse) and diminished military readiness.

Several negative health outcomes in military families have been identified, mostly in the USA, the UK and Canada. Based on an overview of the research, the following military family health outcomes have been identified:⁴ misuse of psychoactive substances (e.g. alcohol, drugs, and medicaments); parental depression & PTSD; intimate partner violence; relationship dissatisfaction; poor child-parent relationships (and attachment style); and negative child wellbeing.

³ *The Service in the Slovenian Armed Forces Act, the Directive for Comprehensive Support in the Slovenian Armed Forces, the Directive for Psychological Support for Service Members, the Standardized Operational Procedure for Information-Sharing between Service Members and their Families, etc.*

⁴ *These will be modified for the purpose of our research if necessary.*

1.3.1 Misuse of psychoactive substances

Psychoactive substances (alcohol, drugs, and medicaments) are one of the identified negative health outcomes in a variety of research studies in both military and civilian populations around the globe. For example, alcohol consumption is highly problematic in Slovenian society, since the statistical data gathered by the National Institute for Public Health shows that Slovenians drink on average 11.5 l of pure alcohol per person per year, which greatly exceeds the EU average. According to the World Health Organization, this places Slovenia among the countries consuming the highest level of alcohol. The high level of alcohol use is directly associated with liver disease, traffic fatalities, suicide, decreased work productivity, poor job performance, and so on. Families in which one or more member is drinking hazardously are at increased risk of relationship problems, intimate partner violence, and child maltreatment (Juvan, 2019, MilFam interim report). A higher level of alcohol use, as well as drug abuse, could have its roots in early childhood experience, stress, poor ability to manage conflict, depression, combat experience, severe familial financial problems and, among other things, also the cultural acceptability and normality of consumption of psychoactive substances (e.g. alcohol).

1.3.2 Depression and PTSD

Research shows correlations between alcohol problems and combat experience, along with PTSD and depression (Wright et al., 2012). Depression has its roots in mental health problems, while impact factors can be identified at various levels (stress, work/family conflict, negative communication, combat experience, deployment, etc.). Combat experience is also related to risk behaviours and other relationship problems (Jakupcak, 2007; Killgore, 2008). Foran et al. (2017) surveyed service members' PTSD in correlation with child mental health; the study documented the association between parental PTSD symptoms and child mental health symptoms, especially during the post deployment reintegration period. The results showed that fathers' PTSD correlates with children's mental health issues. PTSD symptoms, anger, and general aggression may pose a significant problem for the psychological adjustment of children exposed to deployment transition challenges. Therefore, due to their side-effects, depression and PTSD are important to consider when we talk about familial health and wellbeing.

1.3.3 Relationship between the parent and the child

Military socialization with specific values and attitudes is reflected in parenting styles (Speck and Riggs, 2016). The relationship between the parent and child and the attachment style is important for the psychological development of a person. Insecure attachment may result in disorders (Baumrind, 1991) or a lower quality of the individual's life. On the one hand, affectionate, warm and responsive parenting increases the possibilities of a positive outcome in the parent-child relationship; on the other, cold and unresponsive parenting increases the chances of a negative outcome. People who have developed a secure attachment style are described as having happy, trusting and friendly relationships. The characteristics of military

service undoubtedly affect all family members, as well as the relationship between parents and children. Months of separation and the absence of a service member due to a military task are stressful and can influence the relationship between the service member and the child. Jensen et al. (1996) found that children of deployed parents were more likely to be depressed or stressed. Children are vulnerable to the consequences of the absence of parents, so they need to be given more attention by parents and institutions (Jensen et al., 1996).

1.3.4 Child wellbeing

Despite the extensive research available on wellbeing in civilian literature, wellbeing is a construct that has not been well studied in the context of military research. While civilians and military members share many of the same stressors, the military lifestyle introduces a new set of difficulties that service members and their families must manage and cope with (Skomorovsky et al., 2018). Researchers from different NATO nations (including Slovenia) collaborated to provide a comprehensive overview of wellbeing as it is understood in civilian and military research, developing a model of wellbeing that takes into account the complexity of military risk factors (stressors). The child's wellbeing can be defined through material and financial family wellbeing, the strength of social networks, the ability to gain education, the legal protection of the child's rights, their physical, psychological and emotional health, and also through the military demands on one (or both) parents, which influence various aspects of the child's wellbeing. A poor level of the child's wellbeing will likely negatively affect the military family and service member, and ultimately affect operational readiness.

1.3.5 Intimate partner violence

Intimate partner violence is one of the significant negative familial health outcomes (Clark and Messer, 2006), and it is a destructive relationship pattern within the family. Intimate partner violence is one of the factors leading to relationship dissatisfaction and family dysfunctions; it can affect the parent-child relationship and the parenting itself. The reasons for intimate partner violence can be found at various levels (e.g. personal experience at an early age, exposure to violence, combat situations, incapability to manage stress, etc). We estimate that it is very important to identify such behaviour (regardless of the fact that this may be interpreted as a personal or familial matter), prevent its escalation and address the outcomes of such behaviour where necessary.

Violence as such, and especially intimate partner or family violence, should not be acceptable for service members, among other reasons because it puts their ability to handle weapons under question. It also might affect military readiness.

1.3.6 Relationship dissatisfaction

Relationship dissatisfaction is an outcome of various factors, including frequent long-term absences, daily commuting and work-life conflict. The risk factors can be

found at the personal (depression, childhood experience, financial income, etc.) and at many other levels (e.g. job dissatisfaction spilled over into the relationship, being burned out, spouse's job demands, conflict between work and family expectations, inability to deal with conflicts between the partners etc.). Slovenian research data from military and police samples reveal some problems arising from long-term absences. For example, deployment can deepen relationship dissatisfaction since conflict could be frozen for the time being, instead of being communicated and solved. Upon return, in the post-deployment phase, the problems could become even worse.

Relationship dissatisfaction can be a negative predictor of job satisfaction and influences job performance, motivation, devotion, and so on in the military.

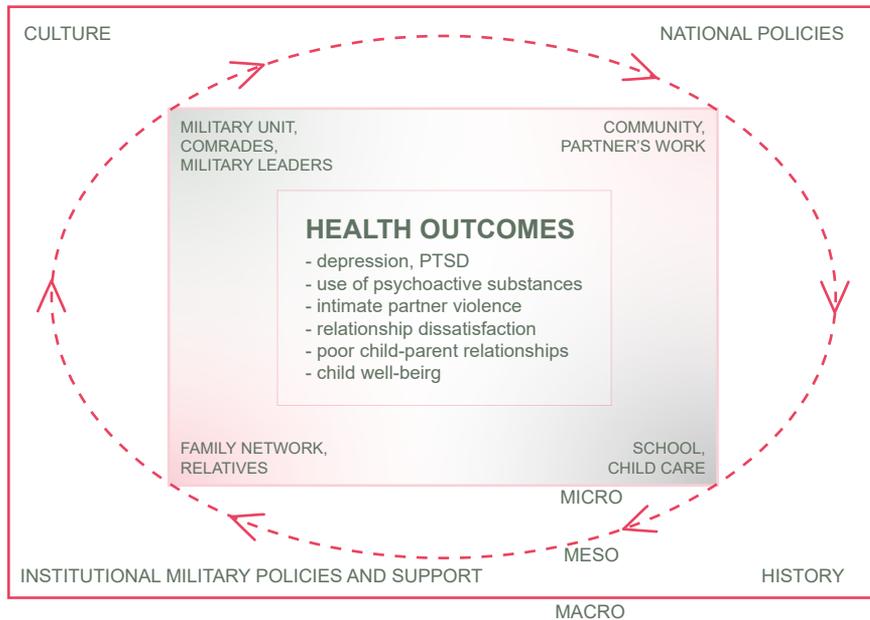
2 A THEORETICAL MODEL OF RISK/PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF MILITARY FAMILIES

The theoretical model has been developed around the central unit, which is the military family. It shows the risk and protective factors that may derive at various socio-ecological levels and affect health outcomes (Figure 1: The Model).

The *individual level* represents the individual characteristics of the military family (based on our definition of the military family⁵), i.e. the service member and their spouse (e.g. education, gender, age, number and age of children, etc.). At the *micro level* we observe individually (i.e. separately from each other) the following structures: the wider characteristics of the military family (e.g. internal dynamics, interpersonal relationships, parent-child relationships, etc.); the military organizational level (e.g. leadership, cohesion of the unit, comradeship, etc.); the spouse and their work environment; the extended family (e.g. three generations cohabiting, grandparents' support with childcare, etc.); and community (e.g. social network, such as peers and their role as a support/safety net, school, etc.). At the *meso level* we observe the interrelation of separate stakeholders from the micro level with each other, for example, the ability of partners to balance life and work is strongly influenced by the interrelationship of family needs, the service member's military demands, the spouse's work expectations, extended family support and a variety of other factors. Above or around all these levels is the *macro level*, which comprises national family policy and normative institutional support for military families in particular. Furthermore, the macro level can be observed through the lens of national culture, values, the position of families in certain society, and attitudes towards the roles of men (fathers) and women (mothers) in the family. Finally it can also be interpreted in the context of the position the military organization has in society (e.g. public opinion, media).

⁵ We have applied the United Nations definition: the family is constituted of at least one or more adults taking care of a child/children (Švab, 2010). For the purpose of our research one of the parents must be a member of the Slovenian Armed Forces and there must be at least one child younger than 18 years to classify the family as military family.

Figure 1:
A theoretical
model of risk
protective
factors for
military family
health outcomes



Conclusion
– why is
the family
important
for the
military?

A variety of expectations affect the individual's everyday life and can lead to various dysfunctions (e.g. stress, family violence, alcohol abuse, depression), with a long-term negative impact on society. The health and wellbeing of each individual as well as of the family is also important for the military.

It is not only that the military influences the family, it is also the other way round. It has been shown by various authors (e.g. Segal and Harris, 1993; Schneider and Martin, 1994; Dandeker et al., 2006) that the overall satisfaction of service members significantly influences their readiness and job performance. For example, Andres and Moelker (2010) established that overall family wellbeing, with little (or no) stress and work/family conflict, significantly influences the deployed parent's wellbeing and the way they perform their tasks.

Hence it should be understood that it is not only the soldier who is subordinated to military demands, but the whole family. Military socialization and identification is not only a matter for the service member; instead it should be perceived as a matter for the family. Either the family supports the service member, their job and military demands, or it will support the service member in finding another, less totally consuming job.

The model described above, with the central position of military family health outcomes and risk/protective factors at various levels, will be tested in the Slovenian environment for the first time – on both a military and a civilian population. We will use a triangulation of measures, e.g. primary and secondary data analysis, qualitative expert interviews, in-depth interviews, focus groups and a quantitative survey. The results will reveal how healthy military families are, and furthermore, the impact of military demands and which are the most common or most useful protective measures for familial health and wellbeing.

I will conclude with the following thought: the position of the military profession in society is not only measured by job performance, but also by the way the military treats military families.

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POMEMBNOST VOJAŠKIH DRUŽIN ZA VOJAŠKE ORGANIZACIJE IN VOJAŠKO SOCIOLOGIJO

THE RELEVANCE OF MILITARY FAMILIES FOR MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS AND MILITARY SOCIOLOGY

Povzetek Prispevek predstavlja zgodovinski pregled odnosa med vojaško družino in vojaško organizacijo, od prepovedi, zanikanja in nadzora do vključitve v vojaško skupnost. Prelomnica v obravnavanju družine je prehod na poklicno popolnjevanje, ko postane lojalnost družine do vojske bistvena za pridobivanje in zadrževanje vojaškega osebja. Hkrati je vojaška družina postala zanimiva vojaškosociološka tematika raziskovanja, tako v kontekstu sociološkega koncepta pohlepnih institucij kot v dihotomiji ravnotežja med delom in življenjem. Vojske, ki so nastajale na slovenskih tleh skozi zgodovino, so sledile svetovnim trendom glede obravnave družin, slovenski vojaški sociologi pa so prispevali pomemben delež spoznanj o slovenskih vojaških družinah h globalnim vojaškosociološkim dosežkom.

Ključne besede *Vojaška družina, zgodovina odnosa med družino in vojsko, celostna skrb za pripadnike SV, raziskovanje vojaških družin v vojaški sociologiji.*

Abstract This article presents the history of relations between the military family and the military organization, which have varied from forbiddance, to ignorance, regulation, and finally to inclusion in the military community. The turning point appeared at a time of introducing all volunteer force when the loyalty of families towards the military became important for recruitment and retention of service members. This was also the moment for military sociology to discover the military families as interesting to deploy the general sociological concepts of greedy institutions, work-life balance, negotiation between military and family, etc. The militaries in Slovenian territory followed these trends. Slovenian military sociologists contributed an important part of the knowledge of Slovenian military families to global social science achievements.

Key words *Military family, history of relations between military and family, comprehensive care for service members of the SAF, the research of military families in military sociology.*

Introduction In this article, we intend to explore two research questions. The first deals with the military family unit and its importance to the military establishment, while the second focuses more on when and how the military family unit becomes relevant to social sciences, especially to military sociology. Furthermore, we will present international and national, specifically Slovenian, trends with regard to the evolution of the perception of the military family.

Relations between the military and the families of soldiers varies over time and according to specific historical events. In some cases, the family and its needs can become a strong incentive to enlist and remain loyal to the military as it brings with it a specific lifestyle, as well as assisting in forming bonds with people who are living through similar experiences. In other cases, enlisted family members may choose to keep their families out of the institutional impact of the military. In either case, social sciences surveys indicate a high importance of family for military morale and efficiency.

1 WHEN DOES THE FAMILY UNIT BECOME RELEVANT TO THE MILITARY?

1.1 The military family from forbiddance to inclusion

The relationship between the armed forces and the families of their members has developed and changed over time. Families of military personnel were ignored and left behind for a long time; in some cases, it was even forbidden for military members to have a family (Malešič et al, 2015, p 58). Soldiers' conjugal families have usually been problematic in institutional terms. The soldier's first obligation was supposed to be to the military institution (Phang, 2002, p 352). Members of the armed forces were socialized according to a job-comes-first philosophy. The burden of responsibility for one's family can be in contradiction to the primary fidelity to the armed forces. Various armies in the past have taken different precautions in order to prevent their members from getting married and from establishing families, since family formation was regarded as incompatible with military service. It was also believed that a soldier with a family was less productive and efficient than one without. According to Phang (ibid.) these restrictions to marriage characterized 18th and 19th century European armies. The US armed forces in the 19th century did not prohibit their service members from getting married; however, married conscripts were not allowed to enlist. In 1847, the US Congress adopted an Act which prohibited married men from joining the armed forces (Albano, 1994, p 285).

1.2 Militaries in Slovenian territory and the families

In what is now Slovenian territory, there have been different empires whose attitudes with regard to military families were similar to other European countries in the same period. In the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1867-1918), the armed forces did not support the marriage of younger officers, because it was difficult for them to sustain the cost of having a family. The military was also not prepared to carry the

costs of military widows and orphans. In order to handle this problem, the authorities introduced the 'marriage bail' (Heiratkaution), a special fund to which all officers were supposed to pay a contribution or contribute a part of their salary during service before they were allowed to get married. Officers from combat units had to contribute double or more, because of the higher probability of them being killed during service. The yearly yield of the fund was distributed to the officers' widows and retired officers. There were no regulations of retirement and officers had to work until they were unable to serve¹. The officers were forced to find a spouse among the higher social strata and better situated families, or delay their plans to build their family until later on in life. On average, officers entered marriage ten years after their civilian peers, they had fewer children, and many did not manage to marry at all (Stergar, 1998, p 380).

The military of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenians and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918-1941) imposed similar regulations on officers' marriages as the Austro-Hungarian Empire. They had to pay a marriage bail. They were supposed to serve at least five years before asking for permission from higher officials to get married, and to have the rank of lieutenant or higher at the time of asking. There were some military apartments accessible only to married officers; unmarried (and younger) officers had to live in the barracks or officers' dormitories (Bjelajac, 1988, p 132).

During WW2, Slovenian territory was divided between four different occupying forces with the intention of carrying out ethnic cleansing of the Slovenian nation. The nation joined guerrilla national liberation units in huge numbers, and although the combatants (men and women) were advised not to have intimate relationships because there was a high probability of the loss of life, it sometimes happened that pregnant female combatants needed some care and protection. When the guerrilla forces liberated the area of Kočevski rog, they formed a field command base there (Baza 20, between April 1943 and December 1944). It included some logistical facilities, among them field hospitals for injured combatants. Aware that some children became orphans in battles and that some of the female combatants were pregnant, the leaders of the resistance movement founded a field hospital in Spodnji Hrastnik meant as a paediatric and maternity ward (Štangelj, 2015).

After WW2, European countries, among them former Yugoslavia (1945-1991), formed armies based on conscription, which has led to the emergence of 'mass armies'. That compulsory enlistment should be seen as an honour and not only as a duty to one's country was a belief that governments strictly enforced. The honour of serving was built off the specific role that the military organization had in the socialization of young men. It was believed that through their enlistment they would be guided to grow from boys into men, ready to accept their duties to their country (working, paying taxes), as well as to their families (care for spouse and children,

¹ *Feldmarschall Josef Radetzky (1766-1858) commanded Austrian troops in Italy well into his nineties.*

taking care of their material needs). Military training as an integral part of civic duty would raise citizens/civilians who were ready and trained as a potential reserve force, an untapped resource should there be a sudden need for more trained soldiers in the event of military conflict. 'Draft dodging' or the evasion of conscription was harshly dealt with by the government and the military. Some countries may have allowed for conscientious objection on a religious or philosophical basis, offering alternative service outside of combat roles, although these often demanded that the person stay in training for significantly longer, which suggested that the position held less honour or was even intended as a sort of punishment. In other countries (most often socialist countries), these alternative services did not exist and draft evasion was a criminal offence, punishable by a prison sentence (Jelušič, 1997, p 151).

The family of the enlisted person was considered to have no significant positive influence on military training. In fact, the opposite was the case, as the military strove to teach discipline, perseverance, determination and respect, which was in many cases the opposite of the permissive upbringing in family units. Strict and uncompromising training was what would form the future soldiers/warriors. As such, it was imperative that the conscripted soldier be kept away from the family, often being sent to serve and train far from their hometown. This was based on the belief that the training would be more successful if they had as little contact with their families as possible. Any homesickness would be overcome by intense training, even though it was often bizarre and needlessly repetitive (repeated cleaning of weapons, shoes, beds, common areas and toilets, as well as repetition of ceremony drills). The conscripted soldier was often very young, just barely beyond the age of majority, and did not have strong intimate bonds back home, much less their own families (wife and children).

Conscription armies required a wide range of personnel to be employed along with the conscripted soldiers. This included non-commissioned officers, officers, and logistical staff, often civilians, filling in for certain specific roles (quartermasters, cooks, cleaners, etc). In contrast to the conscripted soldiers, these personnel often had families, which would most often live in close proximity to the barracks.

In the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA), it was common for families of officers to move with the officer to different parts of the country, in connection with the officer's promotion through the ranks. Spouses of officers often had to give up their own careers, because it would have been difficult to search for a job in new surroundings, not to mention that they were obliged to run the household and take care of the children, with their husbands frequently absent. To keep these migrations from taking too much of a toll on the families, a selection of military-owned housing was available. Military-owned apartments were grouped closely together in neighbourhoods. It was very often the case that children of military families, moving with their families, would only form bonds with children from other military families, because they rarely ventured outside their neighbourhood, which often included schools and gyms they could attend. Military-owned housing was a special reward given to officers

(Juvan, 2008, pp 207-212). The higher the rank of the officer, the bigger the apartment offered to him. However, in this case, the officer's family was an integral part of his social ranking. He could only apply for military-owned housing once he had a family (wife and children). An unattached officer fresh out of the military academy was expected to live in a sort of singles home, organized in military buildings².

The officer's family was seen as part of the military community, which we also know from Moskos (1988), who described it in his institutionalism/occupationalism model. Moskos used this model as a schematic foundation for research in military institutions, which are increasingly expected to adjust to their civilian environment. This means that they must move away from upholding their legitimacy through the military institution and through simple patriotism. They are expected to defer to the demands of the wider job market, especially in the case of recruitment and retention of military personnel. The change that led to this was the switch from conscription to voluntary recruitment. In the US, this happened after the end of the Vietnam War (after 1973), while in Europe this process began after the end of the Cold War in Belgium and the Netherlands (1992-1995), with the rest of the European countries following their lead, and with rare exceptions (Switzerland, Austria, Greece, Turkey, Finland, Lithuania³, Estonia and Sweden⁴).

