

**UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

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Instruments and possibilities of patriotic education in Hungary with special  
focus on Hungarian Scouting

Theses of the dissertation

Author's summary

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## Introduction

Over the past few years, I have started my lectures on several occasions by saying that “maybe I don’t have to brush up on the importance of patriotic education ...” However, during my research I had to realize that this is necessary, most needed. There is really no need to brush up on the importance of patriotic education for an understanding audience, people skilled in military science, but the only way to harness the results of this research is to convince the whole of society about the importance of patriotic education. This is because patriotic education makes sense if its impact is widespread and patriotism becomes the norm for society as a whole, which can be converted into action if necessary.

The military strength of a state, and with it its defense capabilities, is greatly influenced by the social embeddedness of the force, that is, the quality of civil-military relations. This is especially true of Western-type democracies, as the principle of democratic civilian control is constitutionally enshrined in these states, meaning that the tasks are assigned to the armed forces at the highest level by civilian leaders, who are democratically elected civilian leaders. It follows that the attitude of society towards the armed forces fundamentally affects the applicability of the armed forces and thus the military power of the state.

At the same time, a positive attitude towards the military as an organization providing armed protection for the state is inconceivable at the level of society as a whole without a positive emotional attachment to the homeland itself, that is, the idea of patriotism.

## Introduction

Over the past few years, I have started my lectures on several occasions by saying that "maybe I don't have to brush up on the importance of patriotic education ...". However, in the course of my research, I had to realize that this is indeed necessary, and this is exactly what is needed in terms of the utilization of research results. There is really no need to brush up on the importance of patriotic education for an understanding audience, people skilled in military science, soldiers, but the only way to harness research is to convince the whole of society about the importance of patriotic education. This is because patriotic education makes sense if its impact is widespread and patriotism becomes the norm for society as a whole, which can be converted into action if necessary.

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## Identification of the academic questions and the goal of the research

Patriotism and establishing patriotism on the level of the society as a whole is of vital importance when assessing the defense capabilities and the application of military forces of a state. Patriotic education means the establishment of the positive emotional bonds towards one's homeland and the transfer of the related knowledge. Establishing these, this dissertation seeks answers to the following questions:

1. What instruments does a state have for the development of its citizens' positive emotional attachment towards their homeland?
2. How can a state strengthen the effectiveness of its means and organizations dealing with patriotic education?
3. What are the non governmental instruments of patriotic education?
4. How can the effectiveness of these non governmental instruments of patriotic education be strengthened?

## Hypotheses

At the beginning of my research I presumed the following Hypotheses, confirmation or refutation of which can be applied as new scientific results of the research presented in this dissertation:

1. 1. I hypothesized that patriotic education is of great importance in preparing for the armed defense of the homeland. I also hypothesized that the cohesion of society and the foundations of people's belonging to smaller and larger communities, and ultimately to the nation, could be created through patriotic education, and that the state could offset many of the harmful effects of globalization on society and individuals.
2. I assumed that from the aspect of the human resources of the armed forces in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the positive emotional approach towards the homeland and the commitment to the service plays an equal role to physical skills and (academic) requirements.
3. I presumed that it is possible to establish an organization in Hungary that deals with patriotic and military education and that can play a significant role in the development of the society's positive approach towards the homeland. I furthermore presumed that an organization alike can involve masses organically.
4. I presumed that the Hungarian educational system has the institutions for patriotic education and community building and that this set of institutions is appropriate for the fulfillment of its tasks.
5. I hypothesized that the means of patriotic education, if they are not properly present, can be created in the public education system through legislative means and rapid organizational reforms.
6. I assumed that the Hungarian Scouting - since its foundation - practically fully realizes the patriotic educational goals formulated by the state as a need.
7. I hypothesized that the efficiency of patriotic education could be significantly improved by exploiting the synergistic connections between the Hungarian Scouting and the corresponding subsystems of the state.

## Methodological foundations of the research

Since my research aims the enhancement of Hungary's defense capabilities, the methodological background of the research and the whole dissertation would be that of security studies. For this reason in the dissertation, I study the behavior of organized communities (states) and the international system created by the states. Obviously I deal mostly with the Hungarian state and its behavior on the field of patriotic education. I study and analyze the possible measures of the state in order to enhance the effectiveness of patriotic education and serve the security of the state.

