

The Changing Role of the Common Security and Defence Policy of NATO and the EU in Central European Security: The Czech Republic

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Introduction

The Czech Republic's (CZR) unprecedented social transformation was launched in the specific historical conditions of the disintegrating bipolar world after 1989. The international fame of the Velvet Revolution underscored the peaceful way of the division of the state and outlined a wider spectrum of reforms of the CZR from 1 January 1993, including defence policy (PAJER 2013). The political reality, the objective to develop a modern liberal–democratic state, reflected the revolutionary shift in the political system (PROCHÁZKA 2015). Since then, NATO and the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) have influenced the CZR defence policy adaptation in several ways and the ambition of this study is to assess the role of both organisations in this endeavour.

There are several aspects to be taken into consideration when it comes to the research of these matters. First, the attitude of the political elite in the CZR to defence has been evolving and defence safeguarding always had to compete for politicians' attention, who were predominantly occupied by the problems of political, economic and social transformation (JANOŠEC et al. 2009). Second, the regulatory and organisational structure of Czechoslovakia's defence policy and military in 1989 was completely different as we can witness today. The military was an instrument serving entirely the purpose of a totalitarian regime dominated by one ruling political party (JANOŠEC et al. 2009). It was built and prepared to fulfil a grand strategy with predominantly offensive objectives in relation to a potential superpower conflict. A robust military potential was kept in a high readiness mode supported by reinforcement plans to mobilise all state resources. The trends of the main weapon system are depicted in Table 1 (JANOŠEC et al. 2009) (see below). Third, the state-owned economy was organised in a way that would allow sustaining the wartime military structure according to the concept of high intensity military confrontation.

It was a complex task for the new political and military leadership after 1989 to ensure the creation of a new structure for the defence sector and the military organisation in accordance with the different strategic context. At the beginning of the 1990s, there was the utopian vision that the end of the Cold War would mean a beginning of conflict-free relations in the world. Following the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact in 1991, opinions were also voiced that it would be helpful to abolish NATO as well, and that the CZR could become a kind of a neutral bridge between the East and West. Such ideas were fortunately soon forgotten (PROCHÁZKA 2009).

Table 1.
The number of major weapon and equipment systems 1993–2015

	Main Battle Tanks MBT	Armed Combat Vehicles ACV	Artillery Systems AS	Combat Aircraft CA	Attack Helicopters AH
1991	3,315	4,593	3,485	446	56
1993	1,617	2,315	1,516	227	34
1995	1,011	1,451	893	215	36
1997	952	1,367	767	143	36
1999	938	1,219	754	114	34
2001	652	1,211	648	97	34
2003	541	1,235	528	125	34
2005	298	747	362	103	32
2007	181	580	321	38	38
2009	178	490	259	42	29
2011	166	494	244	38	25
2013	123	501	182	39	24
2018	119	439	179	35	17
CFET Ceilings	957	1367	767	230	50

Note: The figures in 1991 are related to the Czechoslovak Armed Forces.

Source: Ministry of Defence 2015.

General Perceptions of NATO and EU CSDP

Since 1989, the CZR's relations with the West has always been a critical component of the country's trajectory towards the establishment of the rule based liberal democracy, prosperity and security. Both the preparation phase and the period immediately after the CZR joined NATO have had a profound impact on defence policy in terms of defining the strategic interests and objectives, institutional adaptation, resource allocation, armed forces innovation and participation in crises response operations (JANOŠEC et al. 2009). The overall progress in the transformation of the country was recognised by Western democracies. The CZR belonged to the first group of the former communist states who joined NATO (1999) and the EU (2004).

Hard and soft security provider

NATO membership, strong transatlantic link and collective security as instruments of hard power have been emphasised as the main guarantee for the security of the CZR in all defence strategies adopted by the Government (National Defence Strategy of the Czech Republic 1997; Military Strategy 1999). EU CSDP has always played a rather complementary role. However, EU CSDP as an instrument of soft power security has also enjoyed political support in terms

of the institutional emancipation of the military pillar as well as concerning the significant Czech military contributions to the EU Battle Group (EUBG) and EU operations.

The NATO accession process speeded up the modernisation of institutional arrangements as well. New legislation on defence and crises management was introduced in 1999. Also, new strategic documents were elaborated, institutional changes in the defence sector were carried out and wide-ranging reforms of the armed forces were launched reflecting NATO requirements and standards.

The political and military assistance of the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany and France was of utmost importance for the defence sector. Bilateral cooperation embraced preparation of personnel, exercises, advice in conduct of institutional reforms, material support and operations. These activities set up the conditions for the execution of defence policy reflecting strategic interests, changing defence needs, new international obligations and available resources (FRANK–PROCHÁZKA 2007).

