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## **NEW MODEL OF SOCIAL POLICY IN BULGARIA ON ADAPTATION OF THE MILITARY, DISCHARGED FROM THE MILITARY SERVICES**

### **Abstract:**

The starting point of our research is the specificity of social work with the military discharged from military service. The need for transparency and equal treatment of users of social services and respect for the dignity of the military, presupposes the importance of the social work with them. This is supported also by the fact that hundreds of specialists from the army have been transferred to the public sector and are able to make a significant contribution to the reconstruction of Bulgarian society and add value but this is not the case in real life. There is often an impression that their experience and knowledge is unnecessary. People who have committed themselves to military service at young age, as a rule, adapt to the conditions of civilian life with difficulty. Despite having a special military skills and knowledge they actually form a new „risk group“, especially when they fall to the attention of the criminal world. There are various analyses and reports of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Ministry of Defence on this issue that are very indicative. In confirmation of this, a third of them are offered „a job“ in the security departments of various private organizations, banks and / or specialized licensed private security units.

Practice shows that some of the reserve officers experience serious difficulties with the selection of civil profession. Although they are highly qualified, many of them cannot find a job for months, discontinue their works experience or lose their qualification. Finding the reasons for this is based on the analysis of materials from sociological and psychological research that allow defining the specifics of internal and personal adaptation. Accordingly, there are different age groups of military staff, leaving the armed forces and the Bulgarian Army, whose social adaptation is manifested differently.

The importance of social work should be taken into consideration, when identifying the main issues of socialization and adaptation of the military leaving military service and transitioning to the conditions of civilian life, resulting from their economic, age, psychological and social characteristics, and their current social status. This determines the necessity of further development of existing and establishing new types of social work with them. Moreover, the social security system of the military has historically been developed as a part of the national policy.

### **Keywords:**

SOCIAL WORK, SOCIAL MANAGEMENT, SOCIAL ADAPTATION OF THE MILITARY

**JEL Classification:** P49

## 1. Introduction

The formation of a complex model for social adaptation of the military reservists and the members of their families is implemented on the basis of a specific social background. Created in the early and mid 90<sup>s</sup> of the last century, this background serves as a basis for a complete reorganization and restructuring of the Bulgarian society. In particular, this concerns the following specific characteristics.

The 90s of the last century, along with political and socio-economic changes across the world, and with Bulgaria's transition to a market economy, were the years when the radical military reform was implemented in our country, which resulted in the reduction of the armed forces. The actions taken led to the discharge of large part of the active population among officers, sergeants, petty officers and the members of their families. This led to increased social tension in society. Despite the efforts, made by the state and various social groups and the implementation of a program for social adaptation for the military personnel, discharged from military service, this group remains at risk in the labor market.

An important feature of the social situation within the field of work with military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families is practically the general failure of the existing social institutions in the complex solving of the problems of this process in the new conditions of life and their involvement in active work life in the market conditions.

Thus, the social situation created in this field determines another concept of the social adaptation of the military reservists and the members of their families.

In accordance with these specifics, the basic conceptual ideas of the specific model have the following priorities:

At the first place, the term "social adaptation of servicepersons" is used for the first time as a basic priority instead of the earlier term "rehabilitation training" and employment of the servicepersons. The approbation of the given conceptual priority is implemented within the "Social adaptation" program.

The structure of the program in Bulgaria includes the following units (Figure 1):

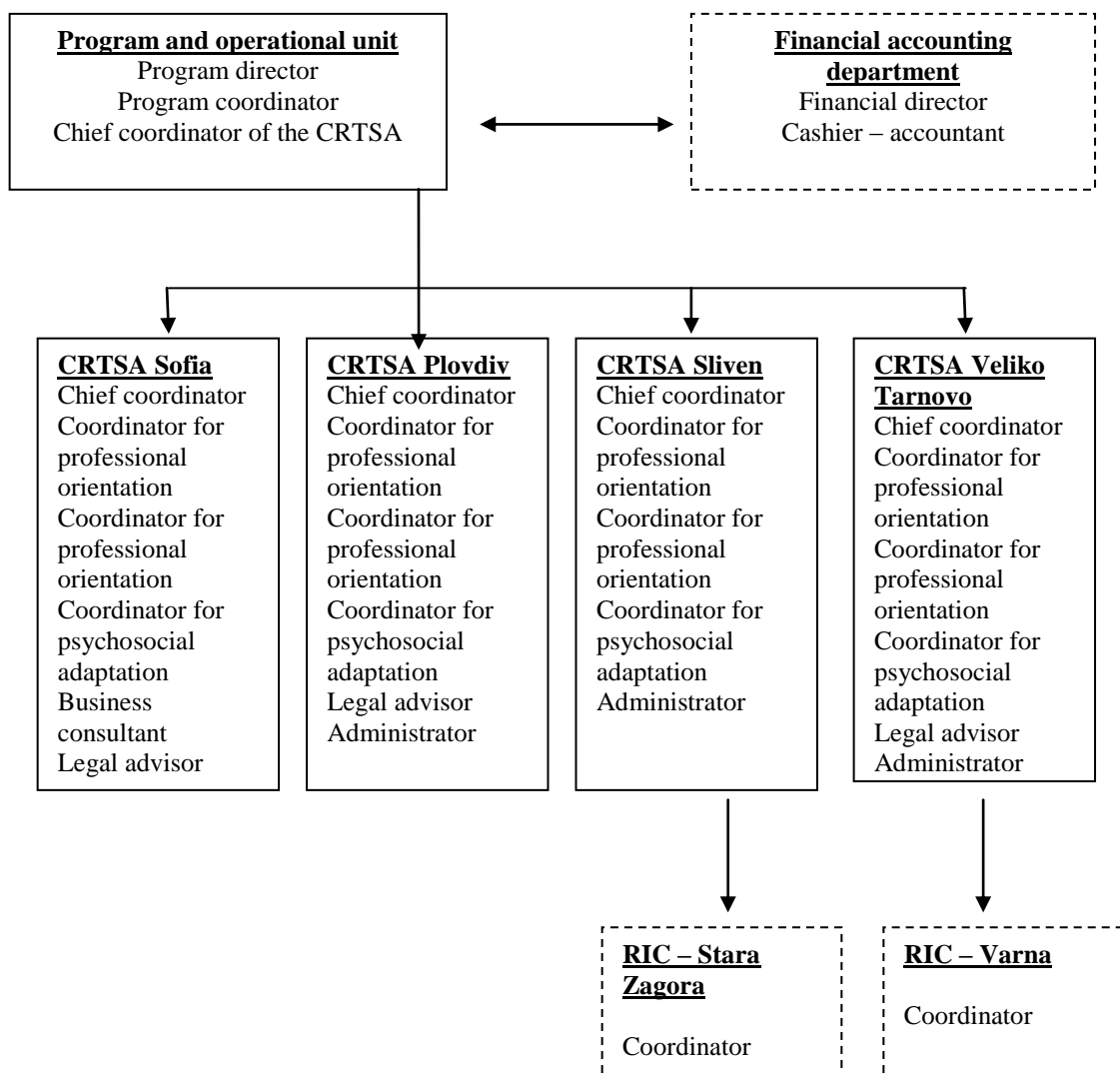
- Program and operational unit, consisting of a program director and program coordinators;
- Financial accounting department, including a financial director and a cashier accountant;
- Centers for rehabilitation training and social adaptation /CRTSA/, a total of 4, in the cities of Sofia, Plovdiv, Sliven and Veliko Tarnovo, managed by chief regional coordinators. They employ coordinators for psychosocial adaptation, professional orientation, business consultants, legal advisers and administrators;
- Regional information centers /RIC/, as at the beginning of 2003 two RICs work with CRTSA Veliko Tarnovo – in the cities of Shoumen and Varna, and one RIC works with CRTSA Sliven – in the city of Stara Zagora.

