



TRAINING SYSTEMS IN NON-NATO EUROPEAN ARMED FORCES – SWITZERLAND

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Abstract: In this paper we will present general aspects of current history, social, political and economic situation of the European states that are not part of the North Atlantic Alliance. Also, we will briefly present the organized training system of human resources from the active military service, for mobilization and active reserve. The paper describes the elements of the structure of the military educational system developed in the Swiss Confederation, which are ex-countries of the former Federalist Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova. Through the content of our paper we will highlight the elements of analysis necessary for the design of an optimized system of training and evaluation of human resources in the Romanian Armed Forces.

Keywords: military organization; military education; training system; training; volunteer reservists; reserve military force; active reserve; Swiss Confederation.

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

The Swiss Confederation (i.e. German "Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft"¹, French Confédération Suisse, Italian Confederazione Svizzera, Romanian Confederaziun svizra, English Swiss Confederation) or Switzerland is a federal state composed of 26 autonomous cantons, located in the west of Central Europe, which borders Austria and Liechtenstein to the east, Italy to the south, France to the west and Germany to the north.

From a historical point of view, the present territory of Switzerland was part of the Roman Empire, French Empire, Kingdom of Alemannia, Kingdom of Burgundy, Holy Roman Empire, The First French Republic and French Empire (i.e. Napoleonic Empire), the last two states led by "Napoleon Bonaparte"². On 18th of June 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte lost the Battle of Waterloo, was exiled to *Saint Helena Island* and the French Empire broke up. Thus, the Swiss Confederation became an independent state and chose to be a

neutral state in terms of participation in armed conflicts.

The national identity does not focus on the spoken language, as in Switzerland German, French, Italian, Rhetoric, English and Portuguese are spoken, but on the active foreign policy by which the state engages in major peace processes around the world. Switzerland is part of the Schengen Area, but it is not part of the "European Union - EU"³.

Due to its neutrality in terms of membership of international defense and security organizations, Switzerland has a distinct foreign policy, which defines the concept of defense by maintaining a country profile not involved in military operations but participating and collaborating in conflict management with international organizations.

Switzerland is not a member of the "North Atlantic Treaty Organization - NATO"⁴, but in 1996 it joined the "Partnership for Peace"⁵. In 2002,

¹ *** Swiss Confederation, available at <https://www.admin.ch/gov/de/start.html>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.

² *** Andrew Roberts, *Napoleon: A Life*, Penguin Group, 2014, Introduction.

³ *** European Union, available at <http://ec.europa.eu/>, accessed on Jan., 20th, 2018.

⁴ *** The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (i.e. NATO/OTAN acronym for North Atlantic Treaty Organization, respectively for Organisation du Traité de l'Atlantique Nord), available at www.nato.int, accessed on Dec., 28th, 2017.

⁵ *** North Atlantic Treaty Organization, article *Partnership for Peace Programme*, 7 Jun. 2017, available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50349.htm, accessed on Jan., 15th, 2018.

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the Swiss Confederation became a member of the "United Nations"⁶.

Nowadays, Switzerland has sent military units to UN humanitarian missions in peacekeeping operations carried out by the "Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe – OSCE"⁷, and the military structure "SWISSCOY"⁸ participates in NATO mission in Kosovo (*i.e.* KFOR) where at the beginning of 2018 there were 235 men and women.

In spite of its neutrality, in Switzerland the military service is compulsory for men and volunteer for women, but it follows the same rules, according to the Constitution of the Swiss Confederation.

1. SWITZERLAND ARMY'S TRAINING SYSTEM

The "Swiss Confederation Army"⁹ defends its country and its population, has the motto "**necessary, fair, modern and flexible**"¹⁰ and is subordinated to the Federal Department of Defense, Civil Protection and Sport.

The army is **necessary** because the general situation in the country shows the need to defend the infrastructure, services and resources. The actions are **fair**, because defense means the global protection of the land and the people, and the Swiss Army is prepared to use its entire means in order to protect population, computer systems, critical infrastructures and airspace. The army is **modern** because its actions focus on current and predictable risks and threats (*e.g.* cyber attacks, sabotage actions of critical infrastructure etc.). The Army's structure is **flexible** as forces and equipment are distributed at regional level and the organization can be quickly adapted.

Switzerland uses the traditional military system to form the "*militia*"¹¹ (*i.e.* the military forces in the reserve) and uses both professional military personnel to train reservists as well as civilian employees, military sociologists, politicians and historians employed by the state. Basic principles and purposes, which are shared in military training in general, are identical for all members of the armed forces, regardless of whether they belong to the profession or reserve forces.