1.3 The Slovenian Armed Forces and military families

The Slovenian Armed Forces, established on the basis of a former territorial military component of the Yugoslav defence forces, and supplemented by individuals and units developed during the Slovenian War for Independence (1991), continued the conscription system of recruitment for a time.

The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, which was accepted on 23 December 1991, stated in Article 123 that "*Participation in the national defence is compulsory for citizens within the limits and in the manner provided by law*". Therefore, citizens have a duty to take part in national defence, and this matter is further elaborated in the Military Service Act (1991). In comparison to the former Yugoslav system of training, the duration of compulsory military service was reduced to seven months (in comparison to the twelve months that conscripts had to serve in the final years of the existence of the former YPA). Conscientious objection was legalized, introducing alternative civilian services, lasting the same seven months as military service (Jelušič, 1997, p 203). As Slovenia is geographically a small country, it was difficult to deploy conscripts far away from home (in order to avoid families' influence on

² For example, the building currently housing the Ministry of Defence in Ljubljana was known in the YPA as the military Hotel Triglav, mostly reserved for unmarried young officers.

³ Lithuania abolished its conscription in 2008. In May 2015 the Lithuanian parliament voted to return to conscription, and the first conscripts began their training in August 2015.

⁴ In Sweden, after having ended the universal male conscription system in 2010, as well as deactivating conscription in peacetime, the conscription system was re-activated in 2017. Since 2018 both women and men have been conscripted on equal terms. The motivation behind reactivating conscription was the need for personnel, as volunteer numbers had proven to be insufficient to maintain the armed forces.

the conscripts). This helped the families of conscripts to have regular contact with their sons, who were allowed to visit home on a weekly basis (at weekends). It was hard at the time for NCOs and officers to maintain discipline, comradeship and loyalty to the military, although the close ties with families were not a major reason for de-activating conscription later on. A high-ranking officer of the SAF with personal experience of the military training of conscripts explained: „It is my belief that contact with families or the lack of it was the least of the issues that threatened discipline among conscripted soldiers in the SAF. There were several other reasons that were more important, chiefly among them: the confusion and disorganization of the system, with the rules too loosely defined and the officers in charge trained poorly” (Humar, 2020).

After 1995, more and more excuses to avoid military training were employed by the conscripts (health reasons, objection reasons), the number peaking in 2001, when more members of the appropriate age cohort were excused from military training than those who went through it. The legislative and executive power of Slovenian political leaders decided it was time to switch from compulsory to voluntary recruitment.

The Ministry of Defence introduced an AVF (All Volunteer Force) through a large scale project (with 16 sub-projects) under the acronym PROVOJ (*Prehod na poklicno vojsko, dopolnjeno s pogodbeno rezervo*) (*Transition to an professional army, complemented by a contracted reserve*). It predicted all the possible setbacks to introducing an AVF, as well as steps to avoid them (Šteiner, 2015, p 96-97). Among other important issues brought up, PROVOJ mentioned military family support programmes. This was discussed as part of a sub-project on care for adequate working conditions and the welfare of service members (Juvan, 2008, p 213), giving the impression that these support programmes would be an important part of the proposed process of military professionalization.

The end of compulsory military service and introduction of the AVF had some (expected) implications for the family demography of the SAF. Military conscription produced a large proportion of the force composed of young unmarried men, with a high turnover. The proportion of the force that was likely to be married (officers, non-commissioned officers, and regular soldiers) was much smaller. After the conversion to the AVF, the personnel turnover would be reduced; the service members would remain in service longer (five to ten years with the possibility of repeating the term, up to age 45). As they aged they would be more likely to marry and have children, and the proportion of the force that was married and with children would increase (as was the case in the US military before and after 1973 (Segal and Segal, 2003, p 226)), although not immediately after the change of the manning system. The SAF expected that the military system still had some years to adjust to these changes.

The introduction of an AVF created new conditions for the members of the SAF and for their families. Despite the fact that the SAF had officers' and NCOs' families to

care about even during the conscription period, the care and support for families of SAF professional soldiers emerged as one of the necessary fields to be improved, and necessitated legal grounds (Juvan, 2008, p 214). Five years after introducing the AVF, the Slovenian parliament set a new legal framework for family support programmes in 2007, accepting the new Act on conditions of military service, called the *Service in the Slovenian Armed Forces Act* (SSAFA). Soldiers were optimistic with regard to support programmes, but the reality of introducing them remains insufficient.

An important part of the SSAFA considers comprehensive care for service members, also mentioning the possibility of extending this care to family members. For this purpose, the SSAFA defines family members as the “spouse, married and unmarried, spouse in a homosexual partnership (if registered according to the *Civil Partnership Registration Act*, adopted in 2005) and children, biological and adoptive until maturity” (SSAFA, Article 76).⁵ The cited beneficiaries do not include extended family members, such as parents or grandparents. This may cause some problems for service members who are single, without children and still live at home with their parents. Their parents are their only family. A survey on the participation of the SAF in international peace operations (Jelušič et al, 2005) has shown that parents are an important source of stress and worry for service personnel during their missions abroad, especially when their parents at home are elderly or ill.

There was a similar statement in an internet post, where the author is posing the question of what we know and what we do not know about military families; “Unmarried and unpartnered service members are an understudied population, and it is not at all clear what family means to these individuals. Is it the family of origin (e.g. parents, siblings), a significant other, or even Fido or Fluffy?” (Meadows, 2012). Eran-Jona and Aviram (2019, p 69) identified a problem in most militaries, which tend to think of the family in the traditional heteronormative way: mother, father, and children living together under the same roof. The reality is different and changing. Divorced families, single-parent families, cohabitation, and same-sex partners are examples of new family forms that are constantly growing. The ignorance towards new family structures in the work-life balance influences the acceptance of family-friendly policies and the commitment of soldiers to the military organization.

The primary concern of the comprehensive care for service members in the SAF is to take care of potential distractions which might have an effect on the capacity of soldiers to do their job. The comprehensive care includes: healthcare, psychological care, social care, legal assistance and legal counselling, religious care, and sports and leisure activities (SSAFA). Family members are entitled to only a few parts of the care plan. Under healthcare, they are entitled to attend lectures on a healthy lifestyle. Family members may get professional psychological help and counselling prior to and during the absence of a serviceperson while on a mission abroad. Social

⁵ *More on the concept of the military family in the article Military families in Estonia, Slovenia and Sweden – similarities and differences, written by Kairi Kasearu, Ann-Margreth E. Olsson, Andres Siplane, and Janja Vuga Beršnak.*

care includes counselling, assistance in dealing with housing problems and moving to a new place, advice in the case of a spouse's employment, and counselling and assistance in childcare. Family members may have religious support from military chaplains if required. They are also entitled to use the SAF's sport and recreational facilities, and are given the right to use holiday capacities at a moderate price. The SSAFA made many promises in a very broad spectrum of support activities that service members could expect from the military. There were additional policies, coordinated between different governmental offices, which should have been implemented to put all types of care into practice. There were some attempts from the defence administration to propose these policies, but they have since been lost to bureaucracy. These plans demanded additional finances to cover activities for service members and their families, which was a difficult subject to raise while the defence budget was progressively decreasing (2009-2017). In some cases, officials from other governmental sectors disagreed with benefits that military service members and their families were promised. The argument was that they were all members of the public administration, and should have similar wages and benefits. Their personal disagreement with treating military personnel as something special transformed into excuses as to why it was not possible to put SSAFA into practice⁶.

Although the SAF is aware of some of the problems that military families face, it is unable to provide enough help. Among other issues, there is not enough military housing for all service members. They usually decide to commute between their home and the barracks, which can be a taxing journey to make every day. It is more important for their families to remain settled in a space where they are near their extended family and their social network of friends, than to move somewhere without the support of the wider family unit and fewer social contacts. This is sometimes the reason why soldiers' families do not participate in the unit's social activities and support programmes. Some families are also unwilling to spend their free time at events that the military organizes, as they would prefer to keep their personal lives separate from their work lives.

2 WHEN DOES THE MILITARY FAMILY UNIT BECOME RELEVANT TO MILITARY SOCIOLOGY?

2.1 From the concept of greedy institutions to the concept of work-life balance

The first researchers to explore the relationship between the family unit and the military organization from a theoretical standpoint were American military sociologists. M. Segal introduced Coser's thesis on greedy institutions into the

⁶ *An example of this was the topic of childcare. The soldiers had suggested building special kindergartens near barracks or even within barracks, where they should have a guaranteed space for their children. The civil servants who were in charge of implementing these ideas instead protested. They said that Slovenia has a unique system of social care for children, and that introducing anything outside of this would be detrimental to the system already in place.*

military environment in the article *The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions* (1986), which became one of the most frequently cited articles in all sociological surveys concerning military families.

M. Segal and Harries organized the first impactful empirical research on military families. On the basis of their observed results (based on the US military) they identified a model of interdependence and the impact of the family environment on the military, as well as the impact of the military on the family environment (Segal M. and Harris, 1993, pp 1-2). The researchers recognized two key factors over which military families have the biggest influence: the retention of personnel and the preparedness of the armed forces. The study itself came about due to the rising interest of the wider public in military families after the Gulf War in 1991 and the military operation Desert Storm. The soldiers who participated in these operations were faced with media attention because of several instances of insubordination, rejecting orders that would have moved them to the Persian Gulf due to family reasons, or fulfilling those orders and leaving behind children without parental care. The military began to become more aware of the issues of military families, and the rising need for more realistic military family support in the case of mass deployment. The study suggested that the spouse had an important say in whether the soldier stayed on the military career path or not (similar to Rosen and Durand 1995). The factor that seemed to be the most important to the preparedness and effectiveness of a unit was the soldier's perception of the officer's level of care towards the soldier's family.

Orthner and Pittman's (1988) research featured 375 married members of the American Air Force, and realized that the spouse's perception of the level of support they had been given from the military, as well as their opinions towards the organization, were key factors in the airmen's loyalty to their workplace.

Rohall and others (1999) studied the difficulties that military families of members of the PATRIOT battalion had had in adjusting to their deployment in South Korea in 1994. They found that families of higher ranked officers had an easier time adjusting to the deployment. They also realized that soldier morale was much higher when their families were well-adjusted (the higher the soldiers' morale, the more well-adjusted they thought their families were to the military lifestyle), and that the perception of the level of support given to the family was positively connected to its level of adjustment. The more the soldiers felt that their families at home were being given institutional support, the greater was their perception of how well-adjusted they were.

In 2001, Moelker and Van der Kloet carried out a study of the spouses of members of the Netherlands Armed Forces who had just come home from a nine-month deployment, participating in missions KFOR I, SFOR 8 and UNFICYP. They also identified the importance of the spouse's relationship with the military. They pointed

out that the military organization is “slow to take responsibility for military families” (Moelker and Van Der Kloet, 2003, p 203).

Dandeker et al. (2006, p 2) mentioned that the health and well-being of military personnel is key to effectiveness in military operations, and that the happiness of their family is part of that.

Bourg and M. Segal (1999) confirmed that the spouse’s opinion of a military career influences the recruiting process, staff retention, and the morale and loyalty that the soldier displays towards the military. The issue of loyalty towards the organization was important for further study of military families. The level of support that the military organization gives to the families of their soldiers influences the acceptance of the family towards the military lifestyle and eases their adjustment in the event of deployment (Juvan, 2008).

All of these research studies were carried out in military organizations in countries that were faced with the problem of military family support due to manning as well as having soldiers deployed abroad earlier than other countries (the case of the US, Great Britain, and the Netherlands). After the end of the Cold War, these issues became important to almost all European armed forces, bringing along the importance of researching military families. As military organizations began sharing their experiences with military family support, the same was happening between military sociologists during international conferences, who shared their research and began comparing it with others. In this case, we should especially mention the beginnings of military family research in the European research environment (ERGOMAS) and in international sociology (ISA, RC01 Armed Forces and Conflict Resolution).

ERGOMAS (European Research Group on Military and Society) was formed in 1986. The founders decided to work in ‘working groups’ (WG), which are formed when there is a critical mass of scientists with similar research interests, such as the military profession; public opinion, media and the military; morale, cohesion and leadership; women in the military; and the democratic control of armed forces, just to name some of the most sustainable. The theme of military families received enough supporters to be identified as a subject of importance at a meeting of the ERGOMAS members, held during the VIIIth Biennial Conference in Portorož, Slovenia. The decision to establish a new working group was operationalized in 2004, at the IXth Biennial Conference in Paris, where the first parallel session of the WG was held, (www.ergomas.ch/images/stories/documents/ixbiennial.pdf, 9.12.2019), chaired by the Dutch researcher Rene Moelker. Three papers were presented: the first establishing the theme and content of the WG (Rene Moelker, Understanding Military Families); the second presenting the anthropological aspect of families affected by peacekeeping (Maren Tomforde, The Emotional Cycle of Deployment); and the third dealing with the problems that military families face during peacekeeping (Jelena Trifunović, Maja Garb and Ljubica Jelušič, Peacekeepers’ Families in Slovenia: Challenges and

Trends). The Slovenian contribution at the first meeting of the military families' WG had shown that this topic was very relevant for Slovenian sociological surveys. The reason for this was the openness of the SAF to researchers' initiatives with regard to surveys of Slovenian peacekeepers. It correlated with the decision of the Slovenian government to extensively contribute to international operations and missions (IOMs), connected with the inclusion of Slovenia in the NATO Alliance in 2004. As the number of soldiers deployed to different IOMs increased, the need to prepare the soldiers and their families for long absences was identified as an important task for commanders and military psychologists. It was very urgent for them to have scientific and empirical feedback from the deployed units. These circumstances helped the sociological research team from Defence Research Centre to survey nearly all the rotations of SAF units to IOMs in 2004-2006⁷. Based on surveys of deployed personnel, Slovenian researchers have contributed several papers to the ERGOMAS WG on military families (Juvan 2009, Juvan 2011, Vuga 2019), and to many other international conferences and workshops.

The International Sociological Association (ISA) began to discuss military family issues at its XVth World Congress (Brisbane 2002, pp102-105), within the Research Committee RC01 Armed Forces and Conflict Resolution, dealing with core military sociology areas, such as the military profession, peacekeeping, military and masculinity, integration of women in the armed forces, armed forces and society, and multiculturalism in the armed forces. The forum to debate the family issue (including the military family) was a joint session of RC01, RC06 (Family Research) and RC32 (Women in Society), chaired by Mady Segal and Ann Denis (ibid. p 105, p 359). During this session, Paul Higate presented a paper on the *Impact on the Military Family of Partner Discharge from the Armed Forces* (ibid. p 359). His paper was the first attempt to bring the military family into the focus of sociological debates at the highest scientific level (at a congress which convenes every fourth year).

The ISA world congresses that followed Brisbane 2002 devoted entire sessions to military family challenges (Durban, 2006; Yokohama, 2014; Toronto, 2018). The development of the theme has shown the implementation of the concept of work-life balance into research into military families. Complementary to the debates at the global level, we observe the broadening of issues, connected and surveyed in military sociology networks with regard to military families. De Angelis and others (2018, pp 341-357) examined the ongoing issues affecting the military as a conceptual model on the military life course and family well-being, the impact of changing missions on families, stressors of military family life, physical and psychological injuries in families, and the long-term effects of service on families across the life course. The authors called for continued cross-national research into military families in all of

⁷ *The Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Science, Education, and Sport, Government of Slovenia co-financed the project Slovenska vojska v mirovnih operacijah – družboslovna analiza dejavnikov vpliva na mirovno delovanje Slovenske vojske (Slovenian Armed Forces in Peace Operations – the Social Science Analysis of Factors Influencing the SAF's Peacekeeping), led by Professor Ljubica Jelušič.*

their diverse forms, considering the changes in families and the changing nature of warfare (ibid. p 354).

The scientific relevance of the investigated topic should be observed through its visibility in the handbooks and compendia from the surveyed science (military sociology). The *Handbook of the Sociology of the Military*, edited by Giuseppe Caforio (2003), included two contributions dealing with military families: *Military Families and the Armed Forces: A Two-Sided Affair?* (Moelker and van der Kloet) and *Implications for Military Families of Changes in the Armed Forces of the United States* (Segal and Segal). The second edition of the *Handbook of the Sociology of the Military*, edited by Giuseppe Caforio and Marina Nuciari (2018), has brought one (already mentioned) comprehensive contribution: *Military Families: A Comparative Perspective* (De Angelis, Smith and M. Segal). A compendia which has tried to overcome the two distinct branches within military sociology (civil-military relations versus the military as an institution) that have overwhelmed studies of the military was entitled *New Directions in Military Sociology*, edited by Eric Ouellet (2005). The chapter devoted to military families dealt with *Divergences in Traditional and new Communication Media Use Among Army Families* (Ender, 2005). In 2019, military families were comprehensively investigated from the theoretical, conceptual, empirical and cross-country points of view in a study *The Politics of Military Families: State, Work Organizations, and the Rise of the Negotiation Household* (edited by Moelker, Andres, and Rones).

2.2 Slovenian military sociology surveys of military families

Slovenian surveys of military families in Slovenia date back to 2004, when the Defence Research Centre at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana (DRC), coordinated the comprehensive research into the *Human Factor in the Defence System 2004-2006*⁸, consisting of several sub-projects. One of them, named *Balancing of Family Demands and Work Demands in Military Occupation*, was carried out by a questionnaire with 200 members (and their families) of the civilian population and 189 service members (and their families) in the SAF. The main aim of the survey was to highlight the work-life balance in the Slovenian military in comparison to civil society. The leaders of the sub-project published an article on the initial results of the survey, where they also mentioned unpredicted difficulties in reaching the sample of 200 military families (out of 1400 addressees) because service members did not allow the researchers to carry out the survey with their family members (Černič-Istenič, Knežević-Hočevar, 2006).

In 2008, Juvan defended her doctoral thesis at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences, in the military sociology approach to military families. Her dissertation on *Military Families: balancing demands between family and the military organization* was the first comprehensive Slovenian study of military

⁸ Project leader Professor Ljubica Jelušič; the project was commissioned by the Ministry of Defence (and with a very small subsidy from the Ministry of Science, Education, and Sport).

families, analyzing work-life balance in the military, the family and the military as greedy institutions, comparing the status of military families, and family support programmes in the USA, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, and Slovenia. She presented the history of military families in Slovenian territory at times of different empires and states, and concluded with her findings on institutional support, offered by the SAF to military families.

Among Slovenian scientific contributions in the field of military sociology dealing with military families, we should certainly highlight an article in *Current Sociology* “Work-family conflict between two greedy institutions: the family and the military”, published in 2013. This article analyzes the relationship between two greedy institutions – the family and the military – considering the demands they both place on their members. The article strives to establish which one of them is greedier, and consequently responsible for a potential work-family conflict. The in-depth analysis is based on the findings of 10 years’ research of service members in the SAF and a sample of their families. The results indicate that: (1) both the family and the military might be greedy institutions, although, especially during deployment, the greediness of the military outweighs that of the family; (2) the contemporary military organization does not only require service members’ loyalty, but the whole family’s support; (3) Slovenian military families remain highly supportive, regardless of military demands; (4) there are no significant differences in balancing work/family between genders ($p=0.119$), with women reporting less work-family conflict than men ($p=0.041$) and women feeling more support for their deployment from their family and friends than men (Vuga-Beršnak, Juvan, 2013).

The research endeavours to make a more comprehensive survey on military families in the SAF continued in 2019. The Slovenian Agency for Scientific Research decided to finance a project on “Military-specific risk and protective factors for military family health outcomes” under the leadership of Professor Janja Vuga-Beršnak from the Defence Research Centre (University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences). The team of military sociologists, family sociologists and psychologists will measure what risk and protective factors may arise from different eco-social levels, as well as their impact on military family health outcomes (Vuga-Beršnak, 2019)⁹.

Conclusion

We may conclude that the relationship between the military and the military family has been complicated and subject to change throughout history, largely depending on their existence in times of war versus times of peace and prosperity. There was also a difference in treatment towards families of privates, NCOs and ranking officers, and differences according to rank and years of service. It was the case for ordinary soldiers and younger ranking officers that a family was considered a hindrance on their effectiveness. They were warned away from starting a family, sometimes even forbidden to do so, and there were restrictions on marrying. Older and higher ranking officers were allowed families, but they married later on in life and as such had fewer

⁹ The research goals of the project are presented in this volume by Janja Vuga Beršnak.

children. Interestingly, it was also the case that those children of officers often became officers themselves, a subtle form of recruitment (so-called 'self-recruitment'). As we can see, often military families were forbidden, ignored or tossed aside by the military organization (Albano, 1994, p 283).