The one set of forces principle has dictated the CZR's attitude to capability development. The NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP) as a top-down approach (NATO 2018) alongside with the participation in NATO Response Force (NRF) and alliance operations and missions (AOM) have played the most significant role in shaping the Czech Armed Forces (CZAF) structure and its capabilities. The EU Capability Development Mechanisms (bottom-up) has never become the game changer in CZAF development. Nevertheless, preparation for the EUBGs (2009, 2012, 2016) proved to have a transformational effect and reinforced interoperability mainly with the Visegrád (V4) countries (Council of the EU 2003).

When the CZR joined NATO, the commitments of collective defence burden sharing became a political priority. There were several elements of this construct: 1. the defence budget meeting 2% of GDP; 2. institutional adaptation in line with best practices applied by NATO embracing civilian oversight of the military; 3. capability development; planning, programming and budgeting; human resource management (HRM); 4. contribution to the AOM.

Transatlantic link

Relationship with the United States was carefully maintained and enhanced through all instruments of national power (diplomacy, military and economy). This was specifically meaningful during the era of President Vaclav Havel and the Secretary of State Madeleine Albright (in office from 1997 to 2001 under President Bill Clinton), when the CZR sought NATO membership.

In recent years, the CZR's relationship with the United States has shifted. On the United States side, it was the shift in foreign policy priorities towards the Asia-Pacific region and the emphasis on the *America First* policy that drove this change. On the side of the CZR, it is mainly due to the increasing political inconsistency in foreign policy orientation and security threat perception (namely Russia) by political elites.

What is more pressing though is Trump's desire to end the perceived free riding on U.S. security guarantees and to encourage other NATO members to increase military spending (The Economist 2017). The Obama Administration had taken a similar approach. America's allies are supposed to magnify the power of the United States and to help protect

shared interests. The United States expects them to take greater responsibility for addressing common threats (National Security Strategy of the United States of America 2017). The Czech Minister of Defence announced that reaching 2% of GDP is likely in 2025 (Lidovky 2017). Nonetheless, so far there was only a commitment on behalf of the Czech Government from 2014 to progressively increase defence spending in order to reach 1.44% of GDP in 2020 (HOLECEK 2014).

Towards EU strategic autonomy

There are indications, that besides NATO – the traditional main pillar of the CZR's defence – the EU CSDP is also gaining higher political visibility. There are several building blocks of evolving EU defence cooperation as it seeks its strategic autonomy: 1. Pooling and Sharing of defence capabilities (P&S); 2. the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC); 3. the European Defence Fund (EDF); 4. European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP); 5. the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD); 6. Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). They have all made progress – each following a strictly functional logic driven by shared interests as well as practical needs. It is to be seen whether these initiatives will advance in a dedicated institutional structure (FIOTT et al. 2017). For the time being, the speed and determination with which the EU and its member states including the CZR have (re)engaged on defence cooperation prove that Europeans are now becoming aware of what is at stake in a rapidly mutating security environment (GILLI–GILLI 2017).

The EU Global Strategy (EUGS) released in late June 2016 in the immediate aftermath of the 'leave' vote in the U.K. provided a new comprehensive narrative for building a more credible, responsive and joined-up Union. There is a strong emphasis on making defence cooperation among EU countries 'the norm'. In this context, the opportunity to create PESCO is provided by Articles 42 and 46 of the Treaty on European Union and Protocol No. 10 of the Treaty. A common feature of all these initiatives within the EUGS framework is stress on the gradual synchronisation of national defence planning cycles and capability development practices (FIOTT 2017).

The CZR understands PESCO as an ambitious, binding and inclusive European legal framework for investments in the security and defence of the EU. PESCO provides a crucial political framework to improve military assets and defence capabilities that will also benefit NATO. It will strengthen the European pillar within the Alliance and respond to repeated demands for stronger transatlantic burden sharing. PESCO could be an element of a possible development towards a common defence. A long-term vision of PESCO is to arrive at a coherent full spectrum force package – in complementarity with NATO, which will continue to be the cornerstone of collective defence for its members. The CZR joined PESCO in 2017.

It is generally recognised that Brexit is creating space for strengthening military cooperation among EU member states. They need to step up defence cooperation. Because of structural changes in both the strategic environment (demand) and the economics of defence (supply), when it comes to technology, procurement and weapons manufacturing, there is a strong case for European countries to move beyond their traditional approach to defence cooperation and this is a window for opportunity for the CZR as well (GILLI–GILLI 2017).

The strategic leadership of Germany

Currently, traditional strategic partnership with the United States is augmented by Germany. The affiliation of a Czech mechanised brigade to German units can serve as one of the many examples taking place under the umbrella of the NATO Framework Nations Concept (FNC) initiative built on the strategic proximity of nations (MAJOR–MÖLLING 2014). The CZR's support to FNC represents its contribution towards transatlantic burden sharing. However, concerns have been voiced that affiliation requires a high degree of interoperability that may dictate operational requirements and modernisation of the CZAF and that Germany's hidden agenda is to advance its industrial interests.

