

# Integration Processes in the Military Education System

**Milko Stefanov**

Rakovski National Defense College  
Sofia, Bulgaria  
[m.j.stefanov@rmdc.bg](mailto:m.j.stefanov@rmdc.bg)

**Daniel Berchev**

Research and Innovation Institute  
Vasil Levski National Military University  
Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria  
[dberchev@nvu.bg](mailto:dberchev@nvu.bg)

**Abstract** — This article explores the integration processes within military education systems, emphasizing their critical role in modernizing curricula and addressing the dynamic needs of national and international security. The aim is to analyze integration models and strategies that combine civilian and military education, theoretical and practical training, and traditional and innovative teaching methodologies. Using a systematic and comparative approach, the study evaluates global practices and specific examples from Bulgaria and NATO member states to identify effective integration strategies.

The research highlights the importance of fostering synergy between diverse educational components to enhance the preparation of military personnel for evolving defense challenges. Integration models, such as dual and modular training and institutional cooperation, are analyzed for their potential to combine military and civilian expertise. The integration of theoretical knowledge with practical training, including the use of simulations, field exercises, and joint international training, is shown to be critical for developing problem-solving skills and operational readiness. Furthermore, balancing traditional and innovative teaching methods is identified as a means to foster critical thinking and adaptability in learners.

The study concludes that integration is a strategic imperative for modern military education. Key recommendations include strengthening collaboration between military academies and civilian institutions, continuously updating curricula to reflect technological advancements, increasing opportunities for practical training, promoting flexible learning models, and investing in resources such as equipment, facilities, and teacher development. These measures are essential for preparing military professionals to meet the complexities of contemporary defense and security environments effectively.

**Keywords** — civilian-military cooperation, integration processes, military education system, theoretical and practical training.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Integration in military education is a topic of growing importance in contemporary educational systems worldwide. Integration is defined as a dynamic process of uniting different elements into a cohesive whole, aimed at achieving synergy and unlocking new opportunities. Within military education, this process is strategic, driven by the need to modernize curricula, promote interdisciplinary knowledge, and balance theoretical and practical training to meet the demands of the rapidly changing defense and security environment.

Using a comparative analysis of global practices and specific examples from Bulgaria and NATO member states, the article aims to analyze contemporary integration models in the military education system and to propose strategies for their optimization. Using a systematic approach, the study evaluates the integration of civilian and military education, theoretical and practical training, and traditional and innovative teaching methodologies.

Examining integration from multiple dimensions, the authors argue in the article that integration in military education is not simply an organizational or pedagogical necessity, but a strategic imperative. By promoting interconnectedness between disciplines, institutions, and methodologies, military education can better prepare individuals in the armed forces for complex, multidisciplinary challenges in the context of national and international security.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A comparative analysis of different models of military education systems, including those in Bulgaria and NATO countries, was used to identify common trends, differences and best practices in integration processes.

A systematic analysis was applied to establish the interaction between the different components and how

Online ISSN 2256-070X

<https://doi.org/10.17770/etr2025vol5.8466>

© 2025 The Author(s). Published by RTU PRESS.

This is an open access article under the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

integration can improve the effectiveness of the military education system as a whole.

An analysis of documents, such as higher education development strategies, laws and regulations, was carried out to establish the goals, policies and mechanisms for integration in military education.

An analysis of existing practices of different models of integration that are applied in practice, such as dual training, modular training and cooperation between institutions, was carried out. This approach allows illustrating the different ways in which integration is implemented in military education.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 1. *Fundamentals of integration processes*

##### 1.1. *The concept of "integration" in the context of education*

Integration in the broad sense of the word is a process of uniting disparate parts into a common, unified and whole, and contributes to increasing efficiency and productivity [1, p. 112]. Furthermore, integration is a process that is characterized by multi-facetedness and multi-layeredness. It is not simply the collection of parts, but their fusion into a single whole, in which differences are overcome or become complementary elements, through interaction and interdependence. The purpose of integrating the elements of the system is to create a synergistic effect that leads to the creation of new properties and capabilities that are not inherent in the individual parts. This is achieved by creating stronger connections between people, organizations, and systems. On the other hand, by combining different elements, integration can lead to the emergence of new ideas and opportunities. In this way, applied in many fields, from science and technology to the humanities, it becomes the driving force of development and progress. This gives us reason to claim that integration is a universal process that is relevant to all aspects of our lives. In support of this statement, we can point out that we are talking about integration in the social, economic, cultural, and technological spheres.