It was not until the formation of modern armies (1970s and onward), which were faced with laws that no longer guaranteed them a set number of fresh-faced recruits, that the military organization was forced to consider the benefits and problems of modern job markets. It became harder to recruit and retain new personnel. It did not take long to realize that the military family was one of the few tethers that tied a soldier permanently to the military organization, and the military had to accept the family as a necessary part of the soldier's effectiveness. Still, this did not bring much love into the relationship between military and family, competitive as they were over the soldier's time and loyalty. At their core, both the military and the family are greedy institutions (Coser, 1974) that demand almost full devotion. Driven by its need for effective and well-trained staff, the military needed to take a step further. Not just acceptance; it needed to offer military families its support. For a mutually supportive and fulfilling relationship, demands from both the military organization and the military family must be taken into consideration. It must be a mutually beneficial relationship, in which neither of the partners should feel ignored or pushed aside. The family of a soldier must not be forced to feel that they are only sacrificing for their loved one's chosen career path. In return for that sacrifice, the military family must be given special consideration and benefit. Spouses of military personnel are prepared to sacrifice up to a point, but they must feel that their sacrifice is being appropriately honoured (Moelker in Van Der Kloet, 2003 p 203).

Using a mathematical metaphor, the sum of benefits and obligations must be such that the benefits outweigh the risks. This is the only way that the soldier's family members are satisfied with the military way of life and the only way to retain well-trained staff on the military roster (Juvan, 2008). This conclusion is the cornerstone for any military family support, even though financial instability might prevent them from ever being realized.

With regard to the social welfare of the military, Segal and Segal (2003, p 232) identified an interesting phenomenon in modern societies – as governments become more concerned with social equality for its citizens, the military's bond over military family units lessens. If the government is providing affordable housing options, easing access to kindergarten and schools, and medical care for all, there is less call for the military to provide those things. It puts military families on the same standing as civilian families, although this does not mean that their specific issues are necessarily eliminated. Also, the problem of distance is increasingly bridged by the rapid advance of mobile phones and computers. As the training of soldiers becomes increasingly professionalized and specialized, it is less important that some of that training is shared with the military family unit, who are now becoming increasingly removed from the problems that the military family unit might have had in the past.

As such it exposes a unique problem for the militaries of the future – what incentives may they offer to a soldier, if they cannot secure their loyalty through their family? How will it keep its personnel, if an alternative profession might offer the same benefits, while presenting less potential for loss of life and personal safety?

Military sociology has shown interest in studying military families relatively late: at a time when families became a problem for the military. This happened at a time of deactivating conscription and introducing an all-volunteer force. All major sociological concepts on families were tested on military families, like greedy institutions, work-life balance, and so on. Slovenian sociologists successfully followed the findings in international surveys with their own in-depth analyses.

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VOJAŠKE DRUŽINE V ESTONIJI, NA ŠVEDSKEM IN V SLOVENIJI: PODOBNOSTI IN RAZLIKE

MILITARY FAMILIES IN ESTONIA, SLOVENIA AND SWEDEN – SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Povzetek Koncept vojaške družine je prepoznan in preučevan v mednarodnem akademskem ter raziskovalnem okolju, ni pa primerljivo uporabljan v različnih državah. Namen članka je razpravljati in razvijati koncept »vojaških družin« ter analizirati situacije, s katerimi se te družine spoprijemajo v vsakodnevnem življenju v Estoniji, Sloveniji in na Švedskem. Osvetlili smo nekatere podobnosti in razlike, ki izhajajo iz kulturnih, družbenih in vojaških posebnosti posamezne države. Naštete vplivajo in sooblikujejo identifikacijo družine kot vojaške ter tudi prepoznavanje družine kot vojaške v širši družbi. Slednje vpliva tudi na razvoj in obliko podpore ter storitev, namenjenih vojaškim družinam v posamezni državi.

Ključne besede *Vojaška družina, socialna podpora in storitve, Estonija, Švedska, Slovenija.*

Abstract The concept “military family” is very well known in the international academic sphere, but is not a widely used term in many countries. The aim of this article is to elaborate the concept of the military family and the situation of these families in Estonia, Slovenia and Sweden. The similarities and differences between these three countries are highlighted by showing how the cultural, social and military context may influence and shape the recognition of military families, services and support provision.

Key words *Military family, services and social support, Estonia, Sweden, Slovenia.*

Introduction

In recent years, many European countries have had to reconsider their militaries due to the events in Georgia and Ukraine. Besides the more insecure political situation and the new threats from terrorism and cyber-attacks, in general society and its institutions are continually transforming. In this rapidly changing context the question of the meaning and the stability of the institutions arises. Military sociologists have devoted extensive attention to the changes in military institutions and their associations with other institutions situated in the civilian sphere: the political system, the family, the labour market, the educational system. The well-known sociological concept of “greedy institutions” by Coser (1974) has given ground for military sociologists to emphasize the fact that the military and the family are institutions that put high demands on individuals’ commitment, time, loyalty and energy (Segal, 1986). Later, the third institution – civilian employment – was highlighted in the case of reservists (Edmunds, Dawes, Higate, Jenkins and Woodward, 2016). Following this differentiation of institutions, several theoretical and conceptual approaches have been developed. Beginning from a “military-civilian gap” approach, which emphasizes the division between the military and the civilian worlds (Rahbek-Clemmensen, Archer, Barr et al., 2012), the transmigration concept (Lomsky-Feder et al., 2007), transition theory (Castro and Dursun, 2019) and finally civil-military entanglements (Refslund Sørensen and Ben-Ari, 2019), are only a few examples to be highlighted.

Moelker, Andres and Ronés (2019) propose a triadic figuration approach to understanding modern military families. The triad of the ‘state’, the ‘armed forces’, and the ‘family’ are interdependent and can be elaborated at the societal, organizational and family levels. Due to their interdependence, a change in one sphere will cause changes in the other spheres. For instance, the shift from an institutional to an occupational approach to service in the armed forces (Moskos, 1977) could have influences on families, which are removed from the military community in situations where the military has progressed towards professions (Moelker, Andres and Ronés, 2019, p 11). Thus, the concept of the “military family” is constantly changing, and may have different connotations at different times and in different places. In the international academic sphere of military sociology, the concept of the “military family” is widely applied; however, recently scholars have begun to point out that the concept of a “military family” is not very common or used in every country (Gribble, Mahar, Godfrey and Muir, 2018; Truusa and Kasearu, 2019; Olsson and Olsson, 2019). In Estonia, the spouses and partners of military personnel do not identify themselves as a special type of family, and do not use a term like this (Truusa and Kasearu, 2019). Olsson and Olsson came to a similar conclusion in the case of Swedish families, stating, “*instead of being part of the military system, the families position themselves as outsiders*” (2019, p 263).

In this paper, we will explore how in European countries, particularly in Estonia, Sweden and Slovenia, the concept of “military families” is constructed, applied and elaborated within the framework of the triangle of the military, the state, and the family, and what kind of social programs families are entitled to. We follow

the assumption that the position of families with one or more members serving in the military, and whether this family is perceived to belong to the civilian or the military sphere, is shaped by the context of the welfare state, the development of the military system, and cultural and normative family ideology. As stated by Kasearu and Olsson (2019), the military and civilian spheres divide the obligation to support the wellbeing of children from military families, depending on the context of the welfare regime.

The idea of embeddedness is recently a widely used approach for different projects (e.g. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2019) and theories (Fossey, Cooper and Raid, 2019). Fossey et al.'s (2019, p 193) *Military Family Systems Model* (MFSM) is analogous with Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model – the military family is seen as a microsystem, the military as an exosystem, and society as Bronfenbrenner's cultural macrosystem. Based on two axes, external threat and internal stability, they differentiate between four types of systems: full conscription, a volunteer force, an army of occupation and civil war. Fossey et al. suggest that the first two are more widespread and characteristic of NATO countries. With regard to full conscription, "the military and, by default, the military family, are closely bound with society and there is an intimate mutuality of experiences and expectations" (Fossey et al., 2019, p 194); however, in volunteer militaries the bond between the military family and the military is partial, and comprises a smaller subset of society. In this paper, we will concentrate on the question of how society and defence forces construct military families and design and implement policy measures intended for these families. More precisely, we ask how the Estonian, Slovenian and Swedish military systems and position of military families is in accordance with the two types of Fossey et al.'s MFSM.

1 CHANGING FAMILY AND CHANGING MILITARY

Scholars have questioned the conceptualization of "the family" (Bernardes, 1999; Trost, 1990; Gubrium and Holstein, 1990) for more than 30 years, and we have witnessed how the family could no longer be equated only with heterosexual married couples who conceive children within wedlock. Unmarried cohabitation has spread (Kasearu and Kutsar, 2011; Hiekel, Liefbroer and Poortman, 2014) and single-parent families, same-sex couples and reconstituted families are more visible and recognized than ever before (Scherpe, 2013; Oláh, 2015). The legal ground of defining "family" has thus been replaced by the individual construction and identification of the family unit, which means that the definition of "the family" is continually being deconstructed and newly created by individuals (Raid and Kasearu, 2017) on the one hand, and on the other by professionals in social service organizations (Gümüscü, Khoo and Nygren, 2014) and by different social and cultural expectations (Fossey, Cooper and Raid, 2019). These new forms of families are also encountered in the military, and highlight new aspects of reconciliation between military and family life (De Angelis, Smith and Segal, 2018; Eran-Jona and Aviram, 2019; Skomorovsky,

Bullock and Wan 2019). For this reason, focusing on the question of the relationship between the family and the military, the fluidity of the family must first be considered.

Against this background, the military institution is also changing. The classical approaches of military professionalism (Huntington, 1957), civilianization of the military (Janowitz, 1960) and the institutional/occupational thesis (Moskos, 1977) have highlighted the constant changes within the military and the military institution. These approaches assist in explaining the variance between different countries and their military systems. According to Nolte (2003), European military law systems vary greatly according to the civilianization of the armed forces; for instance, on the basis of whether military personnel are seen as regular employees whose contracts are very similar to the civil service, or as representatives of a very demanding profession. Moreover, military sociology follows the assumption that the military is a subset of society, and is primarily determined by the socio-political system (the welfare regime) in which the military is embedded (Callaghan and Kernic, 2003; Kasearu and Olsson, 2019). This embeddedness thus shapes how the state, the military and the family divide and combine the obligations and responsibilities to support their members' wellbeing. Mittelstadt (2015) claims that in the United States the transformation from conscription to an all-volunteer force was followed by an expansion of military benefits, which were boosted by the retrenchment of social welfare benefits in the civilian sector. Mark Olson (2016) questioned this conclusion by pointing out that in the military the system of provisions and entitlements of military members exists as a means of recruitment, retention, and compensation. Olson points out that support for military personnel is initiated by two premises: to help cope with the specific challenges of military life, and to demonstrate general societal support for those who are fighting for their country.

To conclude, these two ideas – the embeddedness of the military in a social system, and entitlements as means of compensation, create an analytical framework to elaborate the meaning, position of and provision for military families in Estonia, Slovenia and Sweden.

1.1 Estonia, Slovenia and Sweden – similar or different?

These three countries have some similarities but in many ways they are also quite different. We will briefly point out the main similarities and differences in three domains: the family, the military and the state. According to the demographic family profile, the countries are quite similar: in 2018, the crude marriage rate in Sweden was 5.2 and Estonia 4.9; Slovenia showed the lowest rate at 3.1. The mean age at marriage for men varied from 32.2 years in Estonia and 32.6 years in Slovenia to 36.3 years (2018) in Sweden. In contrast women marry a bit younger, from 30 years in Slovenia to 33.9 years in Sweden. In 2017, the total fertility rate was highest in Sweden – 1.78, followed by Slovenia (1.61) and Estonia (1.59). The proportion of live births outside marriage differs by only 4 percentage points across the countries; in Sweden it is 54% and both in Estonia and Slovenia around 58%. This suggests

that in all three countries, unmarried cohabitation is widespread, marriages are postponed, and replacement-level fertility is not being reached.

Women’s educational attainment is another variable that can be used to describe the sociocultural status of families in a given society. Of course there are no direct causal relationships between women’s educational attainment and demographic characteristics (e.g. nuptiality, birth rate, age at first birth, divorce rate etc.) but one could say that these processes are interrelated and the variable of educational attainment can be used to describe the position of the family in a society (Parvazian et al., 2017, p 10). As can be seen in Table 1, with regard to tertiary education attainment the three countries under observation are quite similar. Sweden has the highest proportion of both employed and unemployed, followed by Estonia and Slovenia. However, in all three countries the employment rate for women is above the average rate of the European Union; thus, the countries clearly represent the dual-earner family type.

Table 1:
Population
by tertiary
educational
attainment,
employment and
unemployment
levels by gender
(Eurostat 2020)

		Estonia	Sweden	Slovenia
Population by tertiary educational attainment level, gender and age group 30-34 in 2017	Women	57.5%	59%	56.3%
	Men	37.7%	45%	31.6%
Population in age group 15-64 by proportion of employed in 2018	Women	71.4%	75.9%	67.5%
	Men	78.1%	78.8%	74.5%
Active population by proportion of unemployed in 2018	Women	5.3%	6.2%	5.7%
	Men	5.4%	6.4%	4.6%

Although their demographic profiles are similar, the cultural and social context is rather different. Slovenian society is known for cross-generational cooperation and strong family ties, which places Slovenian families in the Mediterranean cultural model (Kuhar, 2011). The majority of Slovenian families live near their extended families and the third generation (grandparents) very actively support families on a daily basis (e.g., Kuhar, 2011; Renner et al., 2006, etc.). In Estonia, but even more in Sweden, the likelihood that mothers mainly rely on grandparents to provide childcare is low (Jappens and Bavel, 2012). At the same time, research results in Sweden indicate that grandparents at different life stages have an increased likelihood of retirement compared with non-grandparents, and the more complex the family situation, the greater the likelihood of grandparents’ retirement (Kridahl, 2017). Thus, help from grandparents depends on the needs of the family, and in this regard, military-connected families may have a greater need for support from their extended families.

Alongside informal support, there are several benefits in all three countries offering a positive environment for parents to develop a quality relationship with their children (e.g. maternity, parental, paternity leaves), and in comparison with other European countries, the time off and benefits are rather generous (Thévenon and Neyer, 2014). Moreover, in all three countries the dual-earner family model prevails, and the state provides a strong public network for childcare, which enables both mothers and fathers to go back to work relatively soon after the birth of a child¹. The main differences in the family sphere are related to family values and gender equality. Sweden is far ahead according to the gender equality index and work-life balance; Slovenia is slightly above the European Union level and Estonia below it (EIGE, 2019). Likewise, previous studies have shown that, within the family, couples perceive their work-life balance and arrange their everyday lives differently in Sweden than in Slovenia and Estonia (Kasearu, 2009). The described societal context is in accordance with the military sphere – the proportion of women in the military is higher in Sweden and Slovenia than in Estonia. Furthermore, since 2018 Sweden has reintroduced conscription. It is a gender-neutral conscription; for the first time in the nation's history, both women and men are compulsorily enlisted in the military (Persson and Sundevall, 2019). Slovenia moved from a compulsory to a professional armed forces in 2003, and around 16% of the service members in the Slovenian Armed Forces are women. In Estonia, conscription is only compulsory for male citizens; the proportion of volunteer female conscripts depends on the year, between 1.5-3% of all conscripts, and the proportion of women in active service is around 9% (Siplane, 2017).

In addition, in all three countries there is a public educational system enabling people to acquire up to a university degree free of charge, and there is a public health system available to every person in the country. Thus, in these three countries the military as an institution is situated in the context of a universal welfare system, which may not leave many reasons for the military to develop their own social welfare system and social support programs.

1.2 The military family – an undefined concept?

The three countries have a very similar approach to the concept of the military family – it is not common or recognized in these countries. The family is mostly seen to belong to the civilian world, and the link with the military is made through the family member who is employed in the forces. In Slovenia, the project *Military Specific Risk and Protective Factors for Military Family Health Outcomes* used the United

¹ In Slovenia childcare is provided once the child is 11, in Sweden 12 and in Estonia 18 months old. However, there are some differences. In Estonia and Slovenia, all children have the right to a place in a kindergarten (European Commission: EURYDICE). https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/early-childhood-educationandcare-77_en.

In Sweden the amount of time is limited to 15 hours a week when the child's parent is out of work (jobless) or on leave for care of another child in the family. When the parents are working or studying, required childcare should be provided for the child and the family. All children, irrespective of the situation of their parents, are entitled to free preschool for at least 525 hours per year from the autumn term after they have turned three years old (2010b. The Education Act. SFS 2010:800 changed SFS 2019:410. Sweden).

Nations definition: a family comprises at least one or more adults taking care of a child/children (Švab, 2010). The military family is defined by adding the criterion that one of the parents/caregivers must be a member of the Slovenian Armed Forces to classify the family as a military family. The concept of the military family is not recognized in Sweden either (Olsson, 2018). The families neither talk nor recognize themselves as military, nor use an expression common in historical times: in Swedish the *soldatfamilj*, the soldier's family. In Estonia, the military family has a historical connotation; Soviet officers' families were a separate category, which still – 25 years after Soviet troops moved out of Estonia – sustains its influence in the mindset of older generations (Truusa and Kasearu, 2019).

Today, in all three countries, families usually have dual earners with dual careers trying to achieve equality between the grown-ups in the family (see Table 1). The profession of one (or several) of the family members does not automatically lead to a whole family's identification with any of the professions in question. When asked, the families talk about themselves as families with a family member employed in "the military" – the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF), the Estonian Defence Forces (EDF) or the Slovenian Armed Forces (Slovenian AF).

However, due to the general changes in the understanding the "What is the family" and "Who belongs to the family" in society, the armed forces must reconsider the definitions and adapt to new situations (see also Fossey et al., 2019). Primarily, the need to draw borders arises in the case of the provision of support and services. In Sweden, everybody who identify themselves as having a close relationship with a deployed employee of the Swedish AF can have part of the available support (SAF, 2018a). In Swedish, an umbrella term for people in a close mutual relationship is *anhörig* (in Danish and Norwegian *pårørende*). This Nordic extended meaning in the use of the concept *anhörig/pårørende* seems to produce a more limited circle of family members or next of kin when translated to the English "family" or "kinship". In Estonia, the main responsibility for the identification of family members is granted to the person involved in the military. For example, before their deployment soldiers indicate the recipient who, in the event of service-related injury or death, will receive 50% of the compensation, while the other 50% will be shared between those who have legal (widow) or biological links (children, mother, father) (Estonian Military Service Act § 197 RT I, 10.07.2012, 1). In Slovenia the normative frame for the military family is limited to the spouse (either married or not, including registered same-sex partnerships) and children (biological, adopted or stepchildren) (Slovenian Military Service Act, article 76, 2007). The latter reveals that service members' parents are not defined as part of the military family; the law excludes the extended family from its definition.

These are clear examples of how the military has solved the problem of the looseness of the concept of "the family" and adapted to new forms of families (unmarried cohabitations, same-sex couples etc.) in their legislation.

2 SPECIAL SUPPORT FOR MILITARY FAMILIES IN A SOCIETAL CONTEXT

Next, we will describe how the EDF and Slovenian and Swedish AF-s are approaching families with a member in the military, and how the support and services for these families have been developed. Thus, we follow the idea of embeddedness and describe the developments in a societal context.

2.1 The case of Slovenia: a deployment-centred approach

In Slovenia, the basic legal act is the Defence Act, originally adopted in 1994 and modified several times since, and the Military Service Act adopted in 2007². Military families are mentioned when defining financial reimbursements, and funeral costs and a pension for a spouse and children in the event of the death of a service member while on duty. The Military Service Act was adopted after compulsory military service was abolished, and the provision of support was oriented towards professional service members and their families. The Act defines various types of support, but the following are relevant to military families:³

1. Health support, but only as an addition to the aforementioned Slovenian civilian public health system;
2. Psychological support for service members and their families during various phases of deployment to operations abroad;
3. Religious support⁴ available to all family members (e.g. christening of children, Christian wedding, consoling, etc.);
4. Sports and free time activities available to the whole family (e.g. fitness centre available to family members in the military barracks, summer camps for children from military families, holiday facilities at various locations around Slovenia, etc.)
5. Low-cost military apartment rental for service members, if their post is more than 60 km from their current residence. However, since Slovenian service members would rather commute daily than relocate, this benefit is not widely used.

The Act also foresees financial support for family members of service personnel occupying peacetime posts abroad (e.g. a financial contribution for an unemployed spouse and children; employers must allow the spouse to join the service member when deployed on a peacetime post abroad, if the spouse's job is in the public sector, etc.).