There are also historical reservations in the CZR to the increasing role of Germany in Europe. The initiative was heavily criticised by the Czech opposition as well as by influential magazines such as *Foreign Policy* (BRAW 2017) due to misunderstanding of its implications. The affiliation has been wrongly seen as putting the CZAF under German command and integrating both armies (Czech Parliament 2017).

V4 cooperation – more vision than action

Despite the creation of the V4 EU BG in 2012 and 2016, the cooperation of the V4 countries has offered more vision rather than tangible outcomes. In terms of capability, there were several ambitious modernisation projects as MBT T-72 or rotary airlift of the Mi family. However, these initiatives failed mainly due to the lack of political will and incompatible industrial interests.

The V4 cooperation is considered as meaningful and important by 70% of Slovaks, compared to about 50% of the Czechs and 40% of the Hungarians and the Poles. The V4 cooperation actually does not have any opponents. The highest degree of trust towards the United States is in Poland (50%), the lowest one in Slovakia (27%). The Polish public feels the highest level of distrust towards Russia; contrary to this, Slovaks feel the highest level of trust (GYÁRFÁŠOVÁ–MESEŽNIKOV 2016).

Nevertheless, the V4 format has a role to play when it comes to force preparation (education, training, exercise), operational deployments (EFP) and creation of high readiness units (EU BGs, NRF). There is a certain level of scepticism to advance practical industrial cooperation for the purpose of multinational capability delivery.

The role of NATO and EU CSDP in the Czech defence policy

Democratisation

The democratisation phase spans the period of the armed forces democratisation process from November 1989 until the division of the state on 31 December 1992. The main objective was to introduce civilian oversight of the military according to approaches proven in Western democracies and create the legislative framework to minimise the probability of its misuse against democratisation. The appointment of a civilian minister, personal changes in the top

military leadership and the abolishment of political structures in the armed forces were the most significant measures taken (RAŠEK 2004).

Since 1989, the armed forces have developed as a reliable and credible instrument of national power, loyal to the political leadership, trusted by the public and seen as a stabilising factor in the society. However, the newly established political parties did not have an adequate pool of qualified experts in defence matters. The unexperienced political leadership created a conceptual vacuum concerning the long-term development of the armed forces. Consequently, systematic defence planning and mechanism related to R&D, armament and analytical support to decision making were abolished and replaced by short-term budget-based management. This had a devastating effect on the modernisation and HRM. Both processes lost their functional effectiveness and had to be re-established again in later years during the preparation for NATO membership.

The defence policy's main conceptual construct during this period was to defend the state territory from all direction against unknown enemies.¹ At the end of this phase, the CZR's trajectory towards NATO membership became even more obvious in the evolving state of European security namely the outbreak of the civil war in the former Republic of Yugoslavia.

Integration

The integration period is associated chiefly with the institutional preparation and the very accession of the CZR to NATO on 12 March 1999. This phase commenced immediately after 1 January 1993 upon the peaceful division of the country and its armed forces. Defence policy focused on the integration to the political-military structures of the West. It was not the only option taken into political considerations. However, neutrality or individual self-defence were found too risky in the wake of the country's geographic location at contested crossroads in Central Europe.

One of the main defence policy priorities for this period was to implement best practices on institutional adaptation and to ensure proper functioning of the entire defence sector in line with NATO standards (National Defence Strategy of the Czech Republic 1997). Nevertheless, this effort was negatively influenced by frequent changes in the top political leadership, accompanied with unclear conceptual ideas, unmaturing political guidance and several waves of questionable reorganisations balancing shrinking resources with enormous operating costs of a still very large CZAF and growing demand on its modernisation.

Affordability of the CZAF rather than its operational effectiveness prevailed. Defence policy objectives were driven by the concept of reasonable self-defence. As a result, the military potential of the country was further reduced in terms of military personnel, equipment and infrastructure and material reserves.

The Czech Republic joined the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program on 10 March 1994. In 1999, the Parliament of the Czech Republic adopted a set of defence laws and the Government issued strategic level documents (Security Strategy 1999; Military Strategy 1999).

¹ Concept on the Development of the Czechoslovak Armed Forces by the end of 1993, adopted by the Government in November 1990 and the Czechoslovak Federal Republic Military Doctrine, adopted by the Federal Parliament on 20 March 1991.

Reforms

The main objectives of defence reforms were to prepare the conditions for and create an all-volunteer force – smaller in size, but young, modern, highly mobile and able to meet fair burden sharing of collective defence. During this stage, the CZR advanced also its economic integration with the West and accessed the EU on 1 May 2004.