The so presented program can be considered as a model for the complex approach (and therefore represents a complex model) to solving the problems of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families. Besides, no goal is set for all discharged from the Bulgarian army servicepersons to adapt to civilian life or for helping their families. The goal of the program is to develop a mechanism for complex solving of the social problems of the specified category of the

population of the country, the creation of a complex model (or several models) of the organization of this process on the basis of self-support.

At the second place, the complex approach is not only a complex solution of the problems, related to the adaptation of people to the new conditions, but also a change of the society as well. This includes: the introduction of new, more advanced "production" technologies, training of personnel, social work organization, social and educational activities. The results from the implementation of such projects include the socio - economic development of the regions for planning at the expense of the inclusion in this process of economically active and highly professional personnel of military reservists and the members of their families; establishment of social partnership at the expense of reducing the tension in this social group; infrastructure development of the civil society, etc.

At the third place, the complex nature of the proposed model and the program based on it is determined by the socio-pedagogical value orientations in its structure and content.



**Figure 1. Structure of the “Social adaptation” program**

The starting point in the creation of the complex model of social adaptation of servicepersons and their families lies in the concept of a "model" itself. According to the logic and methodology of the science, it is analogical to a specific fragment of the natural or social reality, product of the human culture, conceptual-theoretical model. This analogue is to preserve and expand the knowledge (information) for the original, for the design of the original, for its restructuring or management.

Therefore, the complex model of social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families is namely part of the socio-pedagogical practice that can and should be studied, designed, approbated and implemented in this reality with new qualities, properties and characteristics.

The complex model is constructed in such a way that it conforms with all essential requirements of the modeling technology: to be an objective conformity of the modeled subject and able to replace it in certain respects; to provide an expert verification of the obtained results, which to be interpreted at different stages by the same instructive terms of the military social work and social pedagogy.

Since scientifically *the social adaptation* is considered as a system, as a process and as an activity, its subject is the military reservists and the members of their families. Besides, this model, on the one hand, implies an inseparable unity of the members of the family when it comes to implementation of all kinds of activities, and on the other – the initial assuming by the family of a status of a subject with its own social adaptation to civil life.

When taking into account the fact that the model is a simplified, "contracted" model of a real event, phenomenon, process, the model for social adaptation of the servicepersons is considered in two plans: a structural-component (organization - subject) and structural-functional (main functions as directions for the social adaptation). Moreover, the model also plays a role as a method of knowledge of the social practice, and as a method for its restructuring in the field of social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families. The model is a "mental image or materially realized system", which by displaying or reproducing the subject of study is able to replace it in such a way that the study of the system provides us with new information for the subject.

The structural - component composition of the model involves combining of all units which take part in the process of social adaptation (as a means for their financial support) and an instrument for development of entrepreneurial activity. Furthermore, other organizations, such as educational, research, social, women's associations, territorial authorities for local government and other organizations become structural elements of the model as well. Moreover, priority is given to those organizations that have been created by discharged servicepersons and the members of their families, or those in which this category of the population is significantly represented.

The structural-functional composition of the model implies the unification of the main directions of the social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families, as well as selection among the main directions of those which are the basis of the model and are the most significant for its amendment, the most resistant in real conditions of life activity in the different conditions of the society.

The basis of social adaptation of servicepersons covers: professional orientation; psychological rehabilitation (psychological support); socio-psychological and socio-pedagogical adaptation, attracting the military personnel, discharged from military service

and the members of their families to small businesses, the creation of support structures for small businesses, employment and if necessary - their professional retraining (prequalification), shown in Fig. 3.6.