But when we consider the issue of integration in the field of education, the goal is to achieve new knowledge by combining knowledge from different fields. This is a complex process that goes beyond the simple collection of different elements.

Depending on what elements are combined and in what way, there are different types of integration in education. Andreev, M. considers three main types: vertical, horizontal and functional integration [2, p. 386].

According to the author, vertical integration in education refers to connecting different levels of education in a way that ensures a smooth transition and better absorption of knowledge. The advantages are better understanding of the processes, deeper knowledge and motivation to upgrade them. Vertical integration in

education is an important tool for creating a connected and effective education system.

Horizontal integration in education is the linking of different academic disciplines or areas of knowledge within the same educational level. The aim is to create more comprehensive and meaningful educational products for learners by showing how different subjects are related to each other and how they can be applied in real life.

Functional integration in education is the linking of different aspects of the learning process. It is a tool for creating dynamic and effective learning that allows learners to see how the knowledge they acquire is useful in real life and to develop skills that they will need in the future. This can involve integrating different subjects, teaching methods, technologies, or even different educational institutions.

The analysis shows that, in addition to everything said so far, integration in education is a strategic approach aimed at creating an educational environment that is diverse, effective and responsive to the needs of the education system. Through it, not only knowledge and skills are developed, but also key competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication.

For example, the "Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in the Republic of Bulgaria for the Period 2021-2030" [3] sets out activities and measures to achieve the goals, which cover a wide range of aspects, ranging from the modernization of curricula and programs, through improving the quality of teaching and research, to internationalization and strengthening the connection between education, science and business. The main directions are the development of competencies, digitalization, interdisciplinarity and practical orientation of training. In addition, the aim is to increase the mobility of students and teachers, attract foreign students and integrate into international educational and scientific networks. The strategy also envisages closer cooperation between universities, business and the state in the fields of education, research and innovation.

Development strategies in the military education system are a function of the "Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in the Republic of Bulgaria". For example, the main characteristics of the educational process at the Vasil Levski National Military University (NMU "Vasil Levski"), specified in the "Strategy of the Vasil Levski National Military University 2030" [4], show that the emphasis is placed on the evolution of the process, highlighting both the permanent elements and the changes determined by the historical and social contexts.

The Military University has always been focused on training qualified officers, taking into account national priorities and the traditions of the army. The duration of training and the structure of the academic year have varied over the years, but there has always been a striving for a balance between theoretical and practical training, with one of the distinctive features of military education being the

combination of general education subjects with intensive military training.

The analysis reveals two main approaches to organizing the learning process:

- individual approach – initial general training, followed by specialization. This approach is characteristic of earlier periods, but also manifests itself as a contemporary trend.

- specialization at the beginning of education – narrow specialization from the first year, with the accompanying less flexibility. This approach was dominant during certain periods of the mid-twentieth century.

Today, emerging trends are for greater flexibility in curricula and a striving for a balanced combination of academic knowledge and practical military skills. The strategy relies on the development of leadership qualities, communication skills and emotional intelligence, as well as the integration of digital tools and simulations in the learning process.

The development strategy of the Rakovski National Defence College also relies on integration processes in several aspects in order to meet the high requirements of modern defense and security [5]. First of all, this is the integration of military and civilian education, through the development of joint educational programs, exchange of teachers and joint scientific research. Next is the integration of theoretical training with practice, through closer cooperation with the armed forces, introduction of new technologies, internships and practices. The Rakovski National Defence College envisages in its strategy for the development and updating of curricula and programs in accordance with the requirements of NATO and other international organizations, participation in international projects and cooperation with foreign military academies. Attention has also been paid to the integration of different types of learning, through the development of distance learning and the use of a combination of traditional and innovative teaching methods to meet the different needs of students.