Reforms were introduced to provide updated strategic direction for further development of the CZAF to meet challenges of the 21st century. The main impetus for reforms was provided by the lessons gained from NATO membership. The participation of the CZAF in AOM increased significantly in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attack on the United States.

Since 2002, there has been a new worrying trend. After a period of stable defence funding as the outcome of sound political commitments during the NATO accession process, the decline in defence spending became a political reality. It was partly influenced by the reprioritisation of the Government spending after the floods in 2002. As an excuse, the enhanced participation of the CZAF in Afghanistan and other AOM was articulated towards NATO.

Based on NATO's advice, several initiatives were introduced to save money mostly in supporting functions (outsourcing) and the core functions of military organisation (fighting capability) was emphasised. Furthermore, aging and not-used infrastructure was sold in larger scope and the modernisation pattern of the CZAF slowed down significantly.

Transformation

The transformation period is typical for its effort to create a modern multipurpose military force with expeditionary capability without geographic limitation (Military Strategy 2008). Despite financial constraints, the priority was to ensure participation in AOM. There was also a mounting pressure to rationalise internal business processes under the motto "do more with less". Several initiatives were outlined to streamline supporting functions (property management, HRM, finance, acquisition) and avoid non-core business activities (civil protection, military sport, orchestras, forestry, state owned enterprises). However, resistance to change resulted in a limited implementation of these measures. The financial crises followed by substantial financial cuts in government expenditures with a reduction in the military budget of more than 20% impacted CZAF preparedness, readiness and capabilities (White Paper 2011).

The more than decade-long operational deployments related to the fight against terrorism worn out the CZAF. Substantive *price tag* was issued in terms of tiredness of personnel as well as material operability. On the other hand, participation in AOM enhanced the prestige of the CZAF in the society. However, it has changed the attitude of both ordinary people and political leadership to defence. In fact, the traditional understanding of territorial defence and preparation of the whole society for high-intensity military confrontation has disappeared (mobilisation, reserves preparation, high-end military capabilities, functionality of critical infrastructure). The responsibility for defending the country was wrongly assigned purely to military professionals with a limited military capability.

Deterrence

The deterrence phase is the course of actions in the country's defence policy following the unlawful annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014. Russia is seen as a risk to the country's security using subversive measures to weaken the credibility of NATO, undermining transatlantic unity and weakening European institutions and governments (the Gerasimov doctrine) (Defence Strategy 2017).

In response to this challenge, there is a renewed political commitment to boost capabilities and capacities of the CZAF. Efforts are being made on political and military levels to keep the defence system and CZAF relevant and fit for the whole spectrum of potential NATO and EU operations.

Since 2014, the CZR's defence policy has been dominated by the outcomes of NATO Summits in Wales and Warsaw, chiefly by reassurance measures, deterrence, enhance forward presence and many others. In practical terms, NATO commitments influenced the amendments to the defence strategy. This created the groundwork necessary for enhancing the overall resilience of the government bodies and agencies, local administrations and citizens. Defence strategy includes several important measures such as the increase of political-military ambitions, the establishment of new units and the increase of the number of soldiers by 5,000.

The CZR is able, depending on the nature of crisis, to deploy a land brigade task force without rotation for a six-month period. If such a task force is not deployed, the CZR will be able to simultaneously deploy a sustainable battalion and company size land task force, or an air force component, with rotation, for AOM. This is a significant increase on the level of political and military ambitions. So far, the previous defence strategy counted with the deployment of a brigade to secure NATO's collective defence only.

Despite the fact that the period of resource driven strategy seems to have passed away, responsible political behaviour should ensure to get the most out of each Czech Crown spent on defence. There is no doubt about the continued worsening of the security situation of the CZR and its allies demanding capable armed forces. Nevertheless, there is no shared vision among policy makers and military leadership in the CZR on the future force posture, as well as on the capabilities this country should exactly invest in.

This sort of dilemma is underscored by the so far limited ability of the MoD administration to implement already agreed plans and modernisation programs and of our military to justify their capability needs. In terms of long-term adaptation, the CZAF pursues the implementation of its Concept of the Czech Armed Forces 2025.

The most critical realm is the command and control function. For more than two decades, the CZR was cutting the positions of higher officer corps and reducing the command structure. In this regard, the NATO recommendations have always been taken into consideration. The original intention was to introduce lean management in military functions and turn the rank pyramid inherited from the Warsaw Pact era. Therefore, the CZAF has currently a limited ability to provide balanced military advice to politicians, capacity for long-term strategic planning and preparation, planning and execution of larger military operations (small joint operation – SJO). Furthermore, the military should react to the changed strategic assumption – no reaction time for managing crisis. The peacetime establishment of the CZAF must be capable to build up, and mobilise command and force structures in case of war faster than in the past.