For a starting point I used the five dimensional security model of the Copenhagen School in which dimensions of security emerge as possible activities of the state on the field of foreign and security politics. This clearly shows the process we have seen in the last centuries. The military dimension of security could only be primary because the other four dimensions defined by Buzan and Weaver could not be affected by forces of a state even a hundred years ago. Besides the military dimension, economical, political, societal or environmental aspects of security appeared only as instruments of military means. For example deflecting a river to deprive the enemy of fresh water obviously has environmental consequences, but it still serves the military means.

Of course, every dimension of security defined here has human resource implications, but when it comes to the patriotic upbringing of youth or society as a whole, perhaps the social and political aspects still stand out. The political dimension is, of course, only in terms of representative democracy, insofar as it is important for security to be a priority for those voting in elections. In any case, starting from this complex interpretation of security, there are opportunities in many areas of an individual's life to make decisions that are related to security. Securitizing these, or raising them to high level politics are more likely and gives us more opportunities than studying only the military aspects of security.

Security Studies as a discipline classification determines the scientific methods used in research and the main direction of research. The subject of the dissertation is how the human resources available to the state can be developed in a direction that promotes the security of the state. Within this, I deal with the patriotic education of the youth, within that with emphasis on Hungarian scouting as a means of achieving the goals of patriotic education with great efficiency.

Since the narrower subject of the dissertation is patriotic education, which has a very strong pedagogical dimension, we have to look at the above defined complex system through the optics of patriotic education. This is not just the scope of interpretation of “national defense human capital,” as we are talking here about patriotic education for the society as a whole. Nor is it just a projection of social security, as we look at the human resource side of every interpretation of security and all the aspects that lead to human decisions.

With regard to military security (e.g., declaring war), the opinion of society is rarely sought by decision-makers, yet it is true that one of the four conditions for the applicability of armed force is that society be willing to support the use of force on the issue. Accordingly, in the course of

the dissertation I will examine the methodological issues through the optics of patriotic education, ie I will review all aspects of security or border areas in terms of the human resource supply and pedagogical issues of the given field.

## Brief description of the conducted research

In the first chapter of the essay I outline some foundational statements in order to impound the issues discussed. Furthermore I raise some global issues that further emphasize the actuality of the issue discussed in the dissertation. The existence of these issues stress the importance of national defense for individuals and the society as a whole. The majority of these problems are generated by the societal phenomenon widely known as globalization. Besides the numerous positive effects of globalization, these negative effects seriously endanger the cohesion of communities and societies, for which reason states actively try to counter these effects. The main statement of the chapter is that these problems do endanger the cohesion of a society and in serious cases they can lead to the dissolution of a society and the collapse of state order. The means of patriotic education on the other hand are appropriate to counter these effects.

In the second chapter – following a brief historical review – I outline the contacts of the defense subsystem of Hungarian public administration with the instruments of patriotic education. Through the scientific results of a survey I show proof of the statement that from the armed forces point of view during human resource supply the positive approach towards the homeland commitment to service are more important than the previously acquired knowledge and capabilities. Through the experience gained from “Honvédelmi Kötelék Program”, through scientific experimental research and through the introduction of “Honvédelmi Sportszövetség” I prove that it is possible to establish an organization that deals with transferring useful defense and survival knowledge (in other words military pre-education). Furthermore I confute the presumption that such an organization will – given the present Hungarian societal and political circumstances – will organically develop to a mass organization such was the pre-1990 MHSZ in Hungary.

In the third chapter I outline the contacts of the educational subsystem of Hungarian public administration with the instruments of patriotic education. In the chapter I focus on primary and secondary education and have a few remarks on teacher training in higher education. Through a definite case I outline the possible means and methods of potential reforms in the Hungarian educational system identifying the possible problems and barriers as well. In a

further section of the chapter, through the results of a survey, I analyze the educational system's approach to patriotic education and confirm the hypothesis that in the transfer of information and knowledge is still predominant to the development of positive emotional approach, team formation and thus the whole system prefers individual development to team work.

In the fourth chapter I deal with the largest youth development movement of the World: scouting. I point out the specialties of Hungarian scouting and thoroughly analyze the development, test and merit system. The scientific achievement of the chapter is the description of the methods of Hungarian scouting considering the defense and security studies' viewpoints. Such description hasn't happened since the reestablishment of the Hungarian Scouting Association in 1989. I point out the activities of Hungarian scouting as a movement are ideal from the aspects of patriotic education. At the end of the chapter I make proposals for the further development of the cooperation between the scouting movement and the subsystems of public administration.