The content of the model for social adaptation of military reservists and the members of their families determines its reference to the pattern model, as it is used to study and change the regulatory properties of the actually existing in the practice of the military social work subject. In the experimental work, the model for social adaptation of the military reservists and the members of their families is also used in its capacity as a substitute model, as with its help a research constructive work is conducted.

In accordance with the requirements of the technology of the socio-pedagogical modeling, the development of the complex model of social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families is conducted through the consecutive change of three related with each other stages.

In *the first stage* (stage of forming the model), separation of key components is performed (of the structure and functions) of the activity for social adaptation of the servicepersons (its content, directions, forms and methods) which are then subject to changes in the model – research and constructive restructuring.

*The second stage* (stage of restructuring the model) is in connection with the modification of its individual properties (of the structure and functions) in relation to the conditions of the research and the presented above social background. The timing frame of the present stage of the research takes three years and the content of the activity at this stage compiles the content of the trial experimental work.

*The third stage* (the stage for transferring the results on the subject) is a set of recommendations, practical measures and proposals, prepared and partially realized in a process of the trial experimental work on the formation of the complex model for social adaptation of military reservists. At this stage, verification of the authenticity, validity, effectiveness and viability of the resulting model is also performed.

The process for development, approbation and implementation of the model for social adaptation of military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families shall be carried out with consideration of the specifics of the social pedagogical modeling.

For example, this model is not only a pattern model, but also a substitute model. As a pattern model, it is used with reference to the existence of major subsystems and activities in the social adaptation of military personnel, discharged from military service and members of their families for the reason of studying and restructuring of the regulatory properties of this activity. As a substitute model, it is used for a creative, constructive work on the problems of social adaptation of military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families.

Furthermore, recognizing social pedagogical models as values, goals, directions for further development, the complex model of social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service is twofold in its nature. In the process of its formation and approbation it is indicated that interconnected types of activities are not always strictly fixed in their sequence.

In this regard, the developed model on the one hand is invariant, as the presented types of activities and directions for social adaptation of military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families constitute its main content. On the other hand, the model varies, as the sequence of these activities and directions of social

adaptation of the respective category of the population is built in accordance with the social needs of every military reservist and their families. It is about the individual profile of social adaptation for each individual.

In implementing the Program, the main focus is on places with compact residence of the families of servicepersons of different types (structural and geographical composition of the model), located within the differentiated city areas of residential buildings, as well as the buildings located in non differentiated areas within the city.

An important conceptual aspect of modeling of the social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families is the theoretical foundation of the social work, setting its priorities and content, nature and approaches, principles, methods and forms.

The classification, built on such basis allows presenting them as a set of the most popular theories of the social work, separate formulations of which lie in the theoretical justification of the complex model of the social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families. It concerns the following:

- psychologically oriented theories of the social work (existential, humanistic, psycho-dynamic, crisis-interventive, behavioral, permitting, bioenergetic, body-oriented; dianetic; socionic; psycho-synthetic);
- sociologically oriented theories of the social work (system-wide, socio-ecological, radical, Marxist);
- complex (interdisciplinary) theories of the social work (vitality-oriented, cognitive, conflict-logical; socio-pedagogical; sociocultural).

Each of these theories has its content, target orientation, methods of learning and changes in the social practice. Formation and implementation of the model for social adaptation of the military reservists and the members of their families suggests a reference to the formulation of these theories, not by the uniform application of only one of them, but through the complex use of those ideas from each theory, which provide effective operation of this model.

Some of the leading conceptual formulations of the complex model, reflecting the social pedagogical values, are the drawn by us *principles of social adaptation* of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families.

## **2. The principle of personal, socially active approach implies:**

- placement of the specific serviceperson in the center of the activity for social adaptation, as a member of the family, within the family and together with their family;
- consideration of all needs of the serviceperson (and any member of their family) within the work for social adaptation: individual, physiological, material, social, personal, professional, universal, cultural, educational etc.;
- organization of the work on their social adaptation through its orientation primarily to the specific (region, municipality, city, district, etc.) society, considering the specifics of the surrounding social environment;
- active participation in the social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families themselves, their switch from passive consuming to active transforming activity in the new social environment of their place of residence.

Full reporting and addressing of all human needs is possible only if there is family support and that is why the core of all processes for social adaptation lies in the work with the family. After all, the family should not only be a user of a particular set of social services, it should also be their producer. It is namely the active participation of family members in solving their problems, together with the particular specialist from the respective Social Work Office that favors the active development of the person, the military society and the mechanisms of their interaction.

**The principle of integration** in the social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families suggests:

- bringing together the different vertical (institutional) structures for social work (socio-pedagogical, medical, economic, psychological, cultural and educational, social protection, etc.) to attract of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families in the social production activities directly into their new society;
- integration of interagency and differentiated (specialized) social work authorities in complex social authorities (centers) in the specific areas of the populated areas;
- providing multidisciplinary and complementary activity of the work for social adaptation of the military reservists and the members of their families in their places of residence in the new environment;
- forming a structure for working on the social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service, with medical, psychological and pedagogical character, helping them to solve major social problems at the level of the individual person in connection with their transition from military to civilian society.

**The principle of pedagogical approach** in the work for social adaptation of the military reservists and the members of their families envisages the use of social, pedagogical theory as the complex foundation of the organization of the whole work. It suggests:

- preventive nature of the social adaptation, which begins before the dismissal of the serviceperson from military service and their transformation into military reservists, as its focus is not so much on solving the acute social problem of their families (without giving up on this kind of activity) but on the immediate diagnostic and preventive actions in the new environment, in the specific civil society;
- introduction of the profession "social teacher " in the Bulgarian army and the corresponding positions in the social infrastructure of military units and military educational institutions and where the family members of the servicepersons and military reservists live; one of its functions must be the immediate work on the training of servicepersons and their families for the transition from military to civilian society;
- organization of the impacts on all aspects of the life and activities of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families; uniting efforts of the school, family, military and industrial pedagogy and the pedagogy of communication, preventive pedagogy, pedagogy of creativity and free time into a unified military, social pedagogy for the benefit of the social education of the servicepersons and the members of their families, their social, pedagogical tracking from the entry into military service to their successful integration into the civil society after its completion.