### *1.2. The systems approach in education*

The systems approach is often used to justify integration processes in education. The most operationalized concepts of the systems approach for the needs of education are connection and systematization [2, p. 388].

The systems approach is a way of thinking and analysis that views objects as systems – collections of interconnected elements that interact with each other and with the environment. This approach is widely applied in various fields, including education, and is guided by certain principles.

Berchev, D. and Stefanov, M. provide a broader definition, considering the systems approach in the context of the military education system and doctrinal documents [6].

Within the Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria, the systems approach to training has been defined as a model for managing individual and collective training in order to control the quality of training and the quantity of resources allocated for training and preparation of the headquarters and formations of the Armed Forces. This is an analytical method that determines what training should be carried out with personnel, headquarters and formations to reach certain standards that guarantee the successful execution of tasks in crisis response operations and to ensure national security [7, p. 23].

The analysis of this definition outlines the following aspects. First of all is the formulation of the goal – optimization of the process of training of personnel, headquarters and formations, which guarantees high standards and efficient use of resources. Next is the use of an analytical method to determine the type of training to achieve the specific goals, as well as the scope of application and the benefits of its implementation.

The definition also reflects some of the basic principles of the systems approach – goal-orientedness, complexity, resource optimization and quality control.

The application of the systems approach in education allows the learning process to be considered as a complex system consisting of learners, teachers, learning materials, teaching methods, environment, etc. Analysis of the interrelationships between these elements allows to improve the efficiency of the educational process and achieve better results.

The systems approach is a tool for identifying problems and seeking effective solutions. It can be used to assess the impact of various changes in the system and to develop a more holistic and integrated approach to education.

Berchev and Stefanov substantiate the claim that the systems approach to education is a set of integration processes [6]. They are related concepts, especially in the context of education as a complex system. This allows problems and processes to be viewed as whole systems, rather than as isolated elements. This is essential for integration, as it requires the connection of different components to achieve a common goal. In addition, the systems approach emphasizes the importance of interactions between the different elements of the system. In integration processes, understanding these interactions is key to successfully connecting the different components. Understanding the structure of the system and how the different elements are organized enables us to plan and execute the integration processes. The systems approach takes into account the dynamic nature of systems. Integration processes are also dynamic and require continuous adaptation to changing conditions.

In summary, the systems approach and integration processes are inextricably linked. The systems approach provides the necessary tools to analyze and manage integration processes, while integration, in turn, allows for more efficient and sustainable systems to be created.

## 2. Analysis of existing integration processes in the military education system

Educational system models represent different ways of structuring and organizing the learning process. Each of them has its own specific characteristics and advantages [8].

Most of the existing examples relate to the school education system, but they nevertheless give us valuable information about trends in education systems.

For example, analysis of the education systems in Shanghai, the Netherlands and Estonia shows different approaches to the organization and delivery of education, with an emphasis on individualization, practical learning and flexibility in student choice. Characteristic of the education systems in other countries such as Finland and Canada is that they emphasize the importance of holistic development, equity in education and adaptability of assessment methodologies, resulting in high levels of education and international success [9, 10].

Existing models of educational systems have not only their advantages, but also suffer from disadvantages. The optimal choice of model depends on the specific educational situation and the goals it sets for itself. In the modern educational environment, there is an increasingly common trend towards combining different models to create more flexible and individualized curricula.

In view of what has been said so far, the choice of an appropriate educational model for military training is a complex issue that depends on numerous factors, including the specifics of the military profession, the objectives of the training, as well as the dynamic environment in which the armed forces operate. Traditionally, military education has followed a more linear model. This means that training takes place in a strictly defined sequence of courses (curriculum disciplines) and topics, starting with basic military disciplines and progressing to more specialized knowledge and skills. This model provides a solid foundation of military knowledge and skills, but may not be flexible enough to respond to the rapidly changing military environment. To this end, military education needs flexible and adaptable models that respond to the dynamic environment and prepare military personnel for successful performance of their tasks.