Switzerland's military recruitment and constitution system is different from other systems, being equally interesting and very effective, since in a population of "6,318,404 Swiss citizens"¹² the Army records a number of "134,886 soldiers in active service"¹³ (*i.e.* 17,506 officers and 22,650 non-commissioned officers), 20,000 recruits, 77,000 military personnel in reserve and 4,230 military and civilian specialists.

Even though the funding of this system has sometimes been disputed, the Government of Switzerland has not changed its defense and recruitment policies, tried to maintain the country's military traditions and provide very good conditions for the preparation of the Swiss Army. For example, political power has shown its desire to modernize air defense until 2020, by acquiring „*anti-aircraft defense systems and modern combat aircrafts*"¹⁴.

The current human resource generation system combines the experience of civilian recruits into the military system, which provides strong interaction between the military and civil society. However, the efficiency of military structures is reduced due to job's duties, about one third of soldiers fail to participate in compulsory annual training programs.

⁶ *** *United Nations*, available at <http://www.un.org/en/index.html>, accessed on Jan., 18th, 2018.

⁷ *** *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe*, available at www.osce.org, accessed on Jan., 15th, 2018.

⁸ *** *KFOR SWISSCOY*, available at <https://www.vtg.admin.ch/en/aktuell/einsaetze-und-operationen/militaerische-friedensfoerderung/missionen/swisscoy.html>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.

⁹ *** *Swiss Confederation Army*, available at <https://www.vbs.admin.ch/by/home.html>, accessed on Jan., 9th, 2018.

¹⁰ *** *Swiss Confederation Army's motto*, available at <https://www.vtg.admin.ch/de/aktuell/themen/wea.html>, accessed on Jan. 9th, 2018.

¹¹ *i.e. militia* = a military force whose members are trained soldiers, but who often have other jobs, the Cambridge Dictionary, available at <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/militia>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.

¹² *** *Switzerland's population 2016*, Federal Statistical Office, Neuchatel, 2017, p. 6, available at <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/en/home/statistics/population.assetdetail.3902101.html>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.

¹³ *** Sabine Mannitz, Rabea Haß, *The Swiss Concept of Soldiering in Practice-The Swiss Case*, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, 2009, p. 2, available at https://www.hsfg.de/fileadmin/HSFK/hsfk_downloads/Switzerland_III_01.pdf, accessed on Jan., 9th, 2018.

¹⁴ *** *Swiss Confederation Army*, available at <https://www.vbs.admin.ch/by/home.html>, accessed on Jan., 9th, 2018.



The Swiss training system begins with the recruitment of all 18-year-old men for active military service and 20-year-olds for military backup service. Women can be enlisted upon voluntary request. The training program starts after the completion of high school studies, without the possibility of postponing if the recruit follows bachelor degree programs. Potential recruits who are physically or mentally unfit for military service must pay an additional 3% of the income tax or perform compulsory military service in a civil protection institution (e.g. fire brigade or medical aid institution).

After recruitment, the soldiers execute 260 days of military service, as follows:

- three days for recruitment;
- a basic training course of 124-145 days in a training camp, depending on the military area where he/she is enrolled;
- six or seven training courses in nineteen days per year in recruitment training schools to revise themes and sessions learned during the initial training.

Soldiers may perform military service through a single 300-day consecutive period.

The infantry men specialized in grenade launchers must run a 25-week training program and the special force soldiers are trained in 10th Reconnaissance Detachment (e.g. a Swiss Army's elite military structure) during an 18-month training program.

At the end of the training period, soldiers are considered to have fulfilled their military service duties and are registered in the Swiss Army Reserve Forces for the next ten years.

Recruitment training schools organize training programs that continue to build up the social skills acquired during high school and form human resources skills necessary to carry out specific missions to war or other crisis situations. Recruitment training schools carry out three stage training programs.

In the first stage, the basic seven-week training program is conducted, when recruits learn how to use their own weapons, individual protection techniques, rules regarding the wearing of the military uniform, ranks, military salute, etc.

In the second stage, there is a six-week individual specialized training program, during which individual instruction continues and complex themes and sessions are introduced.

At this stage, recruits learn how to use weapon systems or equipment depending on the military branch for which they are trained. For example, the ammunition bearer learns to fire the mortar piece, and the medical aid man learns how to treat and evacuate the wounded soldiers.

After these two training steps, recruits who do not follow a training program for NCOs or officers are promoted to privates. The individual, basic and specialist training stages are run by graduates, non-commissioned officers, military and civilian specialists working for the Army.