**The principle of sociocultural orientation** of the social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families suggests:

- the use of the term "culture of the society" as a goal and criterion for assessing the level of development of the human inhabited environment, including by the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families in their particular places of residence; use of this concept as a qualitative characteristic of the way of solving the issues of their social adaptation and meeting the needs of its subjects; its application as an indicator of the development of one or another social environment;

- orientation of the work on social adaptation to formation of a multilateral model for sociocultural behavior of the military reservists and the members of their families in both the military and civilian society. The multidimensional model of socio-cultural behavior suggests the formation of a culture of the military work, culture of social communication and interaction, culture of the family life, lifestyle and behavior, general culture of the military etiquette, culture of the speech and appearance of the military person (even the military reservist), culture of their feelings, etc.

On the other hand, the work on social adaptation of the military reservist and the members of their families and social work with them in their new civil society are oriented towards the formation of a multilateral model of culture in various areas of social consciousness (legal, aesthetic, ecological, economic, political, educational, moral, artistic, physical, etc.);

- using the potential of cultural and educational activities, the cultural institutions of the civil society as the main instrument of social adaptation of the relevant category of the population.

**The principle of the scientific merit** on social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families suggests:

- research of domestic and foreign experience in order to determine the content, organization and methodology of this work, summary, analysis and learning the lessons from this experience in the organization of this kind of activity in the civil society; appropriate use of the experience of social work across society and the different categories of the population; preparation of summarized methodical recommendations of the specialists involved in work with the military reservists and the members of their families;

- organization of consistent research methodology, theory, methods and practice of social adaptation to a particular category of the population with a view to the specifics of its development as a combination of various types of activities;

- preparation of social educators and social workers based on the best Russian and foreign practice, on the basis of specifically organized research.

The process of social adaptation is carried out in two main directions: on the one hand, the specifics of directions and technologies of social adaptation of the military reservists and the members of their families are indicated, on the other hand, the common to all categories of the population, which change the society or the profession, trends and technologies are sought.

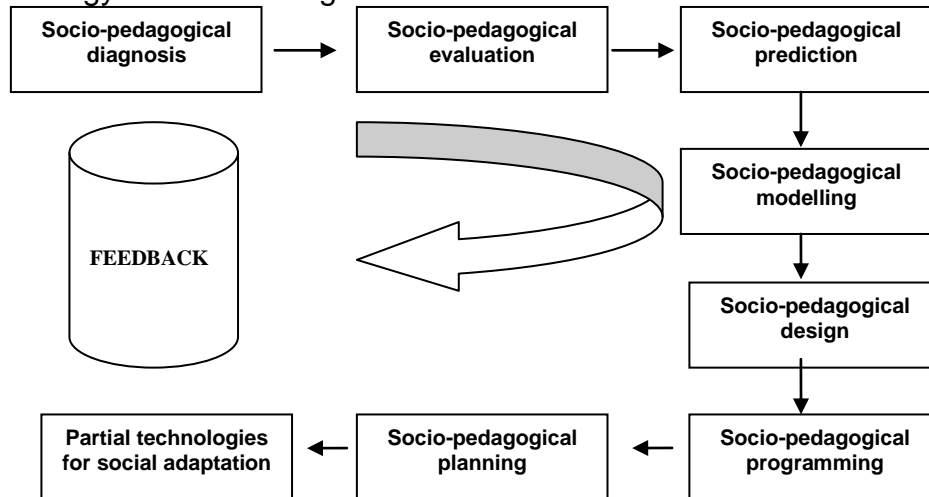
Among the common technologies is the technology of socio-pedagogical diagnosis, evaluation, prediction, modeling, design, programming, which algorithm is shown in Fig. 2.

This group includes technologies for: planning, realization of the goals and value orientations, receiving feedback and providing information of the cognitive and transforming activity on social adaptation of the discharged military personnel and their

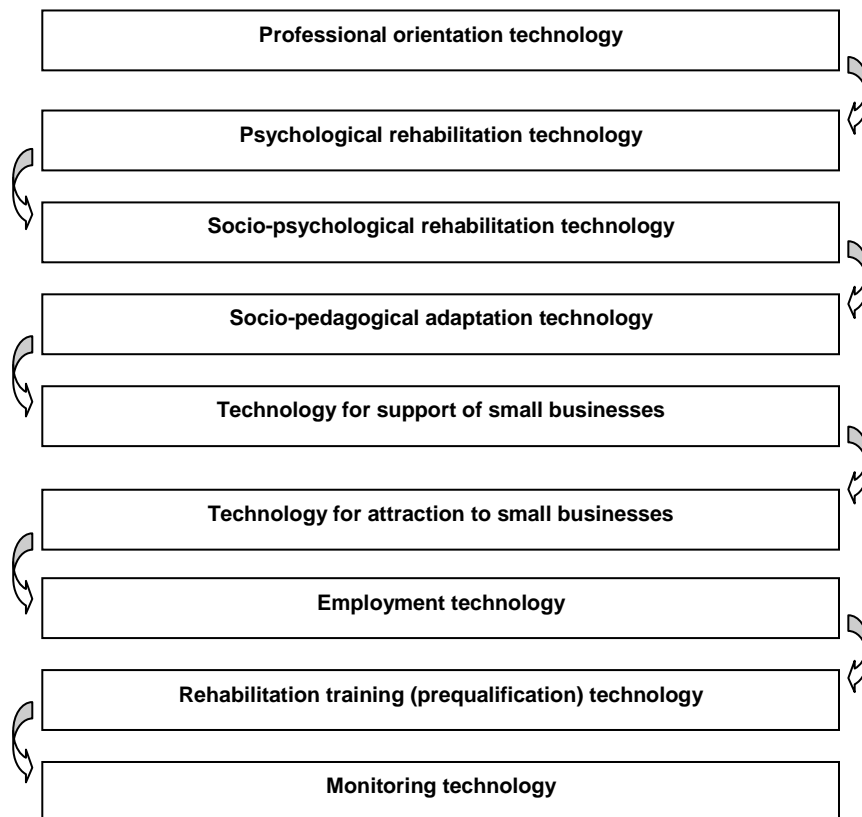


families. Collectively, they represent a closed-loop process of the technological process of the work on social adaptation of each category of population, which is in a state of transition from one set of activity conditions to another.