Besides the official support foreseen in legal Acts, an important place is occupied by the extended family or community's emotional and practical support (Vuga et al.,

² *Afterwards certain additional documents for specific subfields were adopted within the military (e.g. psychological support, communication during deployment, etc.).*

³ *See more on this in the article in this edition by Ljubica Jelušič, Julija Jelušič Južnič and Jelena Juvan.*

⁴ *See more on this in the article in this edition by Matej Jakopič.*

2013b). Since Slovenian families tend to make their homes once and remain there for a lifetime, they make close and deep social ties in the community. This offers them various kinds of support when required (e.g. during deployment or in other stressful situations).

2.2 The case of Sweden: Non-profit voluntary organizations

It is only in recent years that the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) have recognized and developed social support for the families of military personnel. This grew in volume with the task of bringing the decision in 2010 by the Swedish parliament, the Act of Swedish Armed Forces Personnel in International Military Operations (2010a), into effect. The SAF must have coherent planning for their work with their families as a whole, and provide support in the form of information to families/next-of-kin of employees serving in an international military deployment. Notice that the Act specifies international military deployment, not national commissions or replacements. Long-distance commuting is rapidly increasing in Sweden, as well as other commuting flows (Andersson, Lavesson and Niedomysl, 2018).

To accomplish the development of appropriate actions of support, the SAF began to collaborate with and give financial support to idea-based non-profit organizations involved with the military, addressing families and individuals that are or have been deployed or are in the tangent of deployment. Through this the SAF provide support with a preventive and mobilizing orientation adapted to what is required, in time complementing what the Swedish welfare system offers to everybody in Sweden. The support of the soldier's family is an important part of ensuring soldiers manage to combine being a caring family member with being a deployed soldier with a focus on their commission.

The SAF organize family support with local military family support coordinators as a base; invite people to events such as family gatherings before, during and after international deployment; and publish web-based family information (SAF, 2019), involving families and/or individual family members giving support in different forms provided by non-profit and voluntary organizations (NPVO). These member organizations are run by and for soldiers and veterans (officers and servicemen – employees and previous employees of SAF) and their family members, making their voices heard, co-creating joint communities and providing preventive support, as well as stepping in to help.

For example, the Swedish Soldiers' Home Association provides professional therapeutic and social support as well as a "Preparation and Relationship Education/Enhancement Programme (PREP)", which offers educational and preventive measures for couples. PREP began to be adjusted to the Nordic context in Norway in 1998 by the Family Relations Centre (FRC) (Thuen & Tafjord Lærum 2005), and was later adapted to the Danish context (2010) and Sweden (2015) (Kildehuset kurs og kompetansesenter Modul Bad Gordon Johnsens Stiftelse, 2017). PREP has been evaluated in Denmark (Loft, 2014, Pollman, Hartmann-Madsen and Vedtofte, 2016).

In Sweden, in the context of international military deployments, the PREP has been found to be highly valued by participants⁵ (Olsson, 2019).

Another example of an involved NPVO is the organization *Invidzonen*, mainly a web-based network of family members, offering flexible support to partners, children and parents of soldiers/officers/service personnel, including support for deployed family members in their role as family member (Invidzonen, 2018). Within “the Family Zone” of Invidzonen, family gatherings are arranged with a focus on the children, and, for instance, coaching support for parents and children is offered. Other examples are the Swedish Veteran Federation (SVF) (Svenska Veteranförbundet Fredsbaskarna, 2019) and the Swedish Military Comrades’ Association (SMKR) (Sveriges Militära Kamratföreningars Riksförbund, 2017), both offering support to military employees and veterans, including in their role as family members. All these organizations collaborate, and family members are guided to get advised support from within this collaboration.

Soldiers/parents deployed abroad with young children (up to 18, and up to 20 years old if studying), have the right to compensation for additional costs at home (approximately 320 euros per month) and for children at home (425 euros per month). In recent years political initiatives in Sweden, such as tax deductions for household services, have created a private market for care services. This has made it possible for families to hire cheap care labour, such as domestic care work like cleaning or babysitting and childcare, including in the form of nannies and au pairs (Eldén & Anving, 2016). These opportunities are also available for families with a deployed family member, using the additional financial compensation to buy care and household services, which increases their independence (Olsson, 2019).

According to the Act of Swedish Armed Forces Personnel in International Military Operations (2010a), financial support for family members is also provided in the following circumstances: if a person serving in an international military deployment is injured and needs hospital care or dies or is killed, the SAF reimburses, at a family member’s application, a reasonable number of trips to the injured or dead person. Subsistence and the time taken on these trips are reimbursed on the same grounds as applications for reimbursement of witnesses by public funds. If a family member’s presence is of particular importance for the injured person’s rehabilitation, the SAF will, on application, give that family member reasonable reimbursement for the costs which such a presence entails. The SAF may also otherwise make such a contribution if there are special reasons for doing so; for example, a reasonable contribution to the costs of psychosocial support to families/next-of-kin relatives who need it, where it seems reasonable in view of other aspects of the circumstances.

⁵ *Seventeen couples were interviewed about their participation in PREP. The participating couples found PREP helped to relieve pressure in the context of deployment, improving their mutual communication and awareness of how they interacted and their mutual responsiveness. They recommended that other couples approaching deployments participate.*

2.3 The case of Estonia: inclusiveness and exclusiveness

In Estonia, similar to Slovenia, the family of military personnel come on the scene in association with international deployments within the framework of international operations and missions. The families of deployed service members have access to a restricted website, which provides up-to-date information, counselling, feedback and a chat room (Siplane, 2015, p 22) and, after the deployment, the families have the option of a weekend stay at a wellness centre. The aim is to support the reunion of the family members after the deployment.

Besides deployments, according to the Estonian Military Service Act, the family is mentioned in the case of compensation for resettlement to a peacetime post in another local government department. However, most support for family members or an appointed person (usually an unmarried partner) is regulated in the situation of injury or death of the service member. Paragraph 9 in the Act of Regulation on Covering Expenses for Medical Treatment in Case of Service-related Injury speaks about situations where treatment abroad is required (for example, in the case of some specific surgery); then the expenses of a chaperon are covered by the EDF (RT I, 22.03.2013, 22). The chaperon is usually a family member. The same applies to compensation in the event of service-related injury or death, and in the medical treatment of a service member who is still in service.

To sum up, the Estonian approach to military families is quite structured and hierarchical. The system could be described as a welfare pyramid, which means that the largest group in the military sphere forms the bottom of the pyramid – the reserve forces and their families. At the top of the pyramid are the fallen soldiers and their families. These families are eligible for different psychological and material support, and this group is the smallest. In the middle of the pyramid are different types of veterans: deployment, service leavers, and retired veterans.

Table 2:
Welfare
pyramid of EDF
members and
their families

Group	Approx. number of people	Services and benefits for the families
Reservists	80,000	None (while in reserve)
Conscripts	3300	Conscript's child's benefit (300 EUR per month)
Professionals	3300	Social and psychological counselling, 24h helpline
Deployment veterans	3100	Social and psychological counselling, 24h helpline, family reunion programme, housing programme
Service leavers (veterans)	1600	Social and psychological counselling, 24h helpline, housing programme
Retired veterans	800	Social and psychological counselling, 24h helpline, housing programme
Wounded veterans	80	Social and psychological counselling, 24h helpline, housing programme, family support programme
Fallen soldiers	36	Social and psychological counselling, rehabilitation, survivors' pension, lump sum compensation, family support programme

Thus, in the case of Estonia, families with a member involved in the military are defined and entitled to services depending on the type of the involvement. As a rule, the bigger the group, the less generous the military-provided welfare package is. The family is seen to belong to the civilian sphere and the responsibility for the wellbeing of the family is granted by the general welfare system.

Discussion and conclusion

The military family is not a widely used concept in the context of Swedish, Estonian and Slovenian society. Looking at the three countries, we can see both similarities and differences. First, due to the overall changes in the concept of “the family” and the spread of new family forms, the military has also had to face the new situation. In this regard, all three countries are in one way quite similar – unmarried cohabitations are widespread – but the legal context is different. In Sweden, the relationships of unmarried couples are regulated by a gender-neutral act – the Cohabitees Act (adopted in 2003, 376). In Estonia and Slovenia, the legal recognition of unmarried heterosexual couples is not so clearly defined⁶. In Estonia, the Family Act is mostly centred around the biological ties between children and parents, and cohabiting partners determine their relationship and union through everyday life practices, for example, taking out a bank loan together. The EDF has taken this approach and modified its legislation towards the idea that service members themselves define and identify who belongs to their families besides children and parents.

We can thus see how the military has accommodated the vagueness of the family, but on the other hand, we can also witness that the family is seen rather as belonging to the civilian realm, and the term “military family” is an imported concept. The first Swedish paper about military families was written after an educational (study) visit to Canada (Weibull, 2009). This was then the only Swedish publication about military families, and was a contribution to motivating the legislation in 2010. In Slovenia and Estonia, the idea of the military and the family as greedy institutions was introduced at around the same time (Juvan, 2009; Vuga and Juvan, 2013a; Kasearu, 2015). Thus, the concept of the military family is applied in academic spheres or for highlighting the peculiarity of families with a member in the military, rather than being a generally used term.

In all three countries the specific demands the military places on its service members and indirectly on their families are considered. However, the scope and extent of the support programmes and services varies. Swedish military family support has *a complementary and mobilizing orientation*. The support needs to be varied and in tune with the development of family life and the changes in post-modern families, as well as with what the Swedish welfare system offers. At family gatherings, the SAF finds it important to provide both information about the military context and about what to expect as a home-staying family member before, during and after

⁶ In Estonia, Parliament passed the Cohabitation Act in 2014, but the implementing Acts are still missing, which means that the Act has not properly entered into force. In Slovenia, same-sex couples rights are regulated by the Registration of a Same-Sex Civil Partnership Act, but in the case of heterosexual couples, marriage is assumed.

deployment, including the family member's own responses and reactions, and how to act preventively and manage emerging situations. Joining these gatherings could be seen in the perspective of the invited participants as one way of showing/demonstrating the familial relationship to each other and other people, as well as "doing the military family" (Morgan, 2011).

The combination in which the SAF offers family support both under its own management with local family support coordinators as key people, and in collaboration with idea-based member organizations, run by soldiers, veterans and/or their families, means that the supply can be adapted to what is required at the time. A crucial and basic view is to see the soldier and the veteran also as family members, in mutual collaboration with the members of the soldier's extended primary family. This collaboration makes it possible for soldiers to participate and carry out military deployments far from home and to have a home to return to (Olsson, 2019). To conclude, Sweden's family support is characterized by an offer of support with a preventive and involving focus.

In Estonia and Slovenia, the involvement of family members is mostly highlighted and supported during and after international deployments. This approach relies on the premise that being deployed requires long-term separation, stress, high risk of injury or even death (much higher than in most other professions), and so on. These are risk factors for several family health outcomes (e.g. the child-parent relationship, marital dissatisfaction, misuse of psychoactive substances, etc.). Therefore, even if the families with a service member do not identify themselves as 'military' families, they are still subject to specific circumstances that can have particular consequences on the quality of their family life. However, in Estonia and Slovenia the scope of the programmes is smaller, and there are not as many services for families as is the case in Sweden. In Estonia and Slovenia, military psychologists, social workers and other experts cooperate with colleagues in the civilian sphere, and it is mostly civilian specialists who deal with the problems of the family.

Based on these three country cases we can describe the programmes and services for families in the context of the military on the axis of exclusiveness and inclusiveness. It seems that support for families with a member involved in the military sphere depends on the specific need for services and on the available resources. Firstly, all three cases showed that the military is most inclusive towards families in the event of deployments and their possible fatal consequences. Serving only at home in a safe environment, there is not much for loved ones to worry about. Nevertheless, if the service includes deployment in international operations and missions then naturally the military addresses the family separately and a variety of different services must be available for them. It means that first, inside the military system, military personnel are divided into specific groups with varying rights and support measures. This is in accordance with the assumption that the military helps to cope with the specific challenges of military life – deployments (Olson, 2016). Secondly, the principle of the allocation of resources should be taken into account. If there are

too many military families, the provision of generous services and benefits will be limited due to a shortage of resources. Hypothetically, we can claim that there is an inverse correlation between the two, at least based on the Estonian example. We can combine this assumption with whether the family is a separate unit belonging to the civilian world, a link between the civilian and military spheres (the entanglement approach), or whether it belongs wholly to the military world.

Moreover, other dimensions and aspects determine the concept of the military family and the services and programmes families are entitled to. Although we did not go into detail in the country cases, three dimensions should be considered: differences in the wartime and peacetime legal environments; the predicted length of the possible conflict; and the type of defence force – fully professional or based on reserve forces.

In observing different examples of policies on military families, we must always note whether the regulation is designed for peacetime or wartime, or whether there are any differences at all. Usually there is a switch in the legal environment when a country is officially at war. In this situation a country mobilizes its resources for the sake of a single goal – to finish the conflict as quickly as possible with as few casualties as possible. This would usually include a change in the policies concerning families. There is still another important factor – the length of the conflict. When a country defines its policies on military families, the overall risk assessment is considered, including the type of a possible conflict. For example, the Estonian regulation foresees withholding compensation for families in a wartime situation until the end of the conflict. Thirdly, depending on the size of the country and the risk assessment, the military defence is usually fully professional or based on reserves. Larger countries tend to be fully professional and smaller countries have reserve-based forces. With fully professional forces, society is divided between those directly affected by the military conflict (by having one of their family members participating directly in the combat), and those who are not. In this case a principle of social fairness and compensation is applied – those who are providing a higher contribution in the event of conflict are entitled to special treatment (Olson, 2016), and this also applies to the families of service members. However, in Slovenia, professionalization does not seem to affect the perception of families as part of the military. One of the reasons may be the structure and organization of the Slovenian Armed Forces, which enables service members to commute daily instead of demanding that the whole family moves near the barracks. This also intertwines with the small size of the country and its geography, both of which enable such daily commuting. The absence of military bases (as opposed to US ones, which play an integrating and socializing role) is probably another factor that influences the (non)existence of the military family identity in Slovenia.

When the country's defence is based on reserve forces, then it implies that in the extreme case all of its members (or sometimes only the male members of society) are recruited. It follows then that all the families in the society are military families, and you cannot separate them from civilian families. Therefore wartime regulations

concerning families can be observed as military family policies and civilian family policies at the same time.

To conclude, our analysis does not entirely support Fossey et al.'s (2019) theoretical military family systems model. Fossey et al. presupposed that in the case of full conscription, most people in society belong to or have experience of a military family. The relationship between society, the military and the family is intimate. However, our case studies do not support this ideal type. Although conscription is compulsory in Estonia, the proportion of male citizens who go through conscription is less than half of the corresponding birth cohort (Kasearu, 2018), and our analysis clearly shows that the state and the military do not see conscripts' families (mostly the family of origin) as military families. However, previous analysis has shown that the emotional support of the family plays a crucial role in a conscript's adjustment to military service (Raid, Kasearu and Truusa, 2019). Sweden has lately reintroduced conscription; however, it is still active service members who are mostly considered to have military families. Slovenia's case is most similar to Fossey et al.'s (2019) model. Slovenia represents the model of a volunteer force, and our analysis supports the idea that military families are not fully immersed in military culture.

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PRIPRAVLJENOST VOJAŠKIH DRUŽIN: PODPORN VLOGA VOJAŠKE SKUPNOSTI PRI KREPITVI ODPORNOSTI DRUŽIN IN NJIHOVE DOBROBITI

MILITARY FAMILY READINESS: THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING FAMILIAL RESILIENCE AND INCREASING FAMILY WELL-BEING THROUGH MILITARY COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES

Povzetek Zveza Nato zajema različno večnacionalno okolje in najrazličnejše sisteme socialne podpore, saj večina družin nima na voljo infrastrukturne podpore, ki so je vajene. Družinam ob napotitvi v Natovo bazo prilagajanje na vojaško življenje, raznovrstnost kultur in jezik države gostiteljice zato pomeni izziv. Podpora in storitve vojaške skupnosti so lahko za vojaške družine še posebno koristne, saj je med napotitvami, ločenim življenjem in selitvami potreba po taki podpori večja. Namen prispevka je pripraviti pregled literature in poudariti pomen podpore skupnosti, storitev ter državnih programov, ki spodbujajo odpornost družine med življenjem v tujini, in kako se lahko ti zaščitni ukrepi uporabljajo za vse družine oboroženih sil.

Ključne besede *Odpornost, dobrobit, vojaška družina, podpora skupnosti, centri za podporo družinam, podporni programi in storitve.*

Abstract NATO encompasses a diverse multinational environment and wide-ranging social support systems as most families do not have the normal infrastructure support they are used to. Assignment to a NATO base presents a challenge as families navigate military life, a diverse culture and language of the host nation. Military community support and services may be particularly beneficial for military families due to the increased need of such support during deployments, separations, and relocations. The goal of this article is to review the existing literature and highlight the importance of community support, services, and state programs that foster family resilience while stationed overseas; and how these protective measures may be applied to all the families of the armed forces.

Key words *Resilience, well-being, military family, community support, family support center, support services and programs.*

Introduction

Military families certainly play an important part in service members' mission readiness. Indeed, family readiness translates to mission readiness, as the well-being of families heavily influences the well-being of service members. Numerous studies have shown the demanding and challenging lifestyle the military imposes on members and their families (Burrell et al. 2006; Chandra et al. 2009, 2010; Chartrand 2008). Several studies also posit the importance of a vast support system to bolster resilience, well-being, and the readiness of service members' families, and thus the operational readiness of military activities (Chandra et al. 2010; Lester & Flake 2013; Segal, Lane & Fisher 2015). Despite vast research on the well-being of military families, little is known about the specific challenges that families endure while stationed overseas. Further, while there are well-documented studies and research that address the importance of social support for military family resilience and well-being, some do not reflect the current conditions of families living in a multinational environment or social democratic welfare regimes. Being assigned to a NATO base not only brings a host of challenges, but also highlights the importance of community support services and programs on the resilience and well-being of military families.

Military leadership and family support agencies in many overseas locations have proposed and, to some extent, developed measures to increase and widen military families' access to support services and programs. The measures implemented include streamlining the process for obtaining referrals from a military health provider, ensuring that patients see a healthcare provider in a timely manner. Time and access are critical factors with respect to mental health care, especially when dealing with military spouses and children in their host country. In addition, initiatives such as spouses' and youth sponsorship programs aimed at providing ongoing support once families have arrived and settled are vital in ensuring families adjust well in their host country of residence. These would be important steps in increasing access to services and broadening support programs for military spouses and children. According to Hayes (2014), adjusting well to overseas assignments depends largely on support programs that enhance military families' cultural knowledge of their host country. Spouses' and youth sponsorship programs that focus on supporting, preparing, and most importantly educating families to become knowledgeable community members are likely to help families adjust well in their environment. It is important to note, however, that collaborative efforts between host countries' healthcare providers, local citizens and the military must be amicable to ensure success, as well as to enhance community relations. One such measure that can be taken to ease and ensure access to community partners is the establishment of Letters of Agreement (LOA). LOAs are a formal means of implementing mutually agreed upon professional partnerships between the host nation and the military. By creating a formal partnership, service members and their families can better integrate with their host nation community and are ensured access to community support.

1 UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF MILITARY LIFE

Military families face unique challenges that are unfamiliar to many civilian families. Perhaps the most notable stressors many military families endure are lengthy and repeated separations, disruptions to family schedules and routines, and uncertainty about the deployed service member's well-being. These stressors not only affect family functioning but also influence the at-home spouses' and children's psychosocial well-being (Burrell et al. 2006; Chartrand 2008; Lester & Flake 2013; Segal, Lane & Fisher 2015). One study found that during high deployment operations tempo, marital satisfaction in military couples significantly declined (Riviere et al. 2012), suggesting that constant and lengthy deployments may have put further strain on their relationships. At-home spouses carry all the household and child-rearing responsibilities when their husbands or wives are deployed, and the stress associated with these added responsibilities spills over into their marriage. In addition, many civilian spouses express increased difficulty in maintaining personal and emotional connections with their deployed spouses after being separated for months, and frustrations about the length of deployment spill over into their phone conversations (Henderson 2006; Meek et al. 2016). As a result, many of these spouses, both civilians and service members, become unhappy and dissatisfied with their marriages.