In the third stage, there is a collective training program lasting five to eight weeks, during which the soldiers are trained in the military units of the Swiss Army. Soldiers are able to apply the knowledge previously acquired to perform the functions of the position they are assigned within a battalion level structure. At this stage, the soldiers will perform tactical marches, fighting exercises, tactical exercises, endurance tests, living in bivouac conditions etc.

Collective instruction is conducted by officers, and at the end of the training, the commander of the military unit performs an assessment of the soldiers' skills and knowledge.

In the last week of collective instruction, demobilization is carried out; during this period the soldiers clean up and return the combat equipment.

At the end of the three stages of training, the soldiers are released into civilian life, but remain on the record of the military unit where they last practiced during the military commitment until the age of 30, and even after this age if the compulsory military service is not completed.

Every year, soldiers run a three-week refresher training program and non-commissioned officers and officers carry out a four-week training program. Refresher courses are conducted by the headquarters staff of the military units.

In order to acquire the rank of reserve non-commissioned officer, the soldiers must fulfill 430 days of service, and in order to become a reserve officer, the candidates pursue intensive five-month courses. After completing six weeks of basic training at the Recruitment Training Schools, recruits who meet the requirements for promotion to officer rank will undergo training courses, at the Military Academy in Biemensdorf, for short-term military career officers.



In order to pursue specialization courses for short-term career officers, candidates must have a maximum age of 36 and hold a civil-law degree. Specialization courses last for one year.

In order to become a career officer, it is compulsory to attend the courses organized by the Military Academy in Biemensdorf. Promotion to senior officers’ rank is performed after they have completed additional courses. To obtain senior officer ranks, officers with junior ranks must make an official option in this regard and must have a maximum age of 50.

2. THE STRUCTURE OF SWISS ARMY’S TRAINING SYSTEM

The training system of the Swiss Confederation is composed of the Military Academy of the Federal Institute of Technology, the Military Professional

Kriens, is an elite institution that organizes training courses for officers from the central structures of the Swiss Army. The study groups are composed of 30 students and because of the exigency of the course, usually not all students become graduates. The institution forms senior headquarters officers for superior military functions, in G3 branch (e.g. head of operations department for brigade level structures) or J2 branch (e.g. head of military intelligence compartment).

The Higher Military Training of the Army (i.e. “Höhere Kaderausbildung der Armee – HKH”¹⁶) is deployed in Lucerne and is a center of excellence in military education in the field of leadership and military sciences. The institution organizes courses in partnership with other organizations in charge of education and national security.