The specific technologies for social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families, apply to the technologies for their professional orientation; rehabilitation; socio-psychological rehabilitation; socio-pedagogical adaptation; the attraction to small businesses; support of small businesses; employment; rehabilitation training and monitoring. The algorithm of the specific technology is shown in Fig.3.



**Fig.2. General technology for social adaptation of servicepersons and their families**



***Fig.3. Specific technology for social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service***

Common and interconnected general and specific technologies represent the transforming potential of an integrated model of social adaptation of the military reservists and the members of their families.

An important issue is the potential of an integrated model for social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families, as a qualitative and intermodal technology model for social adaptation of persons changing their society, profession, way of life. In particular, the opportunities for application of a model, where migrants from underdeveloped regions of the country, among persons released from prisons, the unemployed, etc., are approbated.

The model for social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families, developed and piloted in this way, is complex in nature, socio-pedagogical in content, technological in its practical relevance, inter-ministerial and inter-institutional in its level of interaction. Such approach to the development and implementation of the model in the framework of the Program for social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families seriously differs from all preceding models, designs, concepts and programs, initiated for the purpose of military social work with the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families.

In conclusion, the problem for modifying the structure of one or another area of the state and society, of one or another sector of a particular area, refers to the problems of the dynamic development of the country and is determined by their dependence on the economy, the level of development of science and technology, etc. On the other hand, the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of one or another field and its sectors are determined by external factors: the international, political and economic relations, the degree of threat to national security, etc.

Reducing and restructuring of the Bulgarian army is determined precisely by these processes, therefore it has an objective character. However, realization of this process, its organization and management have a subjective nature, determined by the human factor.

These and other reasons are the basis for the development of a comprehensive model of social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service, which is acceptable to those servicepersons who integrate into civilian society in the places of their residence. In this case, the leading approach from the position for providing targeted support to specific groups of the population, changes to a position for active transformation: including the military reservists and the members of their families in an active socio-economic activity in the places of their residence in the institutions of the civil society, i.e. full account of the potential of the indicated group of the population.

This model could be implemented and deployed in its main elements across the country, under different conditions and work with different groups of the military personnel, discharged from military service. This often controversial issue in the public space- is the social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families a myth or reality – could be resolved in favor of the reality and effectiveness of the researched by us issues, through the relevance of an integrated approach, interaction between institutions, direct interest of the state and the business.

### **3. Model for social and psychological support of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families**

The initial basis for the implementation of a model for social and psychological support of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families are the three structural levels with separate tasks studied by us in paragraph 3.4. (Figure 4). of chapter 3 of this work, the solution of which is determined by the dynamic changes in the social environment. In particular, the main determinants are mainly the negative effects of the macro and micro environment of interpersonal communication.

Knowing these effects from the factors of the social environment in which the adaptation processes occurs among the military persons discharged from military service and the members of their families is the basis for acquiring social competence in them, the phases of which (unconscious competence, unconscious incompetence, conscious competence, conscious incompetence) are shown in Fig.3.4.

Moreover, the acquisition of competence requires to determine the transition borders between the phases and to provide a conscious shift in all stages of the process. This means that in the different phases of competence, different intellectual and emotional effort is required by the adapting persons as well as the ability for selection and use of appropriate techniques by the persons who help the adaptation.

And since mind changes during the process of competence acquisition occur as a spiral, it is necessary to examine the adaptation cycle at a deeper level.

Usually, the serviceperson knows well the conditions of their professional and domestic life. They can easily predict the consequences of their actions and tasks. The notice of their discharge from military service makes them to predict their life outside the army in the conditions of a deficit of information. This results inevitably in anxiety, which leads sometimes to aggressive tendencies of behavior where hostility and instrumental aggression should be distinguished.

Hostility is a manifestation of the attempts to achieve a "non confirming prognosis" through aggressive means. An example of this is the wish of the serviceperson discharged from military service to receive the same material security as in the military, but the available options are too often „cheaper". Their reaction may represent hostility (to those who discharge them from service in the military, who pay little, etc.). Causing harm to the people who they believe are responsible for their failures, becomes an end in itself of their behavior.

The instrumental aggression constitutes in causing damage in order to achieve other goals (constructive according to the person). It is often accompanied by active social behavior to protect their rights and dignity, i.e it is more constructive than hostility. Instrumental aggression occurs in all phases of competence as opposed to hostile behavior, which is a clear indication of the phase of unconscious incompetence.

Examining the depressive tendency of behavior, we can distinguish a depression in which a denial of problems occurs (an attempt to ignore them), and depression, which results in exaggerating the problems. In both cases the person is trying to avoid constructive examination of the problems before them. As a rule, the depression from denial of problems occurs during the phase of unconscious incompetence. Similarly to hostility, it is dictated by the desire to get the non-confirming prognosis. Depression from exaggerating the problems, typical for the the phase of conscious incompetence, is

connected to „restrictive beliefs” such as „this is impossible to be overcome”, „it is possible for others, but it is not possible for me”, etc.