Other studies show that the impact of separations due to deployment is negatively related to at-home spouses' psychological and physical well-being (Burrell et al. 2006; Lester & Flake 2013; Segal, Lane & Fisher 2015). In addition, Burrell et al. (2006) posit that periodic separations adversely affect marital satisfaction in families stationed abroad. These separations, whether recurring, periodic, or lengthy, are stressful enough for at-home spouses, who must adjust familial roles and responsibilities, but can be stressful even for children, who must also adjust to parental absence. Military children with a deployed parent are more likely to experience increased psychosocial difficulties (Cederbaum et al. 2014; Chandra et al. 2010). In addition, these children are more likely to display higher levels of behavioral problems and exhibit increased symptomatic expressions of emotional or interpersonal maladjustments at school (Richardson et al. 2011). According to Lester et al. (2010), children can experience these psychosocial outcomes even during peacetime missions, as they adjust to parental absence and thus negotiate their changing household roles and responsibilities.

The deployment of a service member represents a challenge for both the deployed and the at-home parent. For the deployed parent, keeping up regular or frequent communications with families back home, especially with their children, can be a challenge due to mission requirements and operations tempo. For instance, some deployed parents may have difficulties staying connected with their family because of the deployment location, where any contact would compromise their safety (Petty 2009). As a result, some children may disengage and become less enthused as time goes on, with limited interaction or response from the deployed parent (Houston et al. 2013; Petty 2009). The at-home parent, therefore, plays a significant role in ensuring

that the deployed parent stays connected with the children. However, although service members and their families experience additional stressors uncommon in civilian families, such as recurring and periodic separations due to deployments, uncertainty of service members' well-being while deployed, and changing familial roles and responsibilities due to service member absence, military families are still resilient and can adjust well to military life.

2 THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Enhanced familial well-being and resilience to stress may be influenced by a host of factors. One significant factor that bolsters familial well-being and influences resilience in military families is community support services and programs. One study of a civilian population showed that community support plays a significant factor in buffering the manifestation of psychosocial problems in children (Wills & Shinar 2000). For instance, military support organizations, such as the U.S. Air Force's Airman and Family Readiness Center¹, provide outstanding core military support services to service members and their families stationed both stateside and overseas. The focus is to build and sustain mental, social, physical, and spiritual resilience for both the individual service member and their family. These services are available to service members at U.S. Air Force military installations within the continental United States and also abroad. The U.S. Armed Forces is determined, through programs and services, to do whatever it takes to ensure that service members and their families become some of the most resilient families. According to Conforte et al (2017), perceived military community support was linked to fewer child and parent psychosocial symptoms. In other words, the presence and thus availability of military community support, whether participation occurs or not, enhances child and parent psychosocial functioning. Simply knowing that military support and services are available and accessible gives families a sense of ease and comfort from the stresses of military life. These support services and programs are vital in the adjustment and thus success of military family functioning; they provide a variety of family programs designed to address the needs of families.

Technology, resources, and collaborative efforts from the host community also aid in the development and maintenance of programs and services offered to military families. The first service program most families utilize when changing their duty station is the Relocation Assistance Program. The impetus of the program is to ease the personal and family stressors associated with relocation by helping families throughout all phases of the moving process. In addition, service members are paired with a fellow military sponsor currently assigned to the base to help them with in-processing the installation and navigating their new host community. Family support centers also host Newcomer's Orientations that welcome the entire family, wherein

¹ *Airman and Family Readiness Centers is a U.S. Air Force organization that provides programs and services in 15 core areas of family life to nearly 1.7 million air personnel and their families around the globe.*

detailed information about arrival procedures, housing, healthcare, child care, spouse employment, education, volunteer opportunities, moving with a family member with special needs, and other critical base information are disseminated. Programs and services in these situations support and foster the development of social networks, which increase families' resilience.

Another significant service and program provided by family support centers is Deployment Assistance. This program provides support services to assist service members, civilians, and their families to meet the challenges and stresses associated with all the stages of the deployment cycle. Service delivery of these deployment-related programs is aimed to provide service members and their families with the necessary tools and resources they need to help cope with mission demands and family responsibilities. Borah and Fina (2017) suggest that resources and social support connections that have an understanding of the nuances of military cultural experience are provided with a unique perspective in helping military families. This is an important factor in helping reduce the stress of the military life-cycle. In other words, service providers with specialization in military families not only assist in strengthening unit cohesion, enhancing morale, and bolstering familial resilience, but also support operational and family readiness, which are integral to the military life-cycle. Successes are measured by levels of retention, early-return-of-dependents (ERDs) for those stationed overseas, and overall well-being for both the service member and their family. Additionally, the well-being of the service member is measured during periodic feedback sessions with their supervisors. Overall familial well-being is also assessed by the service member's First Sergeant and unit Key Spouses. These positions/roles provide necessary familial support while the service member is deployed or abroad on training by staying engaged with the at-home spouse and children.

While most programs and services may appear to appeal only to families with problems, they are first and foremost designed for the prevention of problems. For instance, programs such as Personal and Work Life are designed to increase effectiveness in daily living, promote the individual's potential, and to impart coping skills for managing major life stressors, resulting in an enhanced quality of life and resilience for service members and their families. Community support services and programs aimed at addressing issues such as interpersonal communication, relationship enhancement, positive parenting, and time management not only support family functioning but may also improve the overall well-being of service members and their families. Offering support to families dealing with long-distance familial interactions due to deployments or other military-related separations may strengthen their relationship, as couples learn communication and relationship-building skills. These educational activities are offered in group and individual settings, and are often collaborated with mental health professionals, military family life counselors, social workers, and other helping agents. Targeted intervention and prevention modalities aimed at assisting families to reduce parental stress and increase marital quality and satisfaction may facilitate the healthy development of all children, which in

turn enhances familial well-being and resilience. To start service members and their families on the right path, many of these preventative programs are mandatory at their first duty station. Boberiene and Hornback (2014) suggest that policies which bolster family and community social support programs aimed at reducing parenting stress and improving family relationships can have a propitious effect on the well-being of children. In addition, conducting community assessments, devising customized action plans, offering skills development, and providing referrals to agencies both on- and off-base not only widens the accessibility of resources, but also broadens the options that are suitable for the specific needs of service members and their families.

Another important service program aimed at enhancing relationships is PREP (Prevention and Relationship Education Program), which utilizes a cognitive-behavioral marital therapeutic modality and communication-oriented relational enhancement technique geared toward helping couples maintain high levels of functioning and preventing marital problems from developing. This evidence-based and theory-driven program may facilitate effective marital functioning, such as enhanced communication, improved problem-solving skills, and emboldened positive connections and expectations. Married couples under stress, in general, tend to see their relationships more negatively (Karney, Story & Bradbury 2005), and the quality of their interpersonal connections tends to suffer more (Burrell et al. 2006) than couples whose marriages are relatively free of stress. Couples who had a greater chance of adjusting well to separations and were more likely to stay together, were couples who felt a strong sense of commitment and were highly satisfied with their marriage prior to the deployment (Rosen et al. 1995). Therefore, community support programs aimed at relationship enhancement may have propitious effects on the marital well-being of military marriages. Community support services and programs should be readily available and accessible to military couples not only pre- or post-deployment but also throughout the military life-cycle. Ensuring that these support programs are not only readily available but also accessible in a timely manner is a key factor in marital well-being.

3 RESILIENCE AND WELL-BEING IN FAMILIES STATIONED OVERSEAS

Despite some adverse effects of deployment on the well-being of military families, the psychological and physical well-being of at-home spouses, and the relational health of military marriages (Burrell et al. 2006) after the service member returned home, military families, on average, prevail over the hardships and resume to pre-deployment functioning (Meadows & Karney 2016). In other words, most families who experience deployment demonstrate a sense of resilience and can overcome the stresses endured during separations. Another mitigating factor that separates couples with experience of deploying multiple times from those who are experiencing their first deployment is having the knowledge of what to expect. In the same way, mothers experiencing their second pregnancy and child rearing benefit from the knowledge they have gained from already having had their first child. While not all military families fare similarly in regard to the effects of deployment, those who adapt well

to deployment may possess specific personal attributes, skills, and competencies, including access to resources that characterize families to be more resilient.

Hayes (2014) posits that support programs, which enhances military families' cultural knowledge of their host country, helps families adjust and adapt to their environment, which in turn bolsters their resilience. Such programs are mandatory for service members who are deploying; however, military families can also benefit from these classes to help build resilience and understanding during separation. In addition, the availability and accessibility of childcare off-base, such as those provided in social welfare state programs in many European countries, may also help families acculturate and adjust to the climate of their host country. The cross-cultural interaction of military children with local children may positively enhance their experience of living overseas. To help ensure that military children integrate with local children, policies and directives, such as Letters of Agreement, should be established with the surrounding community. To further enhance community relations, local support facilities should also become familiar with the unique factors that affect military families. Military families with a strong sense of community and military support (Conforte et al. 2017; Hayes 2014), especially from their host country, are likely to adjust well to military life and enhance family functioning.

The most common characteristics of the community support services and programs mentioned above are their preventive nature and emphasis on self-determination, to include mental, social, spiritual, and physical resilience. Military families stationed overseas, especially those assigned to a multinational base or geographically separated units, and at times isolated units, do not have the typical infrastructure support associated with larger U.S. bases around the globe or stateside installations. Military community support services and programs such as those described above, including those presented in social welfare state programs in many European countries, may provide a protective barrier to the adverse effects deployments impose on military life. Communities with a strong support for and greater understanding of military culture may help to mitigate the stress of military life (Conforte et al. 2017), especially for those living abroad. In addition, the tight-knit social network that develops from families experiencing similar issues, such as overseas residency and periodic and, at times, lengthy separations, mitigates the stress endured under the demands of military life. Expanding this military social network into the surrounding community can also have the same positive influence. Through collaborative community initiatives, established by the already present military support services, military families can increase resilience through community involvement, off-base school programs and taking advantage of off-base support systems. Wang et al. (2015) suggests that positive social support is correlated with an increased sense of community among military spouses, which in turn leads to elevated feelings of psychological well-being. It is important to assess not only the well-being of the at-home spouse but also their social support network because of the crucial role at-home spouses play as the conduit between the deployed service member and their child.

Personal and Work Life Programs, such as the non-medical counseling provided by military family life counselors, which are offered at family support centers, may impart protective barriers and preventative measures that may also mitigate the challenges and difficulties associated with military life. Addressing life skill issues and providing educational activities that deal with topics such as conflict resolution, problem-solving and emotion-based coping skills and strategies, relationship/marriage enrichment, parent-child relational enhancement including deployment stress, reintegration, relocation adjustment, and separation may help empower each member of the family, thus leading to enhanced familial well-being and resilience. These psycho-educational programs are particularly beneficial for families stationed overseas because of the limited access to the typical support structure associated with stateside bases and larger U.S. installations. Literature on military families also suggests that parents, both at-home and deployed, who maintain and increase their expressions of love not only help their children cope with difficult situations but can improve their children's well-being (Cozza et al. 2018; Hall 2008; Sogomonyan & Cooper 2010). Cozza et al. (2018) states that healthy interpersonal connections develop when children's parents and other caregivers are caring, reliable, and present in their lives.

According to Flake et al. (2009), the community environment in which the military child is immersed, significantly affects his or her psychosocial functioning. Community support, beyond or within the military context, may help mitigate some of the stresses endured from having a parent deployed. The ability to recognize and provide proper support and assistance will not only alleviate the stresses endured due to separation, but will also provide early warning signs of the onset of negative child well-being outcomes. It is therefore vital that youth mental health care and support are part of military community services and programs. The social support systems framework can be propitious in terms of strengthening military families' informal network of support, which can enhance family functioning and increase resilience. Successes are assessed based on the level of early-return-of-dependents (ERDs) for those stationed abroad, the rate of retention, and the overall well-being of both the service member and their family. Additionally, child well-being can be assessed through parent-teacher interaction, allowing the at-home spouse to understand how their child or children are faring and coping when away from home.

Conclusion The current sociopolitical climate and the increasing demands of military life have intensified the burden and stress imposed on many military families. As the stresses of military life weigh heavily on the lives of service members, their children, and families, it is vital that their sacrifices are recognized and their needs are addressed and supported. Military children and families play an important role in service members' mission readiness. Indeed, family readiness translates to mission readiness, as the well-being of service members is tightly linked to the well-being of their families. As much as service members sacrifice their lives and patriotically serve their country, their children and families serve too and sacrifice much of their lives.

Mitigating the effects of deployment and sustaining a viable military force are indeed some of the most common issues that confront military leaders today. Nevertheless, it is important that policy and program development should be less about problem-centered labeling and more about promoting and supporting communities' and families' resilience during separations, whether recurring, periodic, or lengthy. Particular attention needs to be given to sustaining healthy marital and familial relationships within all aspects of the deployment cycle, as well as promoting familial resilience. Future endeavors of program services, community support, and policy development should focus on preventive measures and psycho-educational resources that military families can use to cope with challenges and manage symptoms before the onset of negative child and familial well-being outcomes. A host of collaborative community-based support resources and services could lessen and mitigate stress before it progresses into serious mental health issues.

Efforts to promote, support, and develop family resilience during separations are vital in fostering enhanced familial well-being and facilitating healthy outcomes. Military personnel should collaborate with community leaders to implement programs and services that help to identify early signs of negative psychosocial behavioral outcomes in children, at-home caregivers (spouses), and non-family member caregivers. Establishing long-term community-led support programs will only enhance familial well-being, bolster resilience and build upon host-nation partnerships. Targeting the onset of the psychosocial behavioral and emotional distress before they escalate into serious mental health issues is paramount in mitigating problems and supporting enhanced family functioning. Similarly, periodic assessments and evaluations must be made to ensure the effectiveness of community support programs and services. In doing so, these programs can be codified into policy that can be initiated in the surrounding military installations. In addition, information gathered from such assessments, when shared, may eliminate shortfalls among partner agencies and promote synergistic practices. Above all, military community support and services are integral in building familial resilience and increasing family well-being, thus bolstering military family readiness.

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UREJENOST PODPORE VOJAŠKIM DRUŽINAM V ZDRUŽENEM KRALJESTVU, NEMČIJI IN SLOVENIJI

STRUCTURE OF THE SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR MILITARY FAMILIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, GERMANY AND SLOVENIA

Povzetek V prispevku obravnavamo antropološke in sociološke lastnosti vojakov ter vojaških družin. Predstavljamo urejenost podpore vojaškim družinam v Združenem kraljestvu, Nemčiji in Sloveniji. Natančneje preučujemo pravne podlage v Sloveniji, ki so temelj urejenosti podpore tem družinam, ter dejavnosti oddelka Celostne skrbi pripadnikov Slovenske vojske in Vojaškega vikariata, ki se v Slovenski vojski edina ukvarjata z njihovo podporo. V sklepnem delu opozarjamo na razhajanje med sistemsko organiziranostjo in individualnim pristopom v skrbi za te družine. S člankom se želimo približati odgovoru na vprašanje, kateri način podpore in skrbi za družine slovenskih vojakov je najustreznejši.

Ključne besede *Družina, vojaška družina, Slovenska vojska, Celostna skrb za pripadnike, Vojaški vikariat.*

Abstract The article aims to bring forth the anthropological and sociological characteristics affecting the military personnel and military families. It presents the structure of the support system for military families in the United Kingdom, Germany and Slovenia. For the latter, legal bases are presented regulating the support for military families, and the activities of the Comprehensive Care Section and the Military Chaplaincy, which are the only two bodies in the Slovenian Armed Forces to engage in the support of military families. The aim of the article is to contribute a piece of the answer to the big question: how to find the correct and appropriate path to help the families of Slovenian soldiers.

Key words *Family, military family, Slovenian Armed Forces, comprehensive care, Military Chaplaincy.*

Introduction Families of military personnel are a “special category of people” (Plut, 2002, p 265) which require support in every society. That support is provided by different institutions.

The conclusions we aim to reach by the end of the article are based on a comparison of the different systematic regulations of three countries: the United Kingdom, Germany and Slovenia. With this methodological approach, we take into the highest account the empirical and experimental dimensions that explicitly show the divide between the statutory abilities and the actual state.

We are writing this article to influence military families in the Slovenian Armed Forces (SAF); of course, only if they wish it. The purpose of comparing three countries is to find the appropriate way to help families of Slovenian soldiers and to uncover the power of systematic solutions in support of the human element in this endeavour.

“In marriage and family a variety of mutual relationships are formed – marital, fatherly, maternal, with children or siblings; all of which initiate every human being into a ‘human family’...” (Janez Pavel II., 1982, p 15). Soldiers always ask themselves which their first and second home is, between the army and family (Plut, 2010). It is clear from practice and life experience that a person strives towards unity and belonging. As a priest is devoted to the church, so is the soldier devoted to the army. Of course, there is a fundamental difference between the two: one lives a lonely life and can fully devote himself to the church, but soldiers also wish to devote themselves to their families, whatever their shape or form. Hence the aforementioned question arises. A military profession demands willingness to serve from each member. It is their job to ensure and protect anything from human dignity to the fundamental morals of humanity. This key stance of members of the SAF is also defined in the Rules of Service in the Slovenian Armed Forces: “Respecting human rights, fundamental freedoms and people, as well as protecting human dignity, are key principles of each SAF member when performing their duties. Any action that violates these principles is dishonourable and in contrast with the interests of the SAF” (Rules of Service in the SAF, 2009). The Armed Forces are designed to protect the dignity of each SAF member, which can sometimes prove to be more difficult than protecting dignity and peace. There is a division in the relationships and roles between home and work; to be a husband/wife; a father/mother; a commander/subordinate/superior; a soldier/junior officer/officer. “Switching between these roles can lead to living a double life and cause big conflicts inside the individual and their partner/family relationships” (Sadar, 2010, p 115). Coser defined military organizations and families as two greedy institutions (Coser, 1974). There has been a great deal of research carried out on military families in Slovenia leading to comparisons with foreign militaries, yet they are not comparable. This is because of the well-known “base” lifestyle of soldiers and their families here. Other than when a Slovenian soldier is participating in field training at home or abroad or in international operations and missions, they return home to a civil environment every day, where they have a good social network.

When talking to soldiers we sense a desire for intimacy. “Work is work” they say, in contrast, family is a personal thing. We will try to figure out why Slovenian soldiers, as well as the majority of Slovenian citizens, have been shown to value family more than anything else in public surveys. They value it more than health, work, money or other goods. A public opinion survey from 2016 about the work-family relationship, the standpoint of Slovenians on the family problem, and the needs of the family¹ delivers a more distinct answer. Personally, I find an answer in the ancient archetypal word for mutual happiness, “longing”.

1 RESEARCHING MILITARY FAMILIES WITH SOME OUTSTANDING SLOVENIAN AUTHORS

Here we aim to mention some key features of military family research that eminent Slovenian authors², including Dr Ljubica Jelušič, Dr Jelena Juvan, and Dr Janja Vuga, have already pointed out. The list includes articles such as “Military Families at the Crossroads of Family and Military Demands” (Juvan and Jelušič, 2007); “The Role of an Individual’s Primary Social Environment in Relation to the Military Organization: A Case Example of the Slovenian Armed Forces” (Vuga and Juvan, 2011); “Harmonizing Work and Family Responsibilities in a Military Organisation” (Juvan, 2009); and “Social, Institutional and Organisational Support in Greedy Institutions: the Contentment of Slovene Military Families” (Vuga et al., 2013). One of the rare works that placed Slovenian research into military families on the international scene is “Work-Family Conflict between two Greedy Institutions: The Family and the Military” (Vuga and Juvan, 2013). Research concerning military families in Slovenia is also discussed in some doctoral theses (Juvan, 2008) and several degree papers (for example Novak, 2015; Krajnc, 2019). We must also mention the most important research paper between 2003 and 2008, written under the leadership of Professor Ljubica Jelušič, entitled “Final Report of a Sociological Analysis of the Slovenian Armed Forces in Missions and Commands on International Duties”.

Before we move on to an overview of the structure of the support system in the Slovenian Armed Forces, we would like to briefly present “Military Family Support” in the United Kingdom and Germany. We chose to discuss these two countries because of the contrast between their systems and cultures: German and Anglo-Saxon. We will leave which of these is closest to the setting of a Slovenian soldier up for question.

¹ Kurdija, S., Hafner Fink, M., Malnar, B. in Podnar, K. (2016). Slovensko javno mnenje 2016/1: Raziskava o odnosu delo-družina. Stališča Slovencev o družinski problematiki in potrebah družin, Stališča o izbranih vidikih zdravja in zdravstva, Ogledalo javnega mnenja. Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, Arhiv družboslovnih podatkov. ADP – IDNo: SJM 161. https://doi.org/10.17898/ADP_SJM_V1.

² Listed are the informative translations of article titles, which have originally been written in Slovene. The original titles of articles can be found in Bibliography.