The analysis of the models of military education systems in some of the NATO member countries shows precisely these trends.

The U.S. military education system is characterized by a hierarchical, multi-tiered approach. It is designed to develop military leaders through a structured and progressive continuum of training and education throughout their careers. Education begins with undergraduate training at institutions such as the United States Military Academy at West Point, the Naval Academy, and the Air Force Academy. Mid-career training is provided at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC), and advanced strategic training is provided at the National Defense University (NDU). The emphasis is on

developing leadership, technical expertise, and academic rigor, and in the preparation of senior officers, training at higher levels of education, the curriculum focuses on military strategy, operations, and politics. Field training is also an integral part of U.S. military education [11, pp. 37-44].

The United Kingdom's military education model integrates civilian education with military officer training. Key institutions include the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (for the Army), Britannia Royal Naval College (for the Navy) and Royal Air Force College Cranwell (for the Air Force). This system combines academic training with military field training, leadership development, and critical thinking. Officers can earn advanced degrees from accredited universities in relevant civilian fields while in service, encouraging intellectual flexibility and interdisciplinary knowledge.

Germany relies on a dual approach of academic-military education, with officers receiving degrees from the Bundeswehr University in Munich and Hamburg. These universities operate as civilian academic institutions but meet military needs. This system is characterized by an emphasis on technical and engineering education, encouraging the development of analytical skills, technical proficiency, and operational efficiency. Officers receive civilian-equivalent degrees along with military training [11, pp. 46-47].

The French military education system relies on leading institutions such as the École Spéciale Militaire de Saint-Cyr (for the Army), the École Navale (for the Navy), and the École de l'Air (for the Air Force). Senior officer training includes advanced strategic courses at the École de Guerre (War College). Officers progress through undergraduate, mid-career, and senior officer education. The education system emphasizes a holistic approach, including military training, academic education, and leadership development. In addition, French military education also emphasizes "formation humaine" (human development), focusing on moral education, critical thinking, and leadership [11, pp. 48-52].

However, current trends point to an increasing need to combine different models in order to ensure greater flexibility and efficiency. It is important to note that the choice of an appropriate educational model depends on the specific conditions and goals. This is clearly evident from the examples given of the military education systems of some NATO member states. Here it should be emphasized that they reflect the combination of national military needs and NATO strategic objectives, promoting operational readiness, technical expertise and joint interoperability. Each country adapts its education system to balance domestic military priorities with NATO's multinational operational requirements.

### *2.1. Integration of civilian and military components in training*

Recently, efforts to change the higher education system have definitely intensified [12, p. 86]. The integration of civilian and military components in training is one of the

processes that is actively developing in the Bulgarian military education system. The goal is to create highly qualified specialists capable of responding to contemporary challenges to national security and functioning effectively in multinational environments.

The **Dual training model** is regulated in the Law on Defense and Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria, where in Art. 95, Para. 5 it is stated that “When training in military specialties, military academies and higher military schools also conduct training in a relevant accredited civilian specialty and award the relevant educational and qualification degrees in accredited military and civilian specialties.” [13]. In addition, Art. 3, Para. 3 of the Regulation on the State Requirements for Acquiring Higher Education with a Bachelor's Degree in the Professional Field of Military Affairs in the Specialties of the Regulated Profession of Tactical Level Command Officer states that training is provided “in specialties of the professional field of Military Affairs and in specialties of other professional fields, with training being conducted according to unified curricula.” [14].

This model is applied in all higher military schools in the Republic of Bulgaria and assumes that students receive both civilian and military education, as well as a diploma for a civilian and military specialty.

#### *Modular training model*

This model is common and conceptually resembles the dual education model, but the emphasis is only on a separate part (a subject, a separate semester), not on an entire specialty.