Studies show that unproductive hostility occurs most often when people suggest that frustrating effects are manifestations of someone's bad will and not the result of force majeure. Depression from exaggerating the problems occurs most often in those who are poorly informed about the possible ways to solve their problems, which are overcome by increased responsibility for the fate of their relatives and believe that such a thing could happen only with them and no one else. This fact determines more than ever the need of preventive work for preparing servicepersons, discharged from military service, for the complexities of the adaptation period.

Preparatory work helps for reducing the hostile and depressive tendency, where in detail the reasons for discharging from military service are explained (as a result of objective processes in the society and the military) and ways to overcome this situation are suggested.

Such preventive work should be of course carried out by specially trained professionals (military and social workers, psychologists) and volunteers (already successfully adapted military reservists and the members of their families).

When the transition to the phase of conscious incompetence is running in its normal course, the serviceperson understands that they are not ready yet for civilian life, but they look to the future with reasonable optimism and are willing to acquire new skills and knowledge. In this case, the task of the social workers and psychological consultants in the course of adaptation is to support the military reservists and the members of their families in the new circumstances of life and work. At this stage we must first emphasize on the training for new jobs and retraining, as well as the provision of information on the civil rights and social guarantees. But the most important thing in the work of the professional consultant is providing support to customer for the personal projection and creation of a positive image of the personal „I”.

It should be noted that at the present stage there is a tendency for external and internal conflicts, search (formation of) for a new circle and new ways of communication (communication partners). The last are in conflict with the requirements of the environment and the new have not been formed yet. In this case the consultant has to train the customer how to communicate effectively. Internal conflicts are determined by the „conflict of values”. The adoption of new values, coordination of old and new experience and the creation of a picture of the world that meets the requirements of adaptation and at the same time would not be contrary to the basic values of the individual, is a non-trivial task that should be solved together with those who help the process of adaptation and the adapting person at the respective stage. For this purpose, the use of specialized techniques designed to distinguish behavior from intentions and behavior from the situation in which it is implemented is necessary, as well as the integration of the values carried by gaining experience and finding a compromise between the conflicting beliefs.

When the serviceperson, discharged from military service takes the necessary decisions, adopts new behaviors and creates new complete picture of the world, then they can proceed with the execution of the intended plan. In order to avoid excess optimism of psychologists and social workers, it is necessary to reckon with the fact that the military personnel discharged from military service face with different problems in the

course of adapting to civilian life: psychological stress, need for retraining, complexity in vocational rehabilitation, household difficulties and family disagreements.

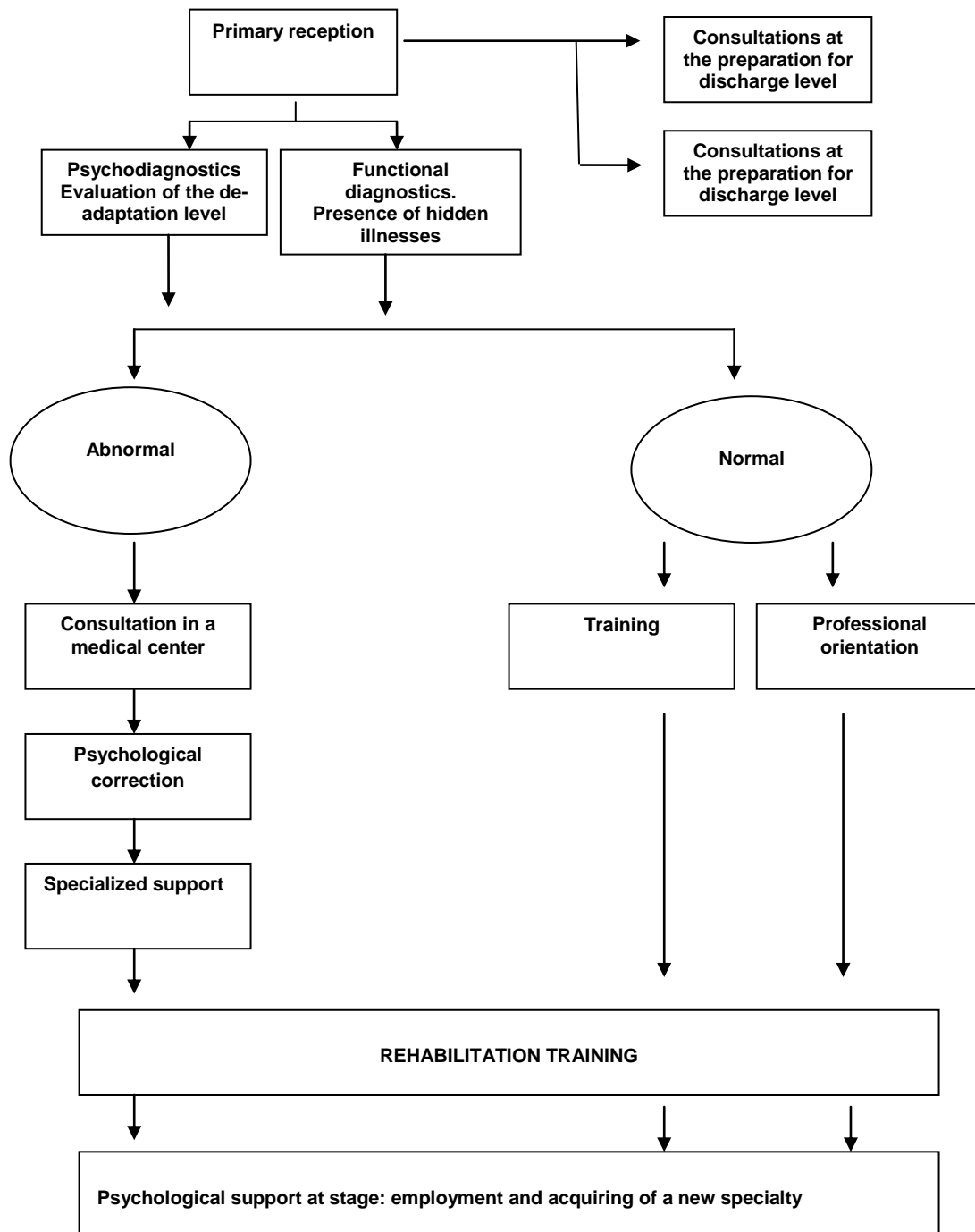
Furthermore, it should be remembered that it is impossible to adapt to life once and for all. Acting under the new conditions, the military personnel, now discharged from military service, and the members of their families are inevitably confronted with the need to review the already made decisions, to gain expertise in new fields and relations, to gather information, to choose alternatives and estimate resources. Within the large adaptive cycle, small, similar in structure issues are solved. The important thing is that one can properly assess their own strengths and be able to individually support themselves psychologically. Then the need for social and psychological support arises only in extreme conditions.