The reappearance of geopolitics and hard power rhetoric (assertive Russia) in international relations accompanied by migration from North Africa and the Middle East and Terrorism and Cyber related threats with other implications such as Hybrid, Asymmetric and Information Warfare will shape the Czech defence policy in the years to come. Provision of credible defence of the CZR in the new era requires a fair contribution to collective defence (financing, capabilities and operations), strong transatlantic link, meaningful deterrence potential of multinational arrangement provided by NATO and its complementarity with the EU CSDP (enhanced cooperation, capability and innovation).

Institutional architecture

The defence system of the CZR is institutionally conceived in concordance with the constitutional order. Its basic elements are mainly the constitutional institutions and functionaries: The President, the Parliament, the Government and the National Security Council and its regular working bodies. Relationships among state institutions are set by the highest legal norm – the Constitution of the CZR. Among its parts, there are the Constitutional Act No. 110/1998 Coll., on Security of the Czech Republic and Constitutional Act No. 300/2000 Coll. According to this law, securing the sovereignty and integrity of the CZR, protection of its democratic foundations and protection of lives, health and material values are the fundamental obligations of the country.

These regulations are further elaborated in a series of so-called military acts. (One of them is e.g. Act No. 222/1999 Coll., on Securing Defence of the CZR, which states the obligations of state bodies, regional governing bodies and physical and legal entities to ensure the defence of the Czech Republic or Act No. 240/2000 Coll., on crisis management.)

The President

The second summit of the executive power in the CZR in addition to the Government is the President. Its role in the constitutional system is relatively weak. The President is the commander-in-chief of the CZAF and his competence covers commanding the Military Office and the Castle Guard. The Military Office ensures the performing of administrative tasks connected with executing the function of the commander-in-chief and the Castle Guard is an autonomous unit, in fact independent of the CZAF, and its obligation is the protection of the President and ceremonial functions.

The Parliament

The supervising role in defence issues is entrusted to the two-chamber Parliament. The Government is obliged to inform both chambers of the Parliament about all related important decisions. The Parliament can rule over the Government's decision in case of disapproval. The Parliament decides to declare the state of war if the CZR is attacked or if it is necessary to fulfil international commitments of collective defence. Further on, it gives its consent to

sending the CZAF outside the territory of the CZR and to deployment of other countries' armed forces on the territory of the CZR unless such decision is exclusive to the Government.

Both chambers of the Parliament have committees dealing with the security and defence policy. Their main task is to assume standpoints towards discussed legislation, defence budget, significant acquisition programs, strategic and conceptual documents.

The Government

The primary responsibility for security and defence of the country is entrusted with the Government that assesses the risks of threats to the country and takes necessary measures to reduce and possibly eliminate such risks, passes the strategic concepts of the country's defence, directs the process of defence planning, decides on basic measures for preparation for defence, decides on basic directions of construction, preparation and use of the CZAF, passes the concept of mobilisation, passes the concept of preparation of citizens for defence of the country, assigns tasks to ministers and heads of other administrative offices and municipalities to carry out its decisions.

The Government also decides on sending the CZAF outside the territory of the CZR and deployment of other countries' armed forces on the territory of the CZR for a maximum period of 60 days.

The National Security Council

An important institution from the point of view of creating and carrying out a comprehensive defence policy is the National Security Council (NSC). The NSC was re-established by Act No. 110/1998 Coll., on the security of the CZR as a regular working body of the Government for the coordination of activities related to ensuring security and defence.

The Czech defence system went through significant changes after 1989. From the beginning of the 1990s to 1997, marginal attention was paid to defence. These problems were lying in the shadow of the deep political, social and economic transformation of the CZR. New challenges, upcoming membership in NATO and the EU entailed the rapid redress of the appalling state in this area. A flexible legislative framework and operational institutional defence system was created.

Operations and mission commitments

On 23 September 1990, the Federal Assembly of Czechoslovakia expressed its consent to the participation of the NBC unit in the solution of the Persian Gulf crisis. Participation in operations *Desert Shield* and *Desert Storm* in 1991 laid the foundations of the modern military tradition.

Since the first deployment alongside Western militaries, the CZAF has deployed and sustained a variety of capabilities in many theatres around the Globe, *inter alia*, mechanised infantry, fix and rotary airlift, air policing capability, METEO and CBRN niche capabilities,

special forces, EOD teams, military police, medical component, CIMIC and PRT teams and logistic support elements under the UN, NATO, EU and OSCE flag or within coalition of the willing to support international crisis management, humanitarian relief and capacity building of failed states or to demonstrate solidarity with allies (air policing in the Baltics and over Iceland).