For example, at the NMU “V. Levski”, with the adoption of the 2022 curriculum for cadets from the military specialization “Motorized Infantry and Tank Troops”; “Intelligence” and “Military Police”, who are also trained in the civilian specialty “National and Regional Security”, two common modules are included:

- Common Module – Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) – 18 hours of lectures, 18 hours of exercises (total 36 hours) – studied during the winter semester of the 4th year;

- Common Module – Troop Leading Procedures – 21 hours of lectures, 9 hours of exercises (Total 30 hours) – studied during the winter semester of the 5th year.

These two modules are also studied in some of the universities that are partners of the NMU “V. Levski” under the Erasmus+ program.

Another example is the creation of the "European Joint Technical Semester for Defence and Security" (EuCTS\_DS). This initiative became an Erasmus+ project, implemented in the period 01.12.2020 – 30.11.2022. The project involves the Military Technical Academy "Ferdinand I" of Bucharest, Romania; Military University of Technology Warsaw, Poland; Hellenic Air Force Academy, Athens, Greece; Vasil Levski National Military University, Bulgaria – Faculty of Artillery, Air Defense

and CSI; French Air Force Academy, Salon de Provence, France. The objectives of the project are the development, testing and design of a new modular curriculum for an international technical semester in defense and security, at bachelor's level, common to the European Union, as well as the development of a network of lecturers with competences in the field of technical defense and security systems.

Last but not least, the example that can be cited is with the curricula of civilian universities that include military modules, such as courses in military history, strategy, logistics or international relations, especially in specialties such as national security, international relations and political science.

#### *Model of cooperation between institutions*

This model involves cooperation between civilian universities and military academies through:

1. Joint scientific research – scientists from both sectors collaborate on projects related to national security. An example of this model is the implementation of the National Scientific Program “Security and Defense”, in which the Center for National Security and Defense Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Science, University of National and World Economy (UNWE), University of Library Science and Information Technologies (UniBIT), Rakovski National Defence College, Defense Institute “Prof. Tsvetan Lazarov”, Academy of the Ministry of Interior, Higher Naval School “N. Y. Vaptsarov”, National Military University “Vasil Levski”, Higher Air Force School “G. Benkovski”, Laboratory Complex at the Science and Technology Park “SOFIA TECH PARK” and other higher schools and scientific organizations participate. The program was created in implementation of the National Strategy for the Development of Scientific Research 2017-2030 (NSDSR) with the aim of increasing the national scientific capacity in the field of security and defense. The consolidated efforts of the aforementioned scientific organizations, higher education institutions and innovative business organizations are aimed at achieving real scientific results, giving the Republic of Bulgaria a competitive advantage in specific segments of security, cybersecurity and defense of the Republic of Bulgaria, the EU and NATO.

2. Exchange of teachers – teachers from civilian universities can teach at military academies and vice versa. This model is mainly implemented through the exchange of teachers under the Erasmus+ program. But in the last 2-3 years, with the introduction of the possibility of creating joint curricula between higher education institutions, collaboration between civilian and military universities has been observed. As an example, we can point to the NMU “B. Levski”, which educates students in joint master's programs with Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” and Southwestern University “Neofit Rilski”, thus realizing an exchange of teachers and students.

TABLE 1 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF MODELS OF INTEGRATION OF MILITARY AND CIVILIAN COMPONENTS IN TRAINING

Model	Advantages	Disadvantages
Dual training	- Broader perspective; - Better understanding of complex issues	- Longer training; - Higher demands on learners
Modular training	- Flexibility; - Ability to choose specialization	There may be a lack of integrity in training
Cooperation between institutions	- Synergy between civil and military knowledge; - Research opportunities	Bureaucratic obstacles may arise

Table 1 shows the advantages and disadvantages of models of integration of military and civilian components in training. This process has great potential to improve the quality of education and prepare specialists capable of dealing with complex security problems. The choice of an appropriate model depends on the specific conditions and objectives. It is important to note that successful integration requires cooperation between different institutions, as well as flexibility and adaptability to changing conditions.