It is appropriate to note that complete adaptation of the military personnel discharged from military service and the members of their families to the conditions of civilian life is long enough, and it can last from one to three years.

In organizational terms the most successful model in working with the military personnel discharged from military service and the members of their families is the model of „psychological and medico-social support”.

Such a model for socio-psychological support includes the following three types of support that are also conditions for providing such support: primary, qualified and specialized. The algorithm of this model is evident from Fig.4.

Ideally, primary support shall be given in military units by specially trained professionals (paraprofessionals) among the servicepersons, by social protection workers and their volunteers. The task of psychologists and social workers from the centers is brought to methodological provision of socio-psychological training of military personnel discharged from military service and support in preparing paraprofessionals for this job.



**Fig.4. Model for social and psychological support to the military personnel, discharged from military service**

The main form of primary support is the organization of the work of groups for social and psychological support, in which the servicepersons and their families in specially created conditions in an artificial micro society (where people with similar problems have been gathered) solve the arisen before them psychological problems related to discharging from military service. The process of adaptation for this occurs in a more active and less painful course for all group members. Involvement of professional psychologists consultants within the primary support is limited by supervision.

Qualified support that should be provided by the centers for social and psychological adaptation of the servicepersons discharged from military service and the members of their families should be directed to:

- conducting diagnostic events for finding persons prone to destructive strategies of adaptation and preventive work with them;
- social and psychological support for various breaches of the adaptation process;
- development of activities for personal projection, professional identity and personal growth;
- consulting and group work for professional reorientation towards retraining, support for vocational rehabilitation;
- psychological consultation for servicepersons, discharged from military service and the members of their families;
- development of methodologies for institutions and specialists rendering primary support and paraprofessionals;
- supervision of paraprofessionals and methodological guidance at all stages for rendering psychological support.

We should bear in mind the fact that diagnostics and referral of people with sharply expressed and neglected disorders of adaptation (depression, alcoholism, deviant behavior, etc.) to specialized and rehabilitation facilities are also considered as qualified support. This stage is characterized by continuity and coordination of efforts in all programs for socio-psychological adaptation and rehabilitation and in addition individual and group work is conducted, as well as family counseling. The center should have the coordinating role at this stage because that is where the information under the programs for socio-psychological support and retraining is accumulated and summarized and where an exchange of experience between professionals is conducted.

To the operational performance of its functions, it is expedient for the center to create a database that includes adapted methodologies, the latest publications on the problems of the adaptation of military personnel, discharged from military service, social work, psychology, psychotherapy and results from the monitoring studies and a description of the summarized experience.

Specialized support is intended for military personnel, discharged from military service and members of their families, in cases when abnormalities have been found in their mental activities. This implies the creation of special conditions which have to be provided by stationary or semi-stationary medical institutions, rehabilitation and medical institutions, the basis of which should be the existing in the system of the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Health, sanatoria, health resorts, etc. As a rule, specialized care is organized on the basis of various departments. Moreover, the coordination mechanisms for interaction with other agencies are built according to the system of administration management.

Psychological support and rehabilitation in providing primary, qualified and specialized support are essential components of the effective social and psychological adaptation. Overall work should be planned in several phases, starting for example one year before the discharge from military service and continue from 1.5 to 3 years after the discharge.

*The first stage* of events for socio-psychological adaptation must be conducted at the workplace and residence of the servicepersons and the members of their families

from 6 to 12 months before the discharge. The main objective of this stage is the preparation of the military personnel for the future discharge from military service. It is important to provide information to the servicepersons and prepare them psychologically for the understanding of the possible difficulties (both external and internal) during the transitional period and their behavior on the labor market. The work should be carried out mainly in a group and refers to the category of the primary support. In this stage, it is necessary to pay attention to the development of guidelines and methodological materials for the conduction of group informing seminars. They shall be in compliance with the need of formation of a certain system in the minds of the listeners of socially acceptable and realistic ways of setting and achieving goals in the new civilian life, as well as give a fair and complete picture of the existing social conditions in which they are to live and work.

Such material must contain pure information blocks (statistics data, revealed social laws) provided for cognitive absorption as well as bright specific examples of successful assimilation of the military personnel, discharged from military service with a view to the emotional assimilation. In this case, very useful are the meetings with servicepersons, discharged from military service that are already successfully adapted to the new conditions. The forms of work should vary: the seminar lecture has to alternate with a seminar-discussion or a seminar study. It is also recommended to check through tests or games how well the material is „digested”. Along with the totally obvious control, this also increases the interest to what is happening in the group, creates competitive spirit during the classes and brings the process of rehabilitation closer to the learning process. In these conditions, the ego of the serviceperson is not affected and they are not put in a position of „psychologically disabled” in need of treatment and recovery. The so organized socio-psychological work reminds of a well-known to the serviceperson process of assimilation of new knowledge, for which it is easy to find optimal strategies and internal resources, to which developing programs and scenarios to informing seminars must be oriented.