The coexistence within a large multinational family was a great lesson for our soldiers and impacted innovation of the CZAF. During deployments in the Balkans (UNPROFOR, UNTAES, IFOR, SFOR, KFOR, UNMIK, AFOR, Althea and many others), in the Middle East (ISAF, RSM, Enduring Freedom, NTM-I), Africa (MONUSCO, EUTM in Mali), Sinai (MFO)² and Kavkaz (OSCE mission in Georgia and Nagorno Karabakh) individuals, including civilians and units of the CZAF have always provided meaningful contribution and earned recognition from allies, partners and local communities. The Czech medical team's deployment was remarkable as a part of the first and so far last NATO Response Force (NRF) activation to ensure consequent management after a large-scale earthquake in Pakistan in 2005 (PROCHÁZKA 2009).

The political willingness to support NATO and EU operations demonstrates strong commitments to both organisations. Participation in AOM has always been understood as a fair contribution to Alliance cohesion, the strengthening of its transatlantic link. CZAF participation in the CSDP operations has remained at a relatively low level on the military spectrum in terms of the degree of complexity, intrusiveness and coercion. EU operations have remained far from the original idea of developing a 'common defence policy', as stated in the 1992 Maastricht Treaty.

Individuals, units and platforms were usually made available with little, if any, operational caveats. Operational deployments are subject to Parliamentary decision. Mandate is provided usually for one year. However, it includes a one-year outlook for planning purposes and timely preparation.

The precise numbers of deployed individuals in AOM is difficult to assess, nevertheless, there were more than fifteen thousand military and civilians involved in those endeavours since the early 1990s. Despite that, the main defence policy conceptual idea, the containment of threats to the country's security and defence alongside with our allies and partners far from our homeland has also had its opponents. Not only public but some political parties as well have opposed this concept continuously. Nevertheless, surveys have proved long-term public support of more than 60% with the deployments of the CZAF abroad. Public opinion concerning missions hit its bottom in 2004 when only 33% of respondents expressed their support. The main reason for that drop was the U.S. invasion of Iraq under rather unclear circumstances dividing the Alliance on the future of war against terrorism (PAJER 2013).

Defence planning and capability development

Defence planning is a critical MoD business process with direct impact on effective and efficient capability delivery, preparedness and readiness of the CZAF. As already mentioned

² The Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) Organisation supervises the observance of security conditions of the peace agreement between Egypt and Israel.

earlier, the long-term planning was abolished in the early 1990s. The task to rebuild this capability again cannot be seen as mission accomplished, yet.

Despite the direct assistance provided by the United States to the MoD via a private company CUBIC, most of the conceptual ideas and solutions offered to internal business improvement, especially to defence planning were only partially implemented. The Czech MoD has usually operationalised its own solutions while emphasising specific national conditions. However, the level of their maturity has influenced the institutional performance and its effectiveness.

Capability development has been mainly driven by the outcome of the NDPP. The CZAF had demonstrated limited ambition to develop the sound analytical support necessary for conducting effective capability-based planning embracing 1. identification of capability gaps against multiple set of scenarios; 2. prioritisation of capability requirements based on operational risks; and 3. assessment of alternative solutions in terms of operational effectiveness, costs and technical feasibility.

The CZR has always been willing to contribute to NATO and EU CSDP initiatives aiming multinational capability development. It has usually offered its niche capability for multinational cooperation, chiefly the CBRN, radar passive systems and medical units. Later, it has also developed rotary airlift capability for AOM in the framework of the users of Mi transport helicopter fleet.

The CZR joined and financially contributed to the Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) Programme and NATO Early Warning Programme (AWACS). It also supported several projects under the umbrella of EU Pooling and Sharing and NATO Smart Defence initiative. The Alliance recognition of the CBRN capability advanced in the establishment of Joint CBRN CoE in Vyškov. Furthermore, the Multinational Logistic Cooperation Centre was built up to provide unique expertise for NATO concepts and doctrines development for multinational logistic support.

Additionally, there are the strategic capabilities, which the CZR will never have resources and know-how to develop on its own and it will rely on multinational arrangements e.g. strategic airlift, air refuelling, satellite communication, strategic level intelligence and many others.

During the early years of NATO membership, the CZR profited heavily from the NATO Security and Investment Program (NSIP). Several projects were implemented to enhance communication within the Alliance, prepare critical infrastructure for reinforcement (airfields), integration into NATO airspace system (3D radars installation and Air C2 modernisation). Multinational cooperation within NATO and EU CSDP and bilateral cooperation with strategic partners in the area of capability development has always enjoyed high political visibility. Initiatives have been regarded together with the participation in AOM as meaningful contributions to collective defence and as a mitigation tool to existing capability gaps of the CZAF.

