



## ‘WAR FOR TALENT’

8,000 vacancies out of a total of 54,000 employees. No employer in the Netherlands has as many vacancies as the Ministry of Defence and, in 2019, and there will once again be more soldiers leaving than there ones signing up (Boerman, 2019). In addition, this summer, the Justice and Safety Inspectorate warned the Minister of Defence that police, fire brigade and forensic care are suffering from extensive employee deficits (AD, 2019).

The private sector, too, has to cope with a tight labor market. In business, however, profits are higher and there are more career opportunities. As a result, Defence, police, and other security services quickly lose out in "the War for Talent".

If the armed forces, law enforcement, and other emergency services are unable to maintain operational employability due to an excessive outflow of talent, this will have an impact on national security. At present, training and education are being eroded to maintain operational employability, despite staff shortages. New recruits can no longer be trained and waiting times are increasing. This has a direct, negative impact on morale and thus promotes early outflow - a downward spiral.

Since, in the case of the Ministry of Defence, 46% of soldiers leaving the organization state a lack of sufficient growth opportunities and 24% too low a salary as a reason for departure, the conclusion can be drawn that fully remedying the 'outflow problem' is unattainable and unaffordable in the short term (House of Representatives of the States General, 2019). Substantial investments and a long-term commitment from politics and society are needed to keep knowledge and experience on board and to guarantee a resilient society.

Cooperation between civil organizations and the Defence sector, law enforcement, and/or emergency services can provide short-term relief and may guarantee a long-term buffer in the event of unforeseen crisis situations.

Training courses, for example, can be outsourced or complemented in-company with external specialists in an existing structure. With good cooperation and reliable strategic partners, capacity can be increased in various areas as needed, when unforeseen situations present themselves. The outsourcing of training courses offers a scope for continuation and quality assurance of primary government tasks, focused on safety and resilience.



The Ministry of Defence and the police force, among others, supply their personnel with extensive training and education. Intensive collaboration with private parties, that manage to retain outgoing talent by responding to their needs, could be the key to retaining the knowledge and experience invested in personnel. These specialists, in which so much has already been invested by the government, can then continue to make a sustained contribution to a resilient society.

The contemporary working climate in the Netherlands requires, more than ever before, a controversial approach by decision makers within the armed forces, law enforcement, and emergency services. In 2017, the first impetus was made for "adaptive armed forces". Various creative projects have been initiated, using attractive pilots aiming at filling staff shortages or retaining existing staff. The first examples of successful public-private partnerships in the context of safety and resilience with civil organizations in the Netherlands, are promising. Consider, for example, training courses in the medical domain at the Defence Healthcare Education and Training Center in Hollandsche Rading, training courses for deputy group commanders at the Royal Military Academy (KMS), and partnerships with construction companies and educational institutions in the domain of army engineers. The Ministry of Finance is also entering into a private partnership for medical training of their firearm-carrying personnel. From an international perspective, the examples in the Netherlands may seem somewhat sparing, but a start has been made.

Within Defence, law enforcement, and emergency services, experienced specialists are becoming increasingly scarce. However, if decision makers within the government look for "out of the box" strategic partners to deal with this problem in a sustainable way, the government may not yet have lost "the War for Talent".

### **About Triangular Group Academy:**

Triangular Group Academy is your partner in the field of safety and resilience. With our extensive experience within the Dutch Special Forces, intelligence services, and special Police units, we deliver fast and intelligent solutions. We unburden you directly through advice, guidance, and capacity building (education & training).

*We enable you to be safe, secure and in control.*