2.2. *Integration of theoretical and practical training*

The integration of theoretical and practical training is a key aspect of modern military education. It aims to create not only theoretically prepared specialists, but also individuals capable of applying their knowledge in real-world conditions.

Several approaches are used in the military education system. In the modular approach, theoretical modules alternate with practical classes, allowing cadets to immediately apply what they have learned. The use of simulators for training in shooting, driving vehicles (tracked and wheeled), making tactical decisions, etc. is increasingly being used. A key aspect of implementing this approach is regular training exercises, where theoretical knowledge is applied in conditions close to combat.

In project-based learning, students work on projects that require a combination of theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Case studies are another aspect of this approach, which involves analyzing real or simulated situations that require decision-making.

In the approach to completing internships and practices in military units, cadets have the opportunity to become familiar with daily work and acquire practical skills.

As a summary, we can point out that the integration of theoretical and practical training can also be realized through:

- **Using simulation centres.** In some higher military schools, such as the NMU “V. Levski”, the Higher Naval School “N. Y. Vaptsarov” and the Rakovski National Defence College, simulation centers have been created where students can practice various scenarios. These are of the type of so-called constructive simulation systems, which are distinguished by the fact that when working with them, participants have the opportunity to control software-simulated units by submitting commands from the interface

of their workstation, and then observe the results of their decisions on the screen, namely how their virtual subordinates act with virtual equipment, vehicles and weapons to perform the assigned tasks. In the armed forces of NATO member states, one of the widely used software applications for constructive simulation at the tactical level is JCATS (Joint Conflict and Tactical Simulation), and at the operational and strategic level – JTLS (Joint Theater Level Simulation) [15, pp. 321-322].

- **Conducting exercises at training ranges.** This is related to the Experiential Learning Model (ELM), which is a form of learning based on the principle of acquiring knowledge through experience. As individuals in the armed forces of any country face physical and mental challenges, experiential learning promotes better understanding and extraction of knowledge from experience. ELM can be applied to military training in a four-step cycle described by David Kolb: 1. Concrete Experience; 2. Reflective Observation; 3. Abstract Conceptualism; 4. Active Experimentation. Overall, this cycle embodies a learning process that gives knowledge from experience and turns into useful information [16]. This is fully responsible for the training of the cadets from the NMU “V. Levski”, who are scheduled to regularly participate in exercises at training ranges, where they apply the acquired knowledge and improve their practical skills.

- **Conducting joint trainings with foreign partners.** For example, in the period 11-22 January 2016, a joint training exercise “BLACK SEA ROTATIONAL FORCE 15.2” – PLATINUM LION 16-2, Land Ops” was held at the Novo Selo Training Range. It was attended by personnel from the US Marine Corps, units from the Land Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria, cadets and teachers from the NMU “V. Levski”, units from Romania, Hungary and Croatia. Participation in such international exercises contributes to the exchange of experience and standardization of procedures between the participants.

The application of these approaches outlines a number of advantages and challenges regarding the integration of theoretical and practical training. The advantages that can be mentioned are: better knowledge acquisition, development of problem-solving skills, increased motivation, better preparation for professional activity. As challenges, first of all, we can highlight resource provision. Without the necessary equipment, ranges and instructors, it is impossible to apply theoretical knowledge in practice. Next is ensuring safe conditions for conducting practical classes. And last but not least, it is finding a balance between theory and practice.

The integration of theoretical and practical training is a key factor for the success of modern military education in Bulgaria. It allows for the preparation of highly qualified specialists capable of responding to modern challenges to national security. In order to achieve full integration, it is necessary to overcome existing challenges and continue the development of existing models.

### 2.3. Integration of different types of training

Individual training focuses on the development of specific skills and knowledge of each learner. It allows for a personalized approach, deeper understanding of the material, and the development of self-discipline and responsibility.

The collective training emphasizes the importance of interaction and cooperation between learners. It develops communication skills, teamwork, leadership qualities, and social skills.

Individual and collective training are two fundamental approaches in the educational process, which complement each other and play a major role in the development of military specialists. Their integration within military education aims to achieve a balance between the development of individual skills and effective interaction to achieve optimal results and build effective teams.