Resourcing defence needs

There were clear political commitments to provide the required resources before the CZR joined NATO. After the CZR became NATO member, some of these promises were forgotten.

In general, during most of the period after 1989 the CZR exercised resource driven defence policy. It means that defence policy objectives, force structure, capabilities and activities have been adjusted to the level of resources allocated. This trend has changed after 2014. It seems that the political leadership is willing to allocate resources against well-justified military requirements to meet the changing defence policy objectives.

Finance and defence budget

The amount of defence expenditures (Figure 1) is only one part of the equation. Political representation in the CZR is seriously concerned about the effective and efficient use of allocated resources. In this regard, the internal structure of the defence budget is of utmost importance. The so-called 50/30/20 formula for defence expenditures, with 50% of the budget going for personnel costs, 30% for operations and maintenance, and 20% for modernisation has long been seen as an ideal goal in the CZR. However, defence expenditures in 2016 in proportion of 59/30.5/10.5 clearly indicate that the investment level is still unsatisfactory and the pattern of modernisation of the CZAF is rather slow.

In addition to these fundamental set of benchmarks within NATO context, there are also other criteria being followed e.g. by the EU and the European Defence Agency (EDA). They emphasise the need for enhancing investments in R&D, which should comprise 2% out of all defence investment, and multinational cooperation through cooperative modernisation programs (35% out of all the money spent on modernisation of main acquisition programs) and 20% out of the total R&D (FIOTT 2017).

People and human resource management

It is generally acknowledged that there is a significant underfinancing of military equipment and infrastructure (Concept of the Czech Armed Forces 2025). However, the most devastating effect caused by the shrinking defence budget in the past occurred in the human resource domain. Figure 2 depicts the evolution of quantitative personnel characteristics. The trend of slushing personnel stopped in 2014. In the pattern of many reforms spanning the entire period from 1989, the CZAF lost many well-qualified and capable officers (TÚMA 2006).

NATO and to some extent the EU membership provided several incentives for military professionals and for their career development, *inter alia*, better career prospect, competitive salaries, improved living and social conditions, awarding multinational cooperation including assignments in NATO Command and Force Structure, deployments in NATO and EU-led operations, variety of training opportunities in prestigious military schools abroad.

The HRM has struggled to introduce sound career control reflecting both the needs of the CZAF and fair and objective assessment of the performance of individual soldiers. In the meantime, new laws on the active duty of military personnel and civil servants introduced new set of rules aiming at the central control of military personnel and civil servants.

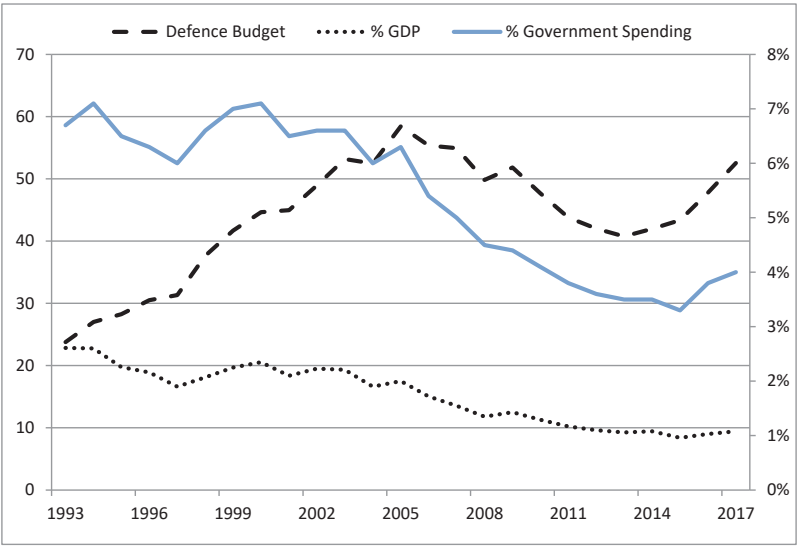


Figure 1.
Defence spending of the Czech Republic

Source: Ministry of Defence 2018.