Upon completion of the first stage, the required level of loyalty to future changes in the lives of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families must be achieved. When they go through the stage of unconscious incompetence, they should continue to the phase of conscious incompetence. Diagnostic procedures are also conducted, according to the results of which, part of the quota may be transferred for rehabilitation in specialized institutions.

*The second stage* of rehabilitation events is characterized by the fact that the main work is focused on the acquisition of habits for personal projection and professional retraining. This stage must coincide with the professional reorientation, retraining and solving of social issues of the servicepersons. With the help of paraprofessionals, the consulting psychologists should conduct both individual and group sessions (of seminars and trainings). The result should include achieved readiness for adaptation, which is accompanied by a transition phase from a stage of conscious incompetence to conscious competence. This stage lasts for less than a year. It is recommended that at least half of the events should take place before the actual time of discharge. Experience shows that usually the conduction of such work in the military units meets opposition.

*The third stage* of rehabilitation activities is aimed at social and psychological support of the adaptation process and can be called an accompanying process. It is characterized by the combination of group and individual working methods. Groups



should serve as a psychological support and exchange of experience, and individual consultations are aimed at correction of situational difficulties. This stage may last from a year and a half to three years after the discharge. After its completion, a level of adaptation must be attained in which the transition from conscious to unconscious competence of the relatively new social and professional environment happens.

In our opinion, the forms and methods of social and psychological support should be selected depending on the specific psychological problems arising in the process of adaptation of the servicepersons, discharged from military service to civilian life. In turn, the forms and methods of rehabilitation should be depending on the specific psychological problems of adapting to civilian life in one or another period.

Based on the proposed model, in the stage of qualified support it is very important to set the areas of activity, events that are considered by the military personnel, discharged from military service and their families as the most severe and psychologically traumatic. In parallel, diagnostics of the used strategies for resolving such situations shall be conducted.

It should be taken in consideration that the availability of the necessary information on the socio-psychological problems and the internal resources to overcome them, as well as the individual experience of dealing with the difficulties are the basics of the organization and implementation of more targeted and effective rehabilitation measures.

Highlighting of non-structural and anti-adaptive ways of responding to problems gives the direction of the next work for psychological correction for control through more effective and optimal for a given situation strategies for coping with life's difficulties, including related changes with the adaptation to civilian life in the social and professional status of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families.

Basic principles of the organization of socio-psychological adaptation to civilian life must be:

- maximum closeness to the needs of the adapting person;
- urgency, possibly an early start of the events for provision of social and psychological support;
- unity of psycho-social and physiological influence methods (unity of rehabilitation and treatment);
- step by step approach, consistency and continuity of the adaptation measures. Impacts of any kind, including psycho-social, should be implemented on certain portions with gradual (step by step) transition from one impact (effort, event) to another, from one form of organization of the support to another;
- versatility (complexity) of effort. Events for provision of social and psychological support have to be implemented in the following areas: psychological, professional, family, educational, leisure, public spheres;
- individualization of social and psychological impact. The restoration of the psychological balance and social confidence of the servicepersons, discharged from military service should be carried out according to the characteristics of the individual and the mechanisms and dynamics of its conditions;
- compliance of the events with the adaptation capabilities of the person;
- systematic monitoring and timely adjustment of the adaptation program.

The question for the optimal results of the process and criteria for success of the socio-psychological adaptation comes naturally. The answer is extremely important for

the specialists who will organize the activity of this process and provide social and psychological support to military personnel, discharged from military service.

There are different approaches to defining the given criteria. The mutual satisfaction of the person and the social environment can be considered as a general indicator of a successful process of socio-psychological adaptation. The state of the individual, allowing the achievement of such a relationship with the society could be called social adaptability. Moreover, a person without long external and internal conflicts chooses their life path and makes decisions, operates efficiently satisfying their basic social needs, fully corresponds to the role expectations of the reference group and reveals their creative potential.

On the basis of the presented model, the conditional differentiation of the following types of adaptation is possible:

- adaptability in the field of extra-personal socio-economic activity where the individual acquires knowledge and skills, becomes competent and achieves mastery;
- adaptability in the field of interpersonal relations, which establish intimate, emotional relationships with other people;
- interpersonal adaptability, which forms a streamlined, harmonious "I-concept" and achieves mental well-being and psychological health.

In this way, proceeding from the nature of the socio-psychological adaptation of the military personnel, the following criteria could be defined, specifying the degree of effectiveness (satisfaction) of the socio-psychological support in the adaptation process:

- criterion for social adaptation, including competitiveness, self-confidence, successful vocational rehabilitation, strengthening of the work position, stable family relations, a sufficient level of proficiency for the successful practice of a new profession;
- criterion for social and psychological comfort of the relations, determined by the degree of satisfaction with the relations in the new social environment with work, salary, relations with people;
- criterion for a positive self-assessment, determined by the absence of internal psychological conflicts and the absence of psychological defense, going beyond pathology.

We can summarize that the presented model for social and psychological support of the military personnel, discharged from military service and the members of their families can serve as a basis for the creation of an adaptation program of the researched category of adapting people, corresponding to dynamic changes in the social environment and the efficiency criteria. And since the social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service is directly related to their adaptability to the new civil society, it suggests in itself the formation of new knowledge, skills and abilities adequate to the requirements of this society. And this means formation of key competencies, adequate to the civil society, corresponding to the labor market, which could be the basis to further build the necessary skills and specific competencies upon. In other words, based on the specified model, our research deepens further in terms of creating a competency model for social adaptation of the military personnel, discharged from military service.

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