2 SUPPORT FOR MILITARY FAMILIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Continual support is offered to British soldiers by the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Army Welfare Service (AWS), the Army Families Federation (AFF), and the SFA (Service Families Accommodation), among others. These institutions execute tasks in four crucial areas³: offering personal support to members; supporting communities; supporting families at home or abroad; and solving housing problems. Through these institutions, the United Kingdom Armed Forces ensures accessible, independent, confidential and professional social help for the personal and family troubles of forces members. They devote themselves predominantly to the following areas: abuse within the family; protection of children and adults; death in the family; issues with relationships and communication; alcohol addiction; personal debt; solving housing problems; and stress and other unfavourable emotional states. It is important to realise that they perceive the role of the military family and the soldier in the same way: if a soldier serves their homeland, so does their family. When a family is unhappy or has trouble due to serving their homeland it reflects on the soldier's performance, meaning the soldier is unable to carry out their duties well.

Military families move frequently because of the nature of the job. Soldiers are absent for long periods of time when they are carrying out their duties in international operations and missions (IOMs), and with that comes a substantial number of divorces. The saying: "Out of sight, out of mind" marks many military families. As we have already mentioned, migrations of soldiers and their families are also a burden. Spouses not finding a job is a recurring problem, because employers are not keen on a fast turnover of staff. Children also encounter many problems due to changing their school setting. They need to adapt to new teachers and replace their old habits quite often. All of this leaves certain consequences for them: few or no friends, poor grades in school and lack of confidence, to name but a few. On 31 January 2020 the MoD launched a test project called the Future Accommodation Model (FAM) which was initiated in the Aldershot⁴ Garrison. However, support for military families does not end there. It is accompanied by a wide spectrum of other offers⁵:

- Employment: they offer help to the spouse in searching for work;
- Finance: the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) manages financial support. They also offer help with working abroad, arranging passports, taxes, loans, social help for children, and more;
- Legal help: guaranteed to soldiers and their family members. They deal mainly with wills, counselling with regard to abuse within the family, and so on;
- Transitioning: they help with the transition from military to civil life.

³ <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/core/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/MILITARY-FAMILIES.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.army.mod.uk/personnel-and-welfare/future-accommodation-model/>.

⁵ <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/core/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/MILITARY-FAMILIES.pdf>.

A great deal of care is also provided by military chaplains⁶. England's armed forces have been involving priests in their operations since 1766, especially in wartime. The profession of army chaplain was officially established in 1796 and has been continuously active since then. According to the traditions of the United Kingdom, they employ Anglican, Catholic and Protestant chaplains, as well as some Jewish rabbis. All are tasked with providing spiritual and sacramental support to soldiers and their families.

3 SUPPORT FOR MILITARY FAMILIES IN GERMANY

Next, we present the structure of the support system for military families in the German Armed Forces on the basis of the Soldatengesetz⁷: the law on the legal status of military personnel. This law regulates the obligations of employers, requiring them to ensure both care and protection. In this sense the country is bound to look after the wellbeing of military employees and their families. Professional soldiers, as well as contractual reservists and their families, enjoy many benefits due to the enactment of this law. The Family Support Organization (FSO) is the institute that carries out this law (Kriem, 2006). The FSO management resides in the United Command of Operations in Schwielowsee. It is divided into 31 regional Family Support Centres (FSCs). They have also established domiciliary units for additional military family support. The principle is that all soldiers and their families must be at most an hour's drive from receiving the assistance of the nearest FSC. The FSO management coordinates and plans the training of support staff, and is the central point of contact between member referrals to international operations and missions (IOMs), the FSC and the domiciliary units. Regional FSCs are responsible for supporting soldiers and their families on a practical level. They aid the conduction of business with other state authorities, government offices and agencies. FSOs are further distributed into Family Support Centres. There are currently 50 active Centres in Germany, dealing exclusively with supporting those soldiers and families that are headed for IOMs. Their main duties are:

- Routinely informing soldiers about events concerning the IOM;
- Routinely informing soldiers about all social matters;
- Being a contact point even outside working hours;
- Connecting family members with soldiers who have been sent on an IOM;
- Hands-on help in tough situations;
- Locating sources of social and psychological help;
- The integration of soldiers into their local environment;
- Transport, support groups, child care;
- Assistance with reintegration after returning from an IOM.

⁶ <https://www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/corps-regiments-and-units/royal-army-chaplains-department/>.

⁷ <http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/sg/BJNROO1140956.html>. Leto izdaje zakona 19. 3. 1956. Nazadnje dodan člen 64.20 novembra 2019.

The staff that work to support soldiers and their families are obliged to prepare for the job by participating in a 14-day course at the Leadership Development and Citizenship Education Centre in Koblenz and Mannheim Academy of Defence Administration and Technology. In each FSC there are four military posts, as well as one civilian post. Their leader is generally a junior officer supported by two subordinates, a superior and a soldier. If required, social workers/counsellors, military chaplains, psychologists, doctors and others may be called for additional help. Volunteer work of spouses or partners of soldiers on IOMs is also allowed. There are currently around 80 active volunteers working with the volunteer base, who offer effective emotional support. During their service, they have established organizations such as the Forum for Families of Soldiers and the initiative Woman to Woman. The German Armed Forces have carried out several longitudinal studies over the years; among other things they closely observed 30 military families over a span of two years. Their findings showed:

- The most stressful phase of the relationship is before the IOM;
- Partners at home carry the heavier burdens;
- Good preparation and regular communication reduces problems during the IOM;
- FSCs must keep constant contact with the families, which enables a quick reaction in time of need.

In Germany even the German Catholic Military Bishopric, German Protestant Military Bishopric and, since January 2020 Jewish Rabbis⁸, offer support to military families.

4 SUPPORT FOR MILITARY FAMILIES IN THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES

Support for military families in the SAF is regulated by a variety of statutory Acts and regulatory provisions. Let us take a look at some of them.

4.1 Slovenian legislation

The Defence Act of the Republic of Slovenia⁹ (ZObr), with all of its amendments¹⁰, mentions military families only once, in part four of Article 20. This states that the SAF has the right to information about a soldier's family such as their uniform ID number, name, last name, date of birth, place of residence and employment, so that they can provide financial support in the event of a war. This

⁸ *Vojaški vikar Matej Jakopič se je med 27. – 31. 1. 2020 udeležil IMCCC (International Military Chiefs Chaplains Conference) v Berlinu, kjer prihaja do izmenjave dobrih izkušenj in praks. Viri trditev so povzeti iz več sporazumov o duhovni oskrbi v nemški vojski kot so: Konkordat med Nemčijo in Vatikanom z dne 20. 7. 1933, Sporazum od duhovni oskrbi protestantov z dne 26. 7. 1957, Sporazum o duhovni oskrbi judov z dne 20.12.2019. Prvega judovskega rabina so v nemško vojsko zaposlili 1.2.2020.*

⁹ *Zakon o obrambi – uradno prečiščeno besedilo – ZObr-UPB1 (Uradni list RS, št. 103/04 z dne 23. 9. 2004).*

¹⁰ *Zakon o dopolnitvi Zakona o obrambi – ZObr-E (Uradni list RS, št. 95/15 z dne 10. 12. 2015).*

clashes with the Personal Data Protection Act¹¹ (ZVOP-1). The Rules of Service in the Slovenian Armed Forces¹² (PS) fails to mention support for military families at all. The most important law when considering the support provided for military families is the Law on Service in the Slovenian Armed Forces¹³ (ZSSloV). Act 11 talks about providing care for subordinates. Superiors must look after their subordinates based on their jurisdiction, and help the families of subordinates, if they accept it. Chapter 12 talks about Comprehensive Care for the Members of the SAF (CSP). Because of the burdens they encounter as a result of serving in the military, members have a right to:

- Healthcare (ZSSloV, Act 77),
- Psychological care (ZSSloV, Act 79),
- Social care (ZSSloV, Act 80),
- Legal help (ZSSloV, Act 81),
- Legal counselling (ZSSloV, Act 82),
- Religious and spiritual care (ZSSloV, Act 83),
- Sporting activities and organized leisure (ZSSloV, Act 77).

The members of the permanent military squad formation, members of the contractual backup squad formation in military service and training, soldiers on voluntary military service, and civilians employed in the SAF are all entitled to the CSP. The third point of Act 76 expands these rights to the family members of the permanent military formation. According to the law, spouses, extramarital partners, partners from registered same-sex partner households and children of SAF members can all reap these benefits. This includes all legal statuses such as minors, adopted children, stepchildren, foster children, and so on.

On top of this, the ZSSloV mentions clubs and centres for comprehensive care, the rights of family members in the event of death or injury of a SAF member, and continued use of military housing after an SAF member has died. It also mentions the execution of special rights arranged by international organizations for the families of deceased SAF members. The legislation talks about help with the employment of a spouse, providing appropriate education for children abroad, and free three-month visits, among other forms of support.

It can therefore be seen that the legislation offers a great deal, but sadly, this is not the case in practice. We all ask ourselves when the words that were written will be upheld. For example, the regulation of the relationship between an SAF member and their parents with whom they live in a shared household or otherwise care for. Since the enforcements of the ZSSloV in 2007, no rule book for the CSP or regulatory provision has seen the light of day. We face the fundamental challenge of harmonizing

¹¹ *Zakon o varstvu osebnih podatkov – ZVOP-1, Uradni list RS, št. 86/04 z dne 5. 8. 2004.*

¹² *Pravila službe, 1996, Ljubljana, Ministrstvo za obrambo RS.*

¹³ *Zakon o službi v Slovenski vojski – ZSSloV, Uradni list RS, št. 68/2007 z dne 30. 7. 2007.*

rights from the ZSSloV with the Personal Data Protection Act (ZVOP-1) and the Income Tax Act (ZDoh-2, Article 39), among others. We see a solution in political activity and a new Defence Act which will take into account the circumstances that a profession in the SAF has created.

4.2 What the Comprehensive care for the members does

Comprehensive Care for the Members of SAF (CSP) is an activity of the SAF that is supported by people from all walks of life. The first representative of the CSP is the commanding officer or the chief of an individual unit. We present below the various agencies that support the commanding officer in carrying out their tasks¹⁴.

Healthcare

Healthcare for SAF members is implemented in the context of emergency medical aid, which is ensured during battle and other military defence tasks. Healthcare is also provided when carrying out duties at the international level. Emergency medical aid during firing and other dangerous tasks that are carried out during training are also covered. In the event of infectious diseases (such as COVID-19), preventive medical precautions following the healthcare guidelines will be taken. Healthcare professionals (the Military Medical Unit) are very active in spreading awareness about key medical resuscitation procedures. In addition, family members have the right to participate in these health awareness programmes.

Psychological Care

Psychological care is provided to SAF members and their families, if necessary. Psychologists are very active in various fields and undeniably deserve a special presentation in a separate article. However, we will only point out the four basic services offered. These are therapy, clinical psychological counselling, psychotherapy work, and implementing preventive programmes for managing all kinds of psychological burdens. All of these are available to SAF members and their families 24/7.

Social Care

This is intended for SAF members and their family members. The main service provided is counselling and assistance with personal social problems, problems encountered during employment, helping with the employment of a spouse, problems with childcare, solving housing problems, and relocation due to a work transfer. They also offer expert advice to commanding officers and other organizational leaders within the military system to improve the work environment for members.

Legal Help and Legal Counselling

In accordance with the ZSSloV, the SAF provides legal assistance to a member against whom criminal or compensation proceedings have been instituted for the

¹⁴ Prim.: <http://intra.mors.si/index.php?id=343>

performance of military or other services, provided that they have conformed to the Rules of Service and other regulations. Legal advice to SAF members and their family members, if they wish, is intended to clarify the legal situation in matters related to military service. It is also intended to provide clarifications on procedures pending in other state bodies, procedural rules and more. All this also applies to contractual reserve members.

Sporting Activities and Organized Leisure

Sports activities and organized leisure for SAF members and their family members are provided primarily at SAF sports facilities such as gyms in Vipava, Kranj and Ljubljana. Hikes and various similar events are also organized.

5 ENSURING RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS OF THE SAF

Religious and spiritual support (RDOV in Slovenian) for members of the SAF and their families is provided by the Military Chaplaincy (VVIK), which is an independent organizational unit at the General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces (GSSV). RDOV provides care for everyone, regardless of their religious affiliation. VVIK is run by a military vicar¹⁵ who has two deputies for churches of different faiths, an assistant military vicar, a Catholic and an Evangelical military chaplain, a pastoral assistant and an administrator. The regulations and normative acts regulating the operation of the VVIK are:

- Agreement between the Slovenian Bishops' Conference and the Government of the Republic of Slovenia on spiritual care for military personnel in the SAF¹⁶;
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Evangelical Church¹⁷;
- The Defence Act¹⁸;
- The Rules of Service in the SAF¹⁹;
- The rule book of the organization of religious and spiritual care²⁰;
- Directive on the operation of the Military Chaplaincy in the Commands, Units and Institutes of the SAF²¹.

¹⁵ A military vicar is a commander of military chaplains and pastoral assistants.

¹⁶ Sporazum med Slovensko škofovsko konferenco in vlado RS o duhovni oskrbi vojaških oseb v SV z dne 21. 9. 2000.

¹⁷ Sporazum vlade RS z Evangeličansko cerkvijo z dne 20. 10. 2000.

¹⁸ Prim. Zakon o spremembah in dopolnitvah zakona o obrambi, Uradni list RS, št. 47/2002, z dne 29. 5. 2002, čl. 52.

¹⁹ Prim. Pravila službe v SV, z dne 15. 10. 2009, Uradni list RS št. 84/2009. Glej točke 42, 64, 78, 80, 170, 362, 363, 371, 378.

²⁰ Prim. Pravilnik o organizaciji religiozno duhovne oskrbe z dne 18. 6. 2003, Uradni list RS št. 58/2003. Z dnem ko je začel veljati ta pravilnik, je prenehalo veljati Navodilo o uresničevanju pravic vojaških obveznikov med opravljanjem vojaške službe do izpovedovanja vere.

²¹ Direktiva o delovanju Vojaškega vikariata v poveljstvih, enotah in zavodih SV, št. 804-36/2010-10, z dne 18. 1. 2011.

The Agreements, Laws, Regulations and Directives²² listed highlight the main tasks of the VVIK, which are:

- Providing regular spiritual care to SAF members and their families in accordance with the GSSV annual plans;
- Participating in the training of SAF members by including spirituality, ethics, morals, patriotism and military traditions;
- Working with the barracks commander to provide appropriate timing, material and spatial opportunities for spiritual care, which is in accordance with Article 170 of the Rules of Service in the SAF;
- The use of chapels, which are arranged as special premises in barracks and personal offices for the regular provision of spiritual care;
- Providing routine day-long professional training to VVIK members each month;
- Training annually in longer professional seminars;
- Participating in celebrations and ceremonies on national and religious holidays by giving short spiritual speeches;
- Preparing thematic weekends and camps for SAF members and their families;
- Providing spiritual care to SAF members in multi-day field training both at home and abroad;
- Participating in the training of SAF members before departure to IOMs;
- Providing spiritual care to SAF members on IOMs;
- Ensuring the preservation and protection of each member's dignity;
- Maintaining deceased SAF members in memory;
- Cooperating with other CSP carriers in the preparation and implementation of worship services and other commemorations of national and religious holidays and unit days;
- Participating in commemorative and mourning ceremonies;
- Participating in the reintegration of SAF members on their return from IOMs;
- Humanitarian activities and cooperation with KVIK (Karitas of the Military Chaplaincy);
- Participating in events organized by veterans' associations and events for relatives of those killed in the war for Slovenia;
- Participating in MORS retirement association events;
- Ministering to sick members of the SAF.

6 THE MILITARY CHAPLAINCY IN THE SAF AND THEIR SUPPORT OF FAMILIES

The Military Chaplaincy offers spiritual care for members of the SAF and their families, the logic being that happy families translate into a happy military. Only a person happy at home can be happy at work and vice versa. For this reason, the VVIK organizes the following for soldiers and their family members:

²² *Prim. Direktiva, 2011, GŠSV.*

- Family holidays;
- Holidays for wives;
- Meditation courses;
- Spiritual exercises;
- Holidays for the children of SAF members (Religious and Sports Camps);
- A 3-day survival camp for children of SAF members co-organized by the ESD (Special Operations Unit).

We will not describe these programmes and their contents in this article because they are always tailored to the number of participants and their personal needs. In addition to these, the VVIK organizes other gatherings for members who have got married or received other sacraments of conversion to Christianity. Meetings with participants in the annual traditional military pilgrimage of soldiers and their families occur in Lourdes (France) and Mejanès (France).

In all cases, sacramental support is the central activity of the VVIK for the families of SAF members. Military chaplains baptize, distribute communion, carry out confessions, confirm, anoint the sick, and marry SAF members. They also conduct funerals for members of the SAF and their immediate family members, if they wish it. The constitution “*Spirituali militum curae*”²³ enumerates spouses, children and parents as immediate family members. The same applies to everyone living in the same household. From the establishment of the Military Chaplaincy in 2000 up to 2020, about 900 children of members of the SAF were baptized by military chaplains, with over 400 SAF members or their family members confirmed. Nearly 300 members of the SAF were married by military chaplains. If we add all the meetings with soldiers and their families, when preparing for the sacraments and the actual ceremonies, we reach a number higher than 5000. This figure does not include all the meetings for blessings of homes, funerals, visits to the sick, assistance in any personal or family distress, and so on, as well as excluding visits to sick members of the SAF in hospitals and those on long-term sick leave at home.

As part of military family pastoral care, military chaplains must pay attention to the following aspects²⁴:

- Taking into account the difficulties and circumstances of a family (absence of a family member, illness of a spouse, infertility, a child’s upbringing, handicapped or disabled children, etc.);
- Care for the spiritual growth of families as a community, spouses as individuals and family members (catechesis at sacraments, spiritual exercises, etc.);
- Recognizing the mission of the family (position of an evangelist or priest and service personnel);

²³ *Spirituali militum curae*, prevod Plut J. 2005, v Zbornik ob 5. obletnici Vojaškega vikariata, MORS, str. 117.

²⁴ *Direktorij družinske pastorale*, 1997. Cerkveni dokumenti 73. Družina, Ljubljana, str. 92-234.

- The importance of family celebrations (wedding celebrations and wedding anniversaries, family holidays, etc.);
- Meeting other spouses (marital and family communication, family associations and movements).

We can certainly conclude from past experience that working for and supporting military families is the best kind of investment for satisfied members of the SAF. When we mention investment, we are not referring to material or monetary goods, but rather to invisible immaterial goods such as acts of understanding, supporting, and allowing mercy. Legislation must provide for visible, tangible, measurable and weighed measures. Spirituality, however, covers a field one cannot see with bare eyes, where happiness resides. One can buy blood, but not life. One can buy medicine but not health. One can buy sex but not love. One can buy a house but not a home. All these things are free because they are a gift, and reside far beyond the legislative field.

Conclusion To conclude, let us cite the old Jewish story as a reminder that in spite of excellent legislation, much like a role model king, we can easily succumb to abuse and work against the individual and the family.

It was now spring, the time when kings go to war. David sent out the whole Israelite army under the command of Joab and his officers. They destroyed the Ammonite army and surrounded the capital city of Rabbah, but David stayed in Jerusalem.

Late one afternoon, David got up from a nap and was walking around on the flat roof of his palace. A beautiful young woman was down below in her courtyard, bathing as her religion required.

David happened to see her, and he sent one of his servants to find out who she was.

The servant came back and told David, "Her name is Bathsheba. She is the daughter of Eliam, and she is the wife of Uriah the Hittite."

David sent some messengers to bring her to his palace. She came to him, and he slept with her. Then she returned home. But later, when she found out that she was going to have a baby, she sent someone to David with this message: "I'm pregnant!"

David sent a message to Joab: "Send Uriah the Hittite to me."

Joab sent Uriah to David's palace, and David asked him, "Is Joab well? How is the army doing? And how about the war?" Then David told Uriah, "Go home and clean up."

Uriah left the king's palace, and David had dinner sent to Uriah's house. But Uriah didn't go home. Instead, he slept outside the entrance to the royal palace, where the king's guards slept.

Someone told David that Uriah had not gone home. So the next morning David asked him, "Why didn't you go home? Haven't you been away for a long time?"

Uriah answered, "The sacred chest and the armies of Israel and Judah are camping out somewhere in the fields with our commander Joab and his officers and troops. Do you really think I would go home to eat and drink and sleep with my wife? I swear by your life that I would not!"

