

NATIONAL REPORT - ROMANIA

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Introduction

The language training program is an integral part of the educational system of the Romanian Armed Forces. This program includes different foreign languages, English being the first priority. The Human Resources Management Directorate of the Ministry of Defense plays the role of professional adviser and coordinator in the foreign languages teaching program. In 2004, a new concept of language training was established. Language training has become a part of military training.

Courses

In 2005, in Romania there are 4 main foreign languages centres and 15 secondary English language centres.

The demand for English language courses is very high. These courses have been designed to achieve specific language proficiency levels, in accordance with STANAG 6001.

Intensive courses organisation:

- 4-week **familiarization** courses;
- 25-week **beginner** courses,
- 4-25-week **intermediate** courses;
- 12-22-week advanced courses;
- 2-9-week **speciality** courses;
- up to 4-week **refreshment** courses.

The non-intensive courses organized in operational military units did not offer the projected performance standard, so they have been discontinued. Motivation was insufficient, attendance was poor, and results were below the expected level.

There are 43 teachers of English in the main foreign languages centres and more than 120 in the secondary English language centres.

In 2004-2005 academic year, 520 students graduated / are about to graduate advanced English language courses in the main foreign languages centres, and about 1200 students graduated / are about to graduate beginner English language courses in the secondary English language centres. Thus, together with those attending special terminology courses, there are a total of about 1900 graduates.

The study of English is compulsory in the Armed Forces Service academies. Starting with 2004-2005 academic year, an admittance examination in English, with a compulsory minimal level 1 score, and a subsequent graduation exam, will further enhance the importance of English language knowledge in the Romanian Armed Forces.

Furthermore, the number of English classes per academic year will increase.

The study of English is compulsory in the Services application schools, as well. There, the situation is a bit more complex, because, to a certain extent, they still lack sufficient didactic materials, books and even enough teachers. Still, it has been deemed necessary to establish a 2-week compact module of English language learning within each speciality course; it will be implemented starting the next academic year.

In 2004, 5 regional resources centres were established, functioning in the self-access system. Currently, there is one pilot English refreshment course. In future, these centres are expected to develop face-to-face and on-line refreshment courses.

Other Languages

Regarding other languages taught in the Romanian Armed Forces, we should mention French, German, Turkish, Greek, Russian, Arabic and Romanian as a secondary language (for foreign students). These

languages are taught in the Foreign Languages Department of the National Defense University and in the main foreign languages centres of the Armed Forces Services.

Testing

Although the tests used in the Romanian Armed Forces have been designed mostly in accordance with STANAG 6001, there are also other kinds of tests used for special purposes. While each language centre can design admittance, placement, achievement and progress tests, all STANAG 6001 tests have to be designed by the core team tester group in the Human Resources Management Directorate in Bucharest. Apart from tests for English, tests for French have also been designed in accordance with STANAG 6001, mostly for SLP 1111 or 2222. The total number of tested military personnel in all languages is 2.358.

Of the total number of personnel with English language knowledge, about 1.000 are key personnel (established in accordance with the requirements of the force goal FG 0356 „Linguistic Requirements for Deployable Forces“), and the rest are comprised in target groups.

The lists of target groups and key personnel are being updated permanently. The personnel in the two groups are tested according to STANAG 6001 and have priority in attending language refreshment or speciality courses.

The Future

English stays the first priority in the field of foreign languages learning in the Romanian Armed Forces. As a consequence of the steps leading to the fully professional Romanian Armed Forces, a significant number of older officers are supposed to retire and a high number of new young people will join the professional military force. This will also bring about changes in languages training. More attention will be paid to NCOs, whose number is expected to rise.

We hope that, with a growing number of military personnel having achieved quite a good level of English skills during school attendance, the focus will shift on to other languages, mostly French, German and Arabic. We also hope that the above mentioned level of English knowledge will bring about changes in the courses structure, students will be offered more refreshment courses and more materials for self-study will be prepared.