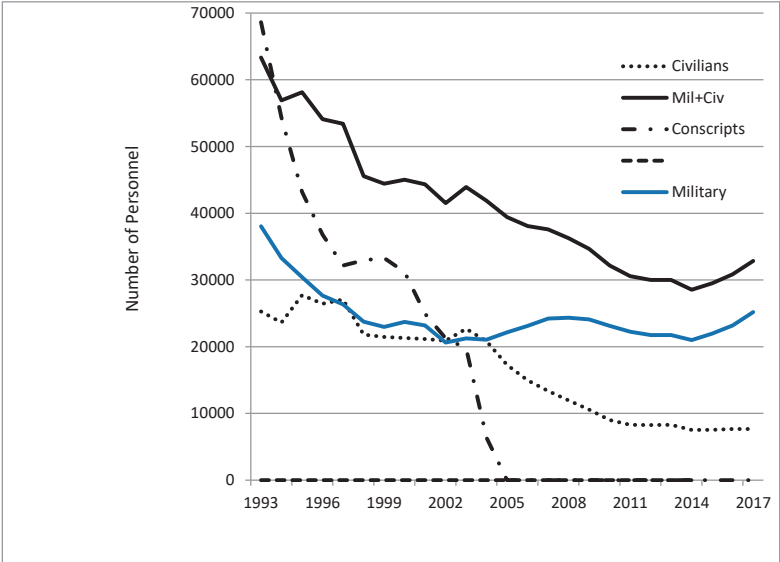


Figure 2.
Ministry of Defence personnel of the Czech Republic

Source: Ministry of Defence 2016.

Innovation of materiel and provision of services

Innovation of materiel and provision of services is a critical MoD function. In the pattern of institutional adaptation, several reorganisations were conducted aiming at on-time capability and services delivery in the budget with required parameters, while ensuring the required level of transparency, effectiveness and efficiency. Several concepts of organisational arrangements of armament and acquisition functions were introduced embracing centralisation or decentralisation of responsibilities. The national armaments strategy adopted by the government in 2004 and 2015 (National Armaments Strategy 2004; MoD 2016) reflected NATO best practices and SMART acquisition principles. Although, the MoD participates in CNAD, NIAG and NATO STO activities and can capitalise on exchange of lessons learned, the acquisition process performance is rather weak (Supreme Audit Office 2016). Despite the fact that more money is allocated, the MoD is unable to spend them in line with the existing legal framework and internal procedures. In the last few years, at the end of the budget executive period about 10% of the budget remained unspent, mainly investments (MoD 2017).

The armaments strategy of the MoD emphasised the need for security of supply and support to preservation and development of a stronger national defence industry while taking into consideration national security interests and using the flexibility of the EU legal framework.

Conclusion

The CZR has transformed its defence sector as an integral part of its political, social and economic evolution from a totalitarian to a democratic country. Both NATO and EU CSDP have played an undisputable role in this process.

NATO's collective defence arrangement (hard power) is the main guarantor of the country's defence and there is no alternative to it. This mechanism allows minimising defence costs and the scope of the CZAF without putting the country's defence under a considerable level of risks. The EU CSDP as a soft security provider has always played a complementary role in the country's defence. EU integration and the common market is beneficial primary to the economy of the CZR. However, there are several external and internal drivers with the potential to enhance the EU CSDP's role in the CZR defence policy in the foreseeable future. Among those drivers belong, *inter alia*, the *America First* policy, Brexit and the rapidly deteriorating security environment (Russia, instability in the Middle East and North Africa, terrorism, migration, hybrid warfare, etc.). Europe must be able to do more in the area of defence to exercise its strategic autonomy while remaining complementary to the NATO collective defence arrangement.

NATO and EU CSDP influenced the following areas: 1. creation of an institutional arrangement; 2. formulation of defence policy objectives compatible with NATO and EU strategy and commitments; 3. cooperation and assistance in capability development; 4. rationalisation of internal business processes; and 5. participation in AOM. The defence policy of the CZR followed the principle of fair contribution to collective defence. There are three lines of fair burden sharing: 1. resourcing of collective defence needs; 2. capability development; 3. participation in AOM.

Participation in AOM has not only raised the prestige of the CZAF internationally and at home, but also acted as a spur to military reform and transformation. International cooperation and assistance provided by NATO and EU member states helped to introduce new skills, technologies, standards and way of thinking. Despite several ways of reorganisation, the CZAF have always been able to support defence policy objectives and contribute to Euro-Atlantic peace and stability. It offers a considerable amount of forces to the international crisis management around the globe.

The attitude of the Czech political leadership to defence matters has been evolving via phases of: 1. democratisation; 2. integration; 3. reforms; 4. transformation; and 5. deterrence. Different political objectives were followed and commitments to defence were not always exercised in a responsible manner.

NATO's collective defence and transatlantic link will continue to play a principle role in the defence of the CZR. Despite the new dynamics in EU CSDP, this instrument remains complementary. The CZR will develop a single set of forces for overlapping NATO and EU missions (besides collective defence). It will exercise multinational cooperation under NATO and EU umbrella. It will use bilateral arrangements with strategic partners (the United States, the U.K., Germany, Poland, Slovakia) and advance cooperation within the V4 format mainly in operational deployments, exercises, training and education. Within the EU CSDP, it will continue to create favourable conditions for small and middle size enterprises (SMEs) to preserve the national industrial capability and security of supply.

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