Then David said, "Stay here in Jerusalem today, and I will send you back tomorrow."

Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day. Then the next day, David invited him for dinner. Uriah ate with David and drank so much that he got drunk, but he still did not go home. He went out and slept on his mat near the palace guards. Early the next morning, David wrote a letter and told Uriah to deliver it to Joab. The letter said: "Put Uriah on the front line where the fighting is the worst. Then pull the troops back from him, so that he will be wounded and die."

Joab had been carefully watching the city of Rabbah, and he put Uriah in a place where he knew there were some of the enemy's best soldiers. When the men of the city came out, they fought and killed some of David's soldiers – Uriah the Hittite was one of them.

Joab sent a messenger to tell David everything that was happening in the war. He gave the messenger these orders:

When you finish telling the king everything that has happened, he may get angry and ask, "Why did you go so near the city to fight? Didn't you know they would shoot arrows from the wall? Don't you know how Abimelech the son of Gideon was killed at Thebez? Didn't a woman kill him by dropping a large rock from the top of the city wall? Why did you go so close to the city walls?"

Then you tell him, "One of your soldiers who was killed was Uriah the Hittite."

The messenger went to David and reported everything Joab had told him. He added, "The enemy chased us from the wall and out into the open fields. But we pushed them back as far as the city gate. Then they shot arrows at us from the top of the wall. Some of your soldiers were killed, and one of them was Uriah the Hittite."

David replied, "Tell Joab to cheer up and not to be upset about what happened. You never know who will be killed in a war. Tell him to strengthen his attack against the city and break through its walls."

When Bathsheba heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him.

(2.Sam 11:1-26).

When comparing the structure of the support systems of military families in the United Kingdom, Germany and Slovenia, we can see obvious differences. The United Kingdom and Germany have good systemic arrangements. We cannot say the same for the SAF, due to the clear lack of implementation of some Regulations, Directives or Standard Operating Procedures. Otherwise, all three countries have a common point in the comparative analysis: the human factor. When working with military families, trust is crucial. Some institutions may slowly gain trust for a long time, yet may lose it with one reckless move. We find that all three countries we have analyzed offer good systematic solutions. In the end, however, a person is only human and therefore requires an individual approach. Nobody wants their intimacy betrayed, so it is hard to trust systems. Perhaps military chaplains have an advantage in this area thanks to the Catholic sacrament of Confession, which could easily be backed up by research in the near future. It is certainly true that military chaplains enter the intimacy of the family by granting the sacraments of baptism, communion,

confirmation, marriage and funerals. These are powerful turning points in everyone's life. This is why the performers of these tasks must be people of unspoiled trust!

It is an honour to be in a position of power. But in modern times we tend to forget that power is service and not lordship. It is true that the written law is barely upheld. Laws and regulations thus remain the minimum of human conduct. But a person is capable of much more than the bare minimum, right? The rest is, of course, a matter of ethics and morality.

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RECENZIJAZ

VOJAŠKE DRUŽINE: DINAMIKA,
PREDNOSTI IN IZZIVI

Družinski odnosi so ena izmed najdragocenejših človekovih izkušenj tako znotraj kot zunaj vojske, zato lahko morebiten razdor ali nesoglasje v družini močno vpliva na posameznike in družbo. Podpora družini lahko vpliva tudi na poklicne kazalnike, kot so pridobivanje in zadrževanje kadra ter pripravljenost vojske. Pripadnost družine vojaški službi se lahko prenaša iz generacije v generacijo in vpliva tudi na javno podporo vojski kot instituciji. Tokratna tematska številka *Sodobnih vojaških izzivov* je v celoti posvečena medsebojnemu vplivu družine, vojske in širše družbe.

Ponuja nam informativni sociološki vpogled v tematiko »vojaških družin« v Sloveniji in tujini. Vsak prispevek obravnava svojevrstna in pomembna vprašanja, povezana z vojaškimi družinami ter družbo. Za napredek pri zagotavljanju podpore vojaškim družinam je pri raziskovanju dejavnikov tveganja in zaščite treba uporabiti socialno-ekološki model raziskovanja v kombinaciji z na implementaciji temelječim znanstvenim pristopom in osredotočenostjo na dejavnike v okolju. Vsi članki v tej številki poudarjajo celovitost in pomen naslavljanja posebnosti vojaških družin v politikah, ki se s tem ukvarjajo.

Na področju družinskih ved se premalo pozornosti namenja implementaciji rezultatov znanstvenih raziskav, za kar bi bilo treba preučiti tako sedanje kot pretekle politike ter njihov vpliv na družine na različnih socialno-ekoloških ravneh. Zgodovinski vidik družine in njenih odnosov z vojsko v Sloveniji in tujini je lahko dobra podlaga za obravnavo politik in smeri raziskovanja (Jelušič, Jelušič Južnič in Juvan, 2020). Raziskave o vojaških družinah v Slovenski vojski so razmeroma novo, a vedno pomembnejše področje, če upoštevamo spremembe, do katerih je prišlo v zadnjih treh desetletjih, sploh po tem, ko se je preoblikovala v prostovoljno in poklicno vojsko. Avtorji se podrobno ukvarjajo z organizacijskimi in političnimi spremembami v Sloveniji, ki so potekale hkrati z raziskovanjem vojaških družin doma in v tujini.

Čeprav je pomen vojaških družin zdaj širše prepoznan, še vedno obstajajo ovire za uspešno uresničevanje podpornih programov. Hess (2020), Jakopič (2020) in Kasearu et al (2020) v svojih prispevkih navajajo več primerov podpornih programov, ki lahko vojaške družine okrepijo in povečajo njihovo pripravljenost. Za doseganje najboljših rezultatov se je tako treba usmeriti ne le v reševanje težav, temveč tudi v primarno preprečevanje dejavnikov tveganja in spodbujanje odpornosti družin, na primer s spodbujanjem kakovostnih medosebnih odnosov, za kar je nujna podpora na več ravneh delovanja, vključno s psihološko podporo, socialnim varstvom, pravnim svetovanjem in duhovno oskrbo.

Poleg kontekstualnih vidikov in preučevanja politik je temeljni del raziskovanja vojaških družin tudi opredelitev tveganja in zaščite na različnih socialno-ekoloških ravneh s pomočjo empiričnih raziskav. Vuga (2020) opisuje akcijski načrt aktualne raziskave, katere cilj je opredeliti dejavnike, ki na različnih socialno-ekoloških ravneh vplivajo na družine. Prihodnji programi in politike se lahko torej navezujejo na tiste dejavnike tveganja in zaščite, ki so najustreznejši za zdravje družin v slovenskem vojaškem okolju. Tak pristop, ki temelji na javnem zdravstvu, se v drugih državah uporablja za seznanjanje vojaških voditeljev s potrebami njihove vojske. Pri našem sodelovanju z vojsko ZDA smo s pomočjo modelov dejavnikov tveganja in zaščite opredelili posebne prilagodljive kazalnike za predvidevanje vedenjskega zdravja in zdravja družin, ki bi jih lahko uporabili tudi pri delovanju na ravni posameznika, družine, stroke in družbe. Širjenje modela socialno ekoloških raziskav, ki ga izvaja Vuga s sodelavci, bo koristno za Slovensko vojsko, njegovi rezultati pa bi lahko bili koristni tudi za druge vojaške organizacije. Rezultati, ki jih bo prinesla uporaba modela dejavnikov tveganja in zaščite iz projekta MilFam – Vojaške družine v praksi, je mogoče v prihodnje preizkusiti v nadaljnjih študijah in tako zagotoviti učinkovito izvajanje in spreminjanje vedenjskega zdravja. Projekt bo pomenil pomemben korak pri zagotavljanju podpore vojaškim družinam v Sloveniji.

V preostalih člankih se avtorji ukvarjajo še z drugimi pomembnimi vidiki vojaškosocioloških raziskav, pri čemer obravnavajo razlike med državami, izzive ob napotitvah in demografske spremembe, ki vplivajo na koncept »vojaških družin«. Kasearu et al. (2020) v prispevku primerjajo koncept vojaških družin v treh različnih državah. Ali se družine obravnavajo kot del vojske ali ne, kot to velja za nekatere druge poklice, je odvisno od tega, kako je v različnih državah vojaška služba opredeljena. V nekaterih okoljih velja poudarek na izvajanju politik le za pripadnike oboroženih sil, ne pa tudi za civilne družinske člane. Čeprav so podobne politike skupne mnogim poklicem, zagotovo obstajajo posebni razlogi, da v vojski te politike in programi veljajo tudi za civilne družinske člane, kar ne koristi le vojaškim družinam, temveč vpliva tudi na boljšo pripravljenost vojske. Kadar veljavne politike ob napotitvah ne veljajo tudi za partnerja in otroke, ki ostajajo doma, lahko to privede do psiholoških stisk, finančnih bremen in slabše družinske dinamike. V digitalni dobi so pripadniki na misijah pogosto dobro obveščeni o težavah doma in se zaradi pomanjkanja veljavnih politik, ki bi podpirale tudi člane vojaških družin v času napotitve, lahko počutijo nemočne.

Poleg izzivov, ki jih povzroča ločeno življenje, se vojaške družine spoprijemajo tudi s svojevrstnimi izzivi, ko je v tujino napotena vsa družina. V takšnih razmerah je bistveno, da se z infrastrukturo in povezovanjem zagotovita formalna in neformalna podpora družinskim članom, kadar se poskušajo znajti v novem okolju. To vključuje materialno in čustveno podporo družinskim članom med prilagajanjem na življenje v tuji državi. Nastanitev, zdravstvena oskrba, izobraževanje, jezik in možnosti zaposlitve za družinske člane so nekatere izmed skrbi, s katerimi se družine spoprijemajo med bivanjem v tujini. Pri tem lahko podporo daje vojska s svojimi notranjimi viri, a je vse odvisno od velikosti vojaške infrastrukture v tujini. Kadar ni na voljo zadostne notranje podporne infrastrukture, se nekatere izmed teh pomanjkljivosti lahko zapolnijo s sporazumi z državami gostiteljicami.

Švab (prav tako tudi Jelušič et al. in Kasearu et al.) v zvezi s tem poudarja, da je to področje še bolj kompleksno, saj izzivi, s katerimi se spoprijemajo vojaške družine, niso odvisni le od vojaške infrastrukture in politike, temveč tudi od družinske strukture in dinamike. Jelušič in sod. opisujejo, kako se je značilna družina pripadnika vojske razvijala skozi čas. Švab predstavi dinamiko družinske strukture v Sloveniji in njeno prepletanje z organizacijskimi potrebami vojske. Struktura družine se je v zadnjih desetletjih bistveno spremenila, kar postavlja vojaške družine pred nove izzive. Spremenjene družinske strukture predstavljajo raznovrstne dejavnike tveganja in izpostavljajo področja, na katera je treba usmeriti podporne programe. Delitev dela in družinskih vlog se v Sloveniji in po svetu še naprej razvija. Vedno več je raziskav, ki utemeljujejo pomen spola in delitve dela v vojaškem okolju. Podpora za pripadnice z otroki se razlikuje od podpore za njihove moške kolege, zato so morda potrebni bolj ciljno usmerjeni podporni programi. Pri uresničevanju potreb različnih praks, povezanih z vojaškimi družinami, je pri raziskovanju in njihovem prenosu v prakso treba nameniti pozornost tako formalnim kot neformalnim podpornim mrežam.

V tej tematski številki so omenjeni posebni primeri programov, s katerimi se že zagotavlja podpora vojaškim družinam, vendar ni pomembno le, da se programi izvajajo, temveč tudi, da so to učinkoviti programi, katerih izvajanje izhaja iz potreb, prepoznanih v empiričnem raziskovanju. Tak primer je program PREP (angl. *Preparation and Relationship Enhancement/Education Programme*, program za pripravo in izboljšanje odnosov ter izobraževanje), s katerim več držav zagotavlja podporo pri odnosih med vojaškimi pari. Številne študije so pokazale, da se s programom stiske v odnosih sčasoma zmanjšajo.

Ta številka Sodobnih vojaških izzivov jasno kaže na to, kako zelo je družina za učinkovito strokovno delo pomembna. Ne glede na pomen vojaških družin te pogosto niso deležne dovolj različnih vrst podpore, na primer v obliki politik ali preprečevalnih ukrepov, ki temeljijo na resničnih potrebah družin. To ne vpliva le na strokovne kazalnike, kot so zadovoljstvo na delovnem mestu, zadrževanje kadra, izostanki z dela in zadovoljstvo z vodstvom, temveč družine izpostavljajo stiskam in psihološkim težavam, kaže pa se lahko tudi v slabši delovni učinkovitosti. Ločitve ali razhodi in samsko življenje, torej družbena osamitev, so povezani tako s tveganji

za pojav depresije in samomorilnih nagnjenj kot s slabo delovno učinkovitostjo. S podpornimi programi je zato treba naslavljeni tako spremembe v družinski strukturi, ki so lahko še posebno stresne, kot negativne dejavnike stresa v družinah, na primer nesoglasja in nasilje v družini, kar prav tako vpliva na delovno učinkovitost. Tokratna tematska številka opozarja prav na to povezanost (med zadovoljstvom pripadnikov in njihovih družin ter uspešnim delovanjem vojaške organizacije, op. ur.) in bo lahko uporabna referenca za prihodnje raziskovalne študije in politike v korist vojske in vojaških družin.

REVIEW

THE MILITARY FAMILY: DYNAMICS, STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

Family relationships remain one of the most valuable and meaningful human experiences, within and outside of the military, and when loss or conflict occurs, this has profound effects on individuals and society. Furthermore, family support can influence occupational outcomes such as recruitment, retention, and military readiness. Family loyalty to the armed services can be transmitted intergenerationally and can influence public support for the military as an institution. The interplay between the family, the military, and broader society are considered throughout this special issue.

This special edition on military families in *Contemporary Military Challenges* provides informative sociological perspectives on “military families” both in Slovenia and internationally. Each article tackles unique and significant issues related to military families and society. The lens of the socio-ecological model for risk and protective factor research, in combination with an implementation science approach and attention to contextual factors, is what is needed to move forward in supporting military families. Taken together, the articles in this special issue highlight the complexity and importance of military families and the related policy implications.

In the field of family science, not enough attention has been given to the implementation of science research. To do this, one needs to consider both current and past policies and how they have affected families at different socio-ecological levels. As a basis for considering policies and research agendas, the historical context of the family and its relationship with the military in Slovenia and internationally is a good start (see article by Jelusic, Jeznic, & Juvan 2020). Research on military families in Slovenian Armed Forces is a relatively young field and of increasing importance given the changes in the last three decades, especially after becoming an all-voluntary force and the professionalization of the military. The authors detail the organizational and policy

changes in Slovenia that have developed concurrently with military family research internationally and at home. The relevance of military families is now more widely recognized, yet barriers to the successful implementation of support programmes remain. The articles by Hess 2020, Jakopic 2020, and Kasearu et al. 2020 provide several examples of support programmes that can strengthen military families and bolster military family readiness. To achieve the best outcomes, the focus needs to not only be on the treatment of problems, but also on the primary prevention of risk factors and promotion of resilient families (e.g. through fostering high-quality intimate relationships). Promoting resilient families requires the provision of support at multiple levels of operation including psychological support, social care, legal counselling, and spiritual care.

In addition to contextual perspectives and policy review, another fundamental part of military family research is identifying the risk and protective factors for socio-ecological outcomes through empirical research. Vuga 2020 provides an action plan for current research to identify factors at different socio-ecological levels that affect family behavioural health outcomes. The risk and protective factors which are most associated with outcomes in the Slovenian military context can be targeted in future programmes and policies. This public health based approach has been applied in other countries to inform military leaders about the needs of their armed forces. In our own work with the US military, we employed risk and protective factor models to identify unique modifiable factors in predicting behavioural and family health outcomes, which could be targeted in interventions at the individual, family, professional and community levels. Vuga and her colleagues' expansion of the socio-ecological research model will be useful for the Slovenian Armed Forces and the results could be informative for other military organizations. Intervention derived from the risk and protective factor model from the MilFam project can then be tested in subsequent studies to ensure effective implementation and change in behavioural health outcomes. The MilFam project will serve as an important step in addressing the needs of military families in Slovenia.

Several other relevant considerations for military sociological research are raised in the other articles, including cross-country differences, deployment challenges, and demographic changes impacting the concept of "military families". The article by Kasearu et al. (2020) compares the concept of military families across three different countries. Whether families are seen as part of the military or separate, as is the case for some other professions, depends on how military service is defined in different countries. In some contexts, emphasis has been placed on policies for service members, and civilian family members are not considered. Although similar policies are common in many professions, there are certainly reasons unique to the military that suggest inclusive policies and programmes for civilian family members not only benefit military families but can also improve military preparedness. In the case of deployment, when policies are in place that do not support the significant other/spouse and children left behind it can lead to psychological distress, financial burdens, and impairment of family functioning. In the digital age, deployed service

members are often well-informed about the problems at home and may become frustrated by the lack of policies in place to support military family members while they are deployed.

Besides the challenges faced by separations, military families also face unique challenges related to being stationed abroad with their families. The importance of the infrastructure and network to provide informal and formal support for family members as they navigate a new environment is critical in these situations. This includes both tangible and emotional support for family members as they adjust to living in a foreign country. Housing, medical care, schooling, language, and job options for family members are some of the concerns facing families while abroad. Depending on the size of the military infrastructure abroad, these concerns may be supported internally through the military. However, in many cases, sufficient internal support infrastructures may not be available and agreements with host countries can fill some of these gaps.

An added complexity is raised in the article by Švab (as well as in Jelušič et al. and Kasearu et al.), in that challenges facing military families not only depends on the military infrastructure and policies, but also on the family structure and dynamics. Jelušič et al. point out how the typical family of service members has evolved over time. Švab describes the dynamics of family structure across Slovenia and their interplay with military organizational needs. Family structure has changed significantly over the past few decades and this poses new challenges for military families. The changing family structures introduce diverse risks factors and areas to target with support programmes. The division of labour and family roles continues to evolve in Slovenia and internationally. There is a growing body of research that documents the relevance of gender and work division in the military context. Support for women service members with children varies from that of their male counterparts, and may require more targeted support programmes. In meeting the needs of diverse military family practices, attention to both formal and informal support networks in research and policy is necessary.

Throughout this special issue, specific examples of programmes already offered to support military families are mentioned. It is important, however, that programmes are not just implemented, but that effective programmes are implemented with a sound base of empirical support for their implementation. One example of this is the PREP programme (Preparation and Relationship Enhancement/Education Programme), which is offered in several countries to support intimate partnerships among military couples. This programme has evidence to support its effectiveness in reducing relationship distress over time across numerous studies.

This special issue makes it clear how important the military family is to effective professional functioning. Despite the clear importance of military families, they are often not supported sufficiently in various ways (e.g. through policies or evidence-based prevention offers). This not only influences professional outcomes such as

job satisfaction, retention, days of missed work, and satisfaction with leadership, it also places families at risk of hardship and psychological distress. This in turn can cycle back into worse professional outcomes. Divorce/separations and living alone (i.e. social isolation) are associated with risks of depression and suicide, along with negative professional outcomes. Support programmes need to address changes in family structure that may be particularly stressful, as well as negative stressors that arise within family structures (e.g. family conflict and violence), which also, in turn, impact professional outcomes. This special issue draws attention to this cycle and will serve as a useful reference to generate further research studies and policies that will benefit the military and its families.

Avtorji

Authors



Alenka Švab

Prof. dr. Alenka Švab je redna profesorica za sociologijo na Fakulteti za družbene vede Univerze v Ljubljani in raziskovalka na Centru za socialno psihologijo. Pedagoško in raziskovalno se ukvarja z družinami in družinsko politiko, vsakdanjim življenjem, življenjskimi poteki, družbenimi vidiki seksualnosti, intimnostjo in telesom. Sodelovala je v številnih domačih in mednarodnih projektih. Kot soavtorica je objavila šest monografij in bila sourednica pri dveh zbornikih s področja njenega raziskovanja. Med letoma 2012 in 2014 je bila glavna in odgovorna urednica revije Družboslovne razprave.

Prof. Alenka Švab, PhD, is Full Professor of sociology at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, and a researcher at the Centre for Social Psychology. Her academic and research fields include family and family politics, everyday life, life paths, social aspects of sexuality, intimacy and the body. She has taken part in numerous Slovenian and international projects and co-authored six monographs. She was co-editor of two journals in the field of her research. From 2012 to 2014, she was the Executive and Managing Editor of the journal *Družboslovne razprave* (Social Sciences Deliberations).