Traditional methods and forms of training in military education are based on strict discipline, hierarchical structure and an emphasis on the development of basic military skills. They are described in the Training Doctrine, contained in the training methodologies for the relevant disciplines and include lectures, exercises, practical classes, etc.

Innovative methods and forms of training are a new approach in military education, using modern technologies and interactive teaching methods. These can be simulations, virtual and augmented reality, mobile applications, online learning, etc.

From the perspective of the integration of these methods and forms, NP-7 states that the choice of the most appropriate training methods is important for the overall functioning of the system. [7, p. 13]. In addition, the doctrine allows teachers and instructors to be creative in their use, stating that the forms of training are open, i.e. they can be complemented, intertwined and combined, aiming to achieve the maximum effect of their use [7, p. 60].

Successful integration of traditional and innovative methods and forms of training requires a balanced approach and adaptive planning. To achieve the training objectives, various integration models can be used, such as:

- combining methods and forms;
- personalizing training;
- focusing on the development of problem-solving and critical thinking skills;
- stimulating learners to analyze situations, make decisions and act in non-standard conditions;
- constantly evaluating the effectiveness of training.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of integration processes in the military education system reveals the central role of comprehensive and adaptive strategies for bringing military education into line with contemporary societal, technological, and

operational requirements. The study highlights the importance of promoting synergy between civilian and military educational components, integrating theoretical knowledge with practical training, and adopting innovative teaching methodologies and technologies. These efforts are essential to equip military personnel with the skills and competencies needed to effectively address evolving national and international security challenges.

In conclusion, integrating different educational approaches is crucial to increasing the effectiveness of military education. Future efforts should focus on:

1. Strengthening cooperation. Promoting partnerships between military academies, civilian universities, and research organizations by developing joint programs, sharing experiences, and conducting joint research will enhance the exchange of knowledge and resources and ensure that curricula are aligned with global trends in education and security.

2. Adapting to change. The evolving nature of security threats and technological advances require continuous updating of educational programs, which will ensure that graduates of higher military schools will possess the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies.

3. Emphasis on practical experience. Increasing opportunities for practical training and simulations that reflect real-world scenarios will allow learners to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings.

4. Investing in resources. Although listed last, this is one of the most important areas for development, requiring the provision of adequate funding and resources for training facilities, equipment and teacher development to support high-quality education.

By implementing these suggestions, military education systems can better prepare their graduates for the complexities of the modern defense and security environment.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] S. Ilieva, "The integrated approach in the training to increase the effectiveness of the learning process." In Proceedings of University of Ruse "May Research Conference", 2017, vol. 56, book 11, pp. 111-116. [in Bulgarian]. Available: <https://conf.uni-ruse.bg/bg/docs/cp17/11/11-19.pdf>. [Accessed December 02, 2024].
- [2] M. Andreev, *The Learning Process. Didactics*. Sofia: University Publishing House "St. Kliment Ohridski", 1996. [in Bulgarian].
- [3] National Assembly, *Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in the Republic of Bulgaria for the Period 2021 – 2030*. Sofia: National Assembly, Promulgated in the State Gazette, No. 2 of January 8, 2021. [in Bulgarian]. Available: <https://dv.parliament.bg/DVWeb/showMaterialDV.jsp?idMat=154629>. [Accessed December 11, 2024].
- [4] Vasil Levski National Military University, *Strategy of the Vasil Levski National Military University 2030*. Veliko Tarnovo: Vasil Levski National Military University, 2023. [in Bulgarian]. Available: [https://www.nvu.bg/sites/default/files/2023-07/strat\\_2030\\_nvu.pdf](https://www.nvu.bg/sites/default/files/2023-07/strat_2030_nvu.pdf). [Accessed December 10, 2024].
- [5] Rakovski National Defence College, *Development Strategy of Rakovski National Defence College 2021-2030*. Sofia: Rakovski National Defence College, 2021. [in Bulgarian]. Available:

- <https://rmdc.bg/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/%D0%A1%D1%82%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%B3%D0%B8%D1%8F-%D0%B7%D0%B0-%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B7%D0%B2%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B5-%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%92%D0%90-2030.pdf>. [Accessed December 10, 2024].
- [6] D. Berchev and M. Stefanov, "The Systems Approach to Training in the Military Educational System – aggregation of integration processes," *KNOWLEDGE – International Journal*, vol. 30, no. 6, March, pp. 1457-1462, 2019. Available: <https://ikm.mk/ojs/index.php/kij/article/view/1620/1619>. [Accessed December 12, 2024].
- [7] Ministry of Defense, *Doctrine for training the armed forces of the Republic of Bulgaria*. (National publication of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria NP-7, Edition A). Sofia: Ministry of Defense, 2018. [in Bulgarian].
- [8] D. H. Schunk, *Learning Theories an Educational Perspective*, 6th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson, 2012. Available: <https://elmirmohammedmemorypsy.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/learning-theories-an-educational-perspective.pdf>. [Accessed December 08, 2024].
- [9] I. Dechkova, "Educational Systems Around the World – part 1," *The magic of art-word, music and dance*, August 8, 2023. [Online]. Available: <https://magicart-delta.com/en/2023/08/08/%d0%be%d0%b1%d1%80%d0%b0%d0%b7%d0%be%d0%b2%d0%b0%d1%82%d0%b5%d0%bb%d0%bd%d0%b8%d1%82%d0%b5-%d1%81%d0%b8%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b5%d0%abc%d0%b8-%d0%b1%d0%be-%d1%81%d0%b2%d0%b5%d1%82%d0%b0-%d1%87%d0%b0%d1%81/>. [Accessed December 14, 2024].
- [10] I. Dechkova, "Educational Systems Around the World – part 2," *The magic of art-word, music and dance*, August 8, 2023. [Online]. Available: <https://magicart-delta.com/en/2023/08/08/%D0%BE%D0%B1%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B7%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5-%D1%81%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BC%D0%B8-%D0%BF%D0%BE-%D1%81%D0%B2%D0%B5%D1%82%D0%B0-%D1%87%D0%B0/>. [Accessed December 14, 2024].
- [11] D. Markov and R. Chalakov, *Challenges Facing the Development of the Military Education System*. Sofia: Rakovski National Defence College, 2023. ISBN: 978-619-77-11-21-9. [in Bulgarian].
- [12] K. Kalinov, "Modern Education – What Everyone Understands," *Security and Defense*, issue 1, pp. 85-95, November, 2022. [in Bulgarian]. [Online serial]. Available: <https://doi.org/10.70265/VCEN6523>. [Accessed December 15, 2024].
- [13] National Assembly, *Law on Defense and Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria*. Sofia: National Assembly, Promulgated in the State Gazette, No. 35 of May 12, 2009. [in Bulgarian]. Available: <https://lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2135631954>. [Accessed December 16, 2024].
- [14] Council of Ministers, *Regulation on the state requirements for acquiring higher education at the educational-qualification degree "bachelor" in the professional direction "Military Affairs" in the specialties of the regulated profession "Tactical level management officer"*. Sofia: Council of Ministers, Promulgated in the State Gazette, No. 68 of September 4, 2012. [in Bulgarian]. Available: <https://lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2135808720>. [Accessed December 16, 2024].
- [15] D. Berchev and S. Petkov, "Integrating Simulation Systems in Cadet Training: Challenges and Opportunities," In Proceedings of the Second National Scientific-Practical Conference "Digital Transformation of Education – Problems and Solutions," 2024, pp. 320-324. [in Bulgarian]. Available: <https://www.conf-dte.bg/docs/2024/p-57.pdf>. [Accessed December 16, 2024].
- [16] Institute for Defense and Business (IDB), "The Experiential Learning Model (ELM) in the Military," *Institute for Defense and Business (IDB)*, 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://www.idb.org/the-experiential-learning-model-elm-in-the-military/>. [Accessed: December 12, 2024].