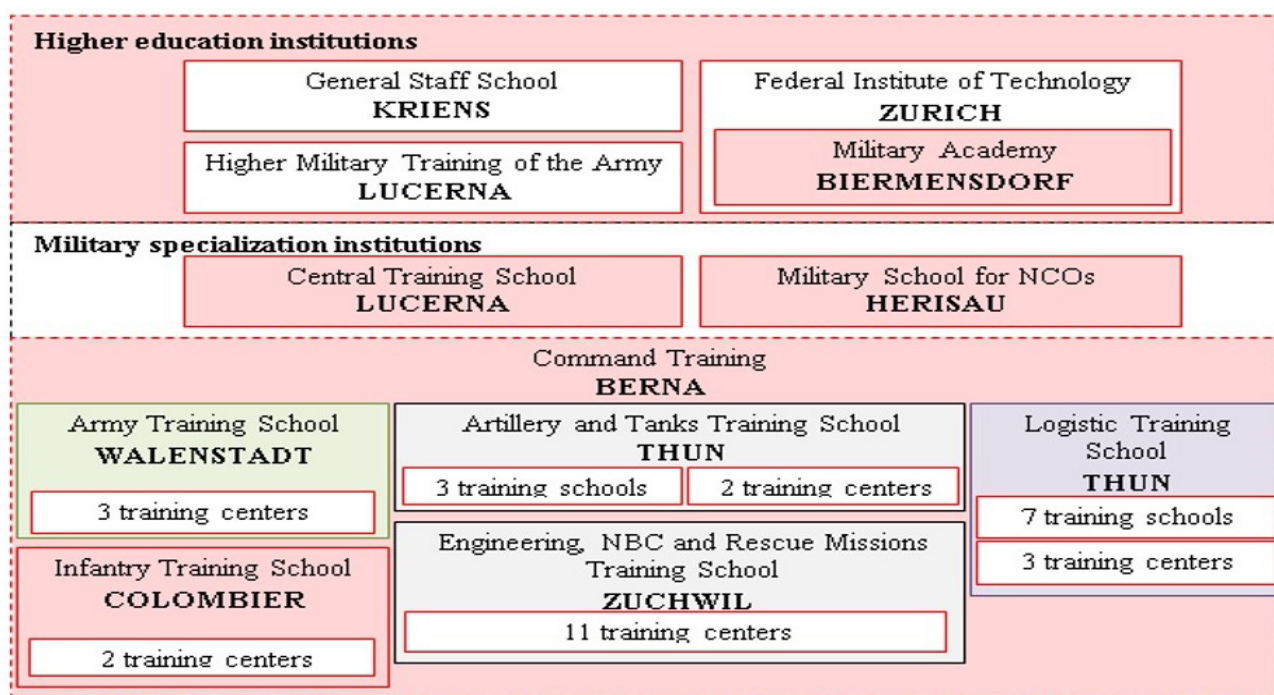


Figure no. 1. Swiss Army’s training system.

School for NCOs, the College of Armed Forces, and eight training units. Thus, in figure no. 1, we presented the structure of the training system of the Swiss Confederation Army, a system that is legally state-funded and whose legally centralized system is governed by national law.

The General Staff School (i.e. “Generalstabsschule – Gst S”¹⁵) deployed in

¹⁵ *** *School of General Staff of Swiss Army*, available at <https://militaer.lu.ch/generalstabsschule>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.

The Central Training School (i.e. “Zentralschule”¹⁷) is deployed in the town of Lucerna and subordinates *the Management*,

*** *Central Training School of Swiss Army*, available at <https://www.vtg.admin.ch/de/organisation/kdo-ausb/hka/zs.html>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.

¹⁶ *** *Swiss Higher Military Training of the Army*, available at <https://www.vtg.admin.ch/de/organisation/kdo-ausb/hka.html>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.

¹⁷ *** *Central Training School of Swiss Army*, available at <https://www.vtg.admin.ch/de/organisation/kdo-ausb/hka/zs.html>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.



Information and Communication Training Center in Berne. The Central Training School is a vocational education institution that organizes officers' specialization and training courses to serve as battalion and company commanders.

*The Federal Institute of Technology (i.e. "Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich – EZZ"*¹⁸) is a higher education institution that organizes three-year or six semester graduate courses. The institution organizes university courses for the training of career officers in the specialization "*Army officers - public affairs*" and specialization courses for the training of reserve officers. The educational program for the first five semesters includes general academic disciplines and military science. General academic disciplines include law, management, economics, contemporary history, sociology, psychology, and statistics courses. Military science disciplines include strategic studies, military pedagogy and psychology, military history, military technology, military sociology and military economics.

In the sixth semester students undertake a military training course at the Military Academy in Biemensdorf. Training consists in participating in the special military training programs and attending the language courses, respectively the English language course and the course for one of the national languages.

In order to be admitted to training courses for career officers, candidates must:

- hold at least the rank of lieutenant;
- meet the assessment criteria for career officers;
- be declared admitted to the physical training test;
- be employed by the Swiss Army.

*The Military Academy (i.e. "Militärakademie an der ETH Zürich – MILAK"*¹⁹) is deployed in Biemensdorf. The institution is an internationally recognized center of excellence for its university programs in the fields of military sciences, military history, strategic studies, economy of defense, leadership and communication, military sociology, military psychology and pedagogy, linguistic skills training and sport. The institution is also an important scientific research center in the field

¹⁸ *** *Federal Institute of Technology from Zurich*, available at <https://www.ethz.ch/en.html>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.

¹⁹ *** *Military Academy of Swiss Army*, available at <https://www.vtg.admin.ch/de/organisation/kdo-ausb/hka/milak.html>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.

of psycho-pedagogical sciences. The institution organizes six-month courses for the career officers and one year training courses for short-term career officers. Starting with 2004, candidates for short-term training courses are selected during the basic individual training period (e.g. after the first six weeks of instruction) and follow the military training program for career officers (i.e. the sixth semester of training university).

*The Military School for NCOs (i.e. "Berufsunteroffiziersschule der Armee – BUSA"*²⁰) is an educational institution deployed in Herisau which organizes two-year professional training courses for the training of NCOs. The institution organizes advanced professional training courses and specialization to promote non-commissioned officers of the Swiss Army.

The Recruitment Training Schools are coordinated by the *Command Training (i.e. "Kommando Ausbildung"*²¹) in Berne in conducting training programs.

Recruitment training is carried out in the following institutions: the *Army Training School*, the *Infantry Training School*, the *Tank and Artillery Training School*, the *Engineering Training School*, the *NBS and Rescue Missions Training School* and the *Logistics Training School*.