Janja Vuga Beršnak

Dr. Janja Vuga Beršnak je izredna profesorica in višja znanstvena sodelavka na Fakulteti za družbene vede. Njeno primarno raziskovalno področje je vojaška sociologija, preučuje pa tudi krizno upravljanje. Je vodja interdisciplinarnega projekta *Vojaško specifični dejavniki tveganja za dobrobit in zdravje vojaških družin*, ki ga podpira ARRS. Pri raziskovalnem delu sodeluje s kolegi iz mednarodnega okolja, tudi v Natovih raziskovalnih skupinah. Raziskovala je med pripadniki oboroženih sil v ISSMI (Rim) ter med pripadniki in pripadnicami SV v MOM Čad/CAR, Unifil in Kfor.

Janja Vuga Beršnak, PhD, is Associate Professor and senior research fellow at the Faculty of Social Sciences. Her primary research area is military sociology. She is also involved in the crisis management research. She is a research project manager of the research project *Military specific risk and protective factors for military family health outcomes*, supported by the Slovenian Research Agency. She cooperates with colleagues from the international research community, also within NATO working groups. Her research has been carried out among soldiers at ISSMI (Rome) and Slovenian soldiers deployed in Tchad/CAR, UNIFIL, and KFOR.



Ljubica Jelušič

Dr. Ljubica Jelušič je doktorirala na obramboslovju s področja legitimnosti vojske (1993). Je redna profesorica in raziskovalka na Katedri za obramboslovje Fakultete za družbene vede Univerze v Ljubljani, kjer trenutno predava polemologijo, sociologijo in politologijo vojske, o varnosti v Jugovzhodni Evropi, o mirovnih operacijah ter varnostnem sektorju in družbi. Vodila in koordinirala je več projektov s področja vojaške sociologije v Sloveniji ter v akciji EU COST, med katerimi je bil z vidika kadrovskih zadev v Slovenski vojski najpomembnejši projekt *Človeški dejavnik v vojaškem sistemu 2004–2006*.

Ljubica, Jelušič, PhD, earned her PhD in defence studies (military legitimacy) in 1993 and is now Full Professor and researcher at the Department of Defence Studies of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana. She currently holds lectures on polemology, military sociology, peace operations, security in South Eastern Europe, and security sector and the society. She has coordinated numerous military sociology projects in Slovenia and within the EU COST campaign, among them a comprehensive survey on Slovenian Armed Forces personnel *Human Factor in the Defence System 2004 – 2006*.



Julija Jelušič Južnič

Julija Jelušič Južnič je diplomirala na študiju biotehnologije na Biotehnični fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani z diplomskim seminarjem *Bioluminiscenca v rastlinah in možnosti njene uporabe* (2015). Med študijem se je posebej ukvarjala z etičnimi implikacijami raziskovanja na ljudeh in z nerazumevanjem pomena gensko spremenjenih organizmov. Je soavtorica poglavja *Bridging the gap between academic findings and operational military needs* v knjigi *Researching the Military* (Helena Carreiras (ur.), Routledge 2016).

Julija Jelušič Južnič holds a bachelor's degree in Biotechnology from the Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana. She graduated with a diploma seminar *Bioluminescent plants and their applications* (2015). During her studies, she was especially interested in ethical implications of research on human beings, and in the misunderstanding of the importance of genetically modified organisms. She has co-authored the chapter *Bridging the gap between academic findings and operational military needs* in the compendium *Researching the Military* (Helena Carreiras (ed.) published by Routledge 2016).



Jelena Juvan

Dr. Jelena Juvan je doktorirala na obramboslovju in je zaposlena kot docentka in višja strokovna sodelavka Katedre za obramboslovje ter Obramboslovnega raziskovalnega centra Fakultete za družbene vede. Predava o skupni evropski zunanji in varnostni politiki, o skupni varnostni in obrambni politiki EU ter o kriznem upravljanju in varnosti v informacijski dobi. Je prva doktorska študentka v Sloveniji, ki je doktorirala s področja vojaških družin z disertacijo *Vojaške družine: usklajevanje zahtev med družino in vojaško organizacijo* (2008).

Jelena Juvan, PhD, holds a PhD in defence studies and is Assistant Professor and senior research fellow at the Department of Defence Studies of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana. She currently holds lectures on Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU, Common Security and Defence Policy of the EU, crisis management, and security in the information age. She was the first social-sciences PhD student in Slovenia to develop military families as research topic. Her PhD thesis was entitled Military Families: Combining Demands of Work and Family in the Military Organization.



Kairi Kasearu

Dr. Kairi Kasearu je izredna profesorica na Inštitutu za družbene vede Fakultete za družbene vede univerze v Tartu v Estoniji. Je tudi vodja projekta S človeškimi viri povezana vzdržljivost estonskih obrambnih sil ter članica Natove raziskovalne skupine HFM-258 Vpliv vojaškega življenja na otroke iz vojaških družin. Kot raziskovalka se posveča družinski sociologiji, socialnim težavam, socialnemu varstvu, človeškim virom in vojaški sociologiji.

Kairi Kasearu, PhD, is Associate Professor at the Institute of Social Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, and University of Tartu, Estonia. She is also head of the research project "Human resource-related sustainability of the Estonian Defence Forces" and member of the NATO SAS-144 research group "Code of Best Practice for Conducting Survey Research in a Military Context". Her research areas include family sociology, social problems and welfare, human resources and military sociology.



Ann-Margreth E. Olsson

Dr. Ann-Margreth E. Olsson je višja predavateljica za socialno delo na univerzi Kristianstad na Švedskem. Doktorirala je iz sistemske prakse na univerzi v Bedfordshiru v Veliki Britaniji. Diplomirala in magistrirala je iz socialnega dela ter magistrirala iz sistemskega nadzora in vodenja ter pedagogike. Osredotoča se na socialno delo, otrokove pravice in sodelovanje, ugotavljanje dobrega počutja otrok, delo centrov za otroke Barnahus in preprečevanje medosebnega nasilja. Je ena prvih, ki se na Švedskem ukvarja z raziskovanjem vojaških družin, vojakov, veteranov ter njihovih otrok in razširjenih družin.

Dr Ann-Margreth E. Olsson is a senior lecturer in Social Work at Kristianstad University, Sweden, holds a Professional Doctorate in Systemic Practice from the University of Bedfordshire, UK. She is a trained social worker, systemic supervisor and manager (MSc) and holds a master in pedagogics. Her research work includes social work, children's rights and participation, child welfare investigations, Barnahus (Children Advocacy Centers), and interpersonal violence prevention. She is a pioneer in Sweden as researcher in the field of military families; soldiers, veterans and their children and extended families.



Andres Siplane

Mag. Andres Siplane je svetovalec za socialne zadeve na estonskem ministrstvu za obrambo. Po izobrazbi je socialni delavec. Na svojih prejšnjih položajih je bil odgovoren za družinske programe v estonskih obrambnih silah. Pri svojem raziskovanju se osredotoča na načrtovanje politike in etične izzive, vojaške družine, veterane in manjšine. Preučuje tudi delovanje žensk v vojski in vidik spola v oboroženih silah. Delo svetovalca na ministrstvu za obrambo mu ponuja edinstveno priložnost za pretvorbo akademskega znanja in empiričnih ugotovitev v zakonodajo.

Andres Siplane, MSc, is an advisor on social affairs to the Estonian Ministry of Defence. By his educational background he is a social worker. On his previous positions he has been responsible for the family programs in the Estonian Defence Forces. In his research he has been focusing on the policy planning and ethical challenges, military families, veterans and minorities. He has also been studying the functioning of female military personnel and the gender perspective in the armed forces. As an advisor at the Ministry of Defence he has a unique opportunity to translate the academic knowledge and empirical findings into legislation.



Donabelle C. Hess

Dr. Donabelle C. Hess je vojaška sociologinja in predavateljica na univerzi Park v vojaški letalski bazi Little Rock v ZDA. Pred tem je delala kot družinska svetovalka v ameriškem direktoratu za vojaško letalstvo v Natovi letalski bazi Geilenkirchen v Nemčiji. Doktorirala je iz vojaške sociologije na univerzi v Oklahomi. Akademsko in interesno se ukvarja s kvantitativnimi in kvalitativnimi raziskavami na področju družine, spola, stratifikacije in dobrobiti vojaških družin.

Donabelle C. Hess, PhD, is a military sociologist and adjunct professor at Park University, Little Rock Air Force Base Campus. She previously worked as a family consultant for the U.S. Department of the Air Force at Geilenkirchen NATO Air Base, Germany. She earned her doctorate in military sociology at the University of Oklahoma. Her field of study and interest involves quantitative and qualitative research in the areas of family, gender, stratification, and well-being of military families.



Matej Jakopič

Višji vojaški uslužbenec XIV. razreda Matej Jakopič je vikar Slovenske vojske. Diplomiral je na Teološki fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani leta 1997. Kot prvi Slovenec se je udeležil temeljnega usposabljanja za vojaške kaplane častnike v Kanadi, ki ga je končal z odliko. Leta 2005 je končal usposabljanje za vodjo vikariata. Julija 2015 ga je Slovenska škofovska konferenca imenovala za vojaškega vikarja. Sodeloval je na petih mirovnih misijah in je prejemnik številnih odlikovanj, med njimi tudi medalje francoskega ministrstva za obrambo.

Senior Military Specialist, Class XIV, Matej Jakopič is a military vicar of the Slovenian Armed Forces. He graduated at the Faculty of Theology at the University of Ljubljana in 1997. As the first Slovenian, he was selected to attend the Chaplain's Basic Officer Training Course in Canada, where he graduated with distinction. In 2005, he completed the training to become Head of the Chaplaincy. In July 2015, he was appointed a Military Vicar by the Slovenian Bishop's Conference. He has been deployed to five peace missions and received many decorations, including a medal by the French Ministry of Defence.

Navodila za avtorje

Instructions to authors

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Vsebinska navodila

- Splošno** **Sodobni vojaški izzivi** je interdisciplinarna znanstveno-strokovna publikacija, ki objavlja prispevke o aktualnih temah, raziskavah, znanstvenih in strokovnih razpravah, tehničnih ali družboslovnih analizah z varnostnega, obrambnega in vojaškega področja ter recenzije znanstvenih in strokovnih monografij (prikaz knjige).
- Vojaškošolski zbornik** je vojaškostrokovna in informativna publikacija, namenjena izobraževanju in obveščanju o dosežkih ter izkušnjah na področju vojaškega izobraževanja, usposabljanja in izpopolnjevanja.
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- Dolžina prispevka** Praviloma naj bo obseg prispevka 16 strani ali 30.000 znakov s presledki (ena avtorska pola). Najmanjši dovoljeni obseg je 8 strani ali 15.000 znakov s presledki, največji pa 24 strani oziroma 45.000 znakov.
- Recenzija znanstvene in strokovne monografije (prikaz knjige) naj obsega največ 3000 znakov s presledki.
- Recenzije** Prispevki se recenzirajo. Recenzija je anonimna. Glede na oceno recenzentov uredniški odbor ali urednik prispevek sprejme, nato pa, če je treba, zahteva popravke ali ga zavrne. Pripombe recenzentov avtor vnese v prispevek.
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- Končno klasifikacijo določi uredniški odbor.
- Lektoriranje** Lektoriranje besedil je zagotovljeno v okviru publikacije. Lektorirana besedila se vrnejo avtorjem v avtorizacijo.

Navajanje avtorjev prispevka	Navajanje avtorjev je skrajno zgoraj, levo poravnano. <i>Primer:</i> Ime 1 Priimek 1, Ime 2 Priimek 2
Naslov prispevka	Navedbi avtorjev sledi naslov prispevka. Črke v naslovu so velike 16 pik, natisnjene krepko, besedilo naslova pa poravnano na sredini.
Povzetek	Prispevku mora biti dodan povzetek, ki obsega največ 800 znakov (10 vrstic). Povzetek naj na kratko opredeli temo prispevka, predvsem naj povzame rezultate in ugotovitve. Splošne ugotovitve in misli ne spadajo v povzetek, temveč v uvod.
Povzetek v angleščini	Avtorji morajo oddati tudi prevod povzetka v angleščino. Tudi za prevod povzetka velja omejitev do 800 znakov (10 vrstic). Izjemoma se prevajanje povzetka in ključnih besed zagotovi v okviru publikacije.
Ključne besede	Ključne besede (3–5, tudi v angleškem jeziku) naj bodo natisnjene krepko in z obojestransko poravnavo besedila.
Oblikovanje besedila	Avtorji besedilo oblikujejo s presledkom med vrsticami 1,5 in velikostjo črk 12 pik, pisava Arial. Besedilo naj bo obojestransko poravnano, brez umikov na začetku odstavka.
Predstavitev avtorjev	Avtorji morajo pripraviti kratko predstavitev svojega strokovnega oziroma znanstvenega dela. Predstavitev naj ne presega 600 znakov s presledki (10 vrstic, 80 besed). Avtorji naj besedilo umestijo na konec prispevka, po navedeni literaturi.
Strukturiranje besedila	Posamezna poglavja v besedilu naj bodo ločena s samostojnimi podnaslovi in ustrezno oštevilčena (členitev največ na 4 ravni). <i>Primer:</i> 1 Uvod 2 Naslov poglavja (1. raven) 2.1 Podnaslov (2. raven) 2.1.1 Podnaslov (3. raven) 2.1.1.1 Podnaslov (4. raven)
Oblikovanje seznama literature	V seznamu literature je treba po abecednem redu navesti le avtorje, na katere se sklicujete v prispevku, celotna oznaka vira pa mora biti skladna s harvardskim načinom navajanja . Če je avtorjev več, navedemo vse, kot so navedeni na izvirnem delu. <i>Primeri:</i> <i>a) knjiga:</i> Priimek, ime (začetnica imena), letnica. Naslov dela. Kraj: Založba. Na primer: Urlich, W., 1983. Critical Heuristics of Social Planning. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

b) zbornik:

Samson, C., 1970. Problems of information studies in history. S. Stone, ur. Humanities information research. Sheffield: CRUS, 1980, str. 44–68. Pri posameznih člankih v zbornikih na koncu posameznega vira navedemo strani, na katerih je članek, na primer:

c) članek v reviji

Kolega, N., 2006. Slovenian coast sea flood risk. Acta geographica Slovenica. 46-2, str. 143–167.

Navajanje virov z interneta

Vse reference se začenjajo enako kot pri natisnjenih virih, le da običajnemu delu sledi še podatek o tem, kje na internetu je bil dokument dobljen in kdaj. Podatek o tem, kdaj je bil dokument dobljen, je pomemben zaradi pogostega spreminjanja www okolja.

Primer:

Ulrich, W., 1983. Critical Heuristics of Social Planning. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, str. 45–100. <http://www.mors.si/index.php?id=213>, 17. 10. 2008. Pri navajanju zanimivih internetnih naslovov v besedilu (ne gre za navajanje posebnega dokumenta) zadošča navedba naslova (<http://www.vpvs.uni-lj.si>). Posebna referenca na koncu besedila v tem primeru ni potrebna.

Sklicevanje na vire

Pri sklicevanju na vire med besedilom navedite priimek avtorja, letnico izdaje in stran. *Primer:* ... (Smith, 1997, str. 12) ...

Če dobesedno navajate del besedila, ga ustrezno označite z narekovaji, v oklepaju pa poleg avtorja in letnice navedite tudi stran besedila, iz katerega ste navajali.

Primer: ... (Smith, 1997, str. 15) ...

Če je avtor omenjen v besedilu, v oklepaju navedemo le letnico izida in stran (1997, str. 15).

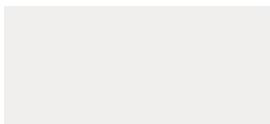
Slike, diagrami in tabele

Slike, diagrami in tabele v prispevku naj bodo v posebej pripravljenih datotekah, ki omogočajo lektorske popravke. V besedilu mora biti jasno označeno mesto, kamor je treba vnesti sliko. Skupna dolžina prispevka ne sme preseči dane omejitve.

Diagrami se štejejo kot slike.

Vse slike in tabele se številčijo. Številčenje poteka enotno in ni povezano s številčenjem poglavij. Naslov slike je naveden pod sliko, naslov tabele pa nad tabelo. Navadno je v besedilu navedeno vsaj eno sklicevanje na sliko ali tabelo. Sklic na sliko ali tabelo je: ... (slika 5) ... (tabela 2) ...

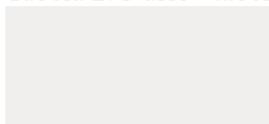
Primer slike:



Slika 5: Naslov slike

Primer tabele:

Tabela 2: Naslov tabele



- Opombe pod črto** Številčenje opomb pod črto je neodvisno od strukture besedila in se v vsakem prispevku začne s številko 1. Posebej opozarjamo avtorje, da so opombe pod črto namenjene pojasnjevanju misli, zapisanih v besedilu, in ne navajanju literature.
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- Naslov uredniškega odbora** Ministrstvo za obrambo
Generalštab Slovenske vojske
Sodobni vojaški izzivi
Uredniški odbor
Vojkova cesta 55
1000 Ljubljana
Slovenija
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- Bibliography** Bibliography should include an alphabetical list of authors referred to in the article. Each reference has to comply with the **Harvard referencing style**.
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a) book
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c) article in a journal
 Kolega, N., 2006. Slovenian coast sea flood risk. Acta geographica Slovenica. 46-2, pp 143–167.

Referencing from the internet

Internet sources are referenced the same as with printed ones, but are followed by the information about where on the Internet and when the document was obtained. The information when a document was obtained is important because of the frequent changes to the www environment.

Example:

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Citation

When citing sources in the text, indicate the author’s surname, the year of publication and page. *Example:* (Smith, 1997, p 12) ...

When quoting a part of the text, put the text in the quotation marks, and indicate in the parentheses the author and year followed by the page of the quoted text.

Example: ...(Smith, 1997, p 15) ...

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Figures, diagrams and tables to be included in the article should be prepared in separate files which allow for proofreading corrections. The location in the text where the image is to be inserted should be clearly indicated. The total length of the article may not exceed the given limit.

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.....

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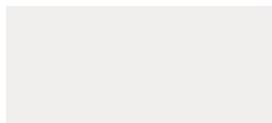
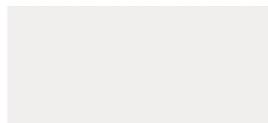


Figure 5: Title of the figure

Example of a table:

Table 2: Title of the table



Footnotes

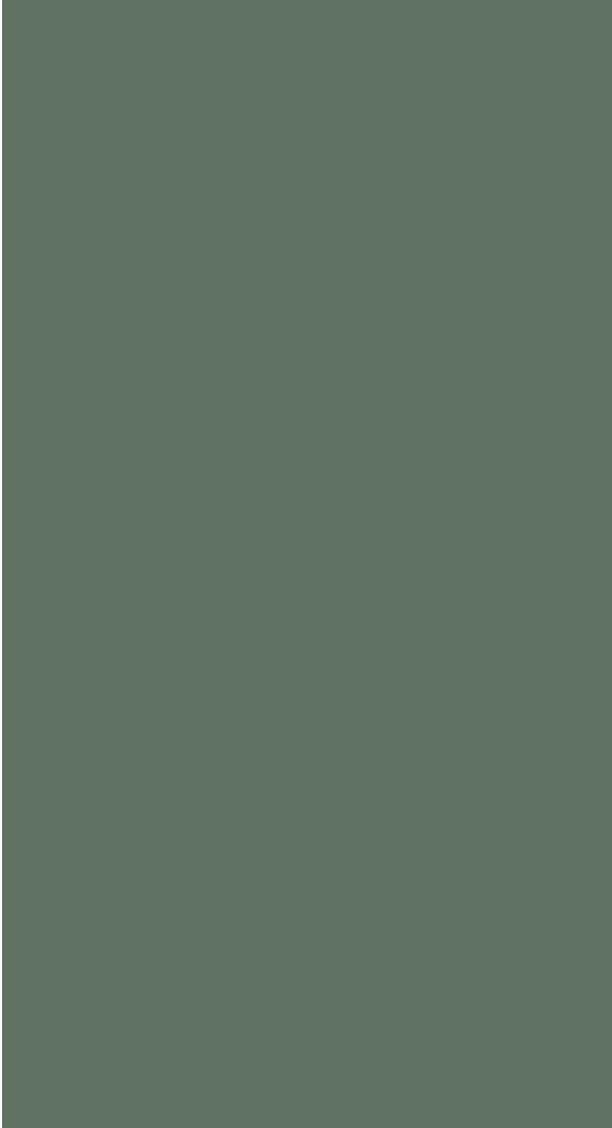
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