*The Army Training School (i.e. "Ausbildungszentrum der Armee"*²²) is deployed in the city of Walenstadt and subordinates the *East Training Center* deployed in Walenstadt, the *West Training Center* from Bure and the *Testing and Simulation Center* from Walenstadt.

*The Infantry Training School (i.e. "Infanterielehrverband"*²³) is deployed in Colombier and has under control the *Military Music Training Center* from Bermuda and the *Mountain Troops Training Center* from Andermatt.

²⁰ *** *Military School for NCOs of Swiss Army*, available at <https://www.vtg.admin.ch/de/organisation/kdo-ausb/hka/busa.html>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.

²¹ *** *Command Training of Swiss Army*, available at <https://www.vtg.admin.ch/de/organisation/kdo-ausb.html>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.

²² *** *Army Training School of Swiss Army*, available at <https://www.vtg.admin.ch/de/organisation/kdo-ausb/aza.html>, accessed on Jan., 9th, 2018.

²³ *** *Infantry Training School of Swiss Army*, available at <https://www.vtg.admin.ch/de/organisation/kdo-ausb/lvb-inf.html>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.



The Artillery and Tanks Training School (i.e. "Lehrverband Panzer Artillerie"²⁴) is deployed in Thun, and subordinates the 21st Pantzer Training School in Berne, the 31st Artillery Training School in Biere, the 22nd Artillery and Panther's officer School in Thun, the Mechanized Units Training Center in Thun and the Artillery Training Center in Biere.

The Engineering, NBC and Rescue Missions Training School (i.e. "Lehrverband Genie/Rettung/ABC"²⁵) is deployed in the city of Zuchwil and subordinates the Engineering Training School in Brugg, the Search and Rescue Operations Training Center from Bremgarten, the Rescue Operations School in Wangen, the Rescue Teams Training Center in Geneva, the Disaster Intervention Training Center in Bremgarten, the NBC and Weapons of Mass Destruction Training Center in Spiez, the Sports Competence Assessment Center deployed in Magglingen, the 10th Assault Boats Training Center in Zuchwil, the NBC Defense Company in Spiez, the 10th NBC Battalion in Spiez, and the NBC Defense Laboratory in Spiez.

The Logistics Training School (i.e. "Lehrverband Logistik"²⁶) is deployed in Thun, and subordinates the 40th School of Logistics Officers of Berne, the 41st School for Hospitals Training in Moudon, the 42nd Medical Training School in Airolo, the 43rd Maintenance School in Thun, the 45th Resupply School in Friborg, the 47th Traffic and Movement School in Romont, the 49th Logistics NCOs School in Bern; the Catering Training Center in Thun, the Veterinary and Veterinary Services Training Center in Bern and the Driver Training Center in Thun.

Each recruitment training school has a training camp and facilities for training and personal developing of the recruits.

CONCLUSIONS

The shortcoming of this training system has a socio-economic nature, because multinational organizations do not take into account the employees' national duty. Thus, multinational companies restrict the sending of employees to annual training courses, since they believe that the military skills acquired by their employees in the Recruitment Training Schools are not useful in civilian life.

The advantage of the Swiss training system is that the civic duty of defending the country is perceived by the soldier as a democratic right, so the system benefits from the services of an ideal soldier, trustworthy of his homeland's policy and culture.

Last but not least, although this country respects the principle of neutrality, it should be noted that Swiss foreign policy supports the participation of armed forces in peacekeeping missions abroad. Consequently, the Swiss Confederation has expanded its cooperation with United States armies without abandoning the tradition of neutrality and the national military system.

In conclusion, the Swiss concept of *soldier-citizen* aims at the lowest degree of a military structures institutionalization and has democratic control over military structures as the state neutrality, conscription and democracy complement each other.

We believe that the recruitment and training system used in the Swiss Army is an efficient training and evaluation system and that using the concepts of this system can be designed as an optimized system of training and evaluation of human resources in the Romanian Army's reserve forces.

²⁴ *** *Artillery and Tanks Training School of Swiss Army*, available at <https://www.vtg.admin.ch/de/organisation/kdo-ausb/lvb-pz-art.html>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.

²⁵ *** *Engineering, NBC and Rescue Missions Training School of Swiss Army*, available at <https://www.vtg.admin.ch/de/organisation/coun-ausb/lvb-g-rttg-abc.html>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.

²⁶ *** *Logistics Training School of Swiss Army*, available at <https://www.vtg.admin.ch/de/organisation/kdo-ausb/lvb-log.html>, accessed on Jan., 8th, 2018.



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