The last chapter contains the conclusions, achievements, proposals for the application of the achievements and closing remarks of the dissertation.

## Results and conclusions of the conducted research

### Conclusion of the statements in general

The main hypothesis of the dissertation is the following: The Hungarian State in its present social system has the instruments to reach the goals of patriotic education. The primary function of these instruments is not designing patriotic education or to reach its goals. Furthermore, operating this state system is relatively expensive and its effectiveness could also be improved. However, a system being operated by the state is the only way to guarantee that the contents related to patriotic education reach all the children at school. Operating the system however is not the only instrument at the state's disposal. The state has all the legal instruments to support other organizations and the state has significant assets that can be exploited to support other organizations to foster the case of patriotic education.

The governmental system has two subsystems that can be relevant when discussing the issue: the subsystem of the armed forces and homeland security and the subsystem responsible for education. These can affect the responsibilities of numerous ministries or other governmental

bodies, but taxonomically they form two subsystems. It is quite clear that none of these subsystems – and actually none of the governmental bodies concerned – considers patriotic education its primary function.

### Conclusions regarding the subsystem of defense

In this chapter I present the results of a survey I conducted among the leaders of the Hungarian Armed Forces about their views on patriotic education. Previously there was no such survey, although my opinion is that this kind of survey should be done regularly. The outcome of the survey supports the aims of patriotic education and the human resource support of the armed forces as scientific achievements. In this chapter I describe the “Honvédelmi Kötelék Program”, which was later detached from the Ministry of Defense and established as a public association under the name “Honvédelmi Sportszövetség”.

The governmental subsystem responsible for armed forces focuses primarily on the defense and the military security of the country and does only have capacities to involve the young, who are relevant for them for potential recruitment. The civil relations of the armed forces are insufficient and not mature enough so that the Hungarian soldier could be of assistance during the society’s patriotic education. 100% of the leaders of the Hungarian armed force began their career before 2003, which means that their primary socialization leads back to an enlisted army and that they are not prepared competition on the labor market. It cannot be overlooked that the military no privileged position on the Hungarian labor market. My opinion is that this has to change. We need a strategy and an action plan to regain the privileged position for the armed forces.

Hungarian military leaders think of patriotic education as preparation for service. Therefore they think of every penny and minute spent on kids who are later not commissioned, as wasted. The Ministry of Defense has no published strategy for the development of civil-military relations.

In terms of the original political impetus of the “Honvédelmi Kötelék” program, it aimed to establish a mass organization similar to the former MHSZ, dealing with defense preparational training. As the head of department responsible for the implementation of the program, from the start of the program I intended to provide a scientific basis for the elements of the program, so the program itself and its experience can be considered a scientific experiment to prove whether such a program can be successfully implemented what conclusions can be drawn from the implementation. In the dissertation I analyze in detail the lessons and experiences of the



program, especially the experiences of the most successful element of the program, the secondary school defense competition system. Through this, I have proved in practice that a national defense competition system according to a unified theme can be established and maintained in the long run. The most important experience is that it is possible to organize national defense competitions in all counties according to a unified theme. This finding was preceded by nearly half a year of survey work, during which I reviewed which parts of the defense competitions of the 1980s survived in each region and in each formation. Thus, I proved the scientific hypothesis that the national defense competition system can be developed. It is also important that it is possible to increase the number of participating teams, as it is possible to receive approximately 30 competing teams at each location. It is important that in addition to the schools participating in the Military School program, it is necessary to build a live connection in other high schools as well.

In addition, I proved that the competition system can be reduced to the local (or educational district) level compared to the county level, thus making the competition system three levels (together with the national finals) and creating the possibility for all high schools in the country to participate in the competitions. The dissertation contains detailed statistics on the organization of competitions, which can be used in practice for those who want to organize such a competition. However, the description of the competition system is only a negligible part of the whole program. The most important part would be to arrange for students to prepare for the competitions in an organized way and within a defined organizational framework. The organization of the preparation and the regular education of the students would create the regular contact between the students and the army, by which the attachment in this direction can be substantially strengthened. This obviously requires orders of magnitude more resources and the much more active participation of the national defense subsystem than at present. Among the experiences of the Defense Forces program, these also appear in the dissertation, saying that these should be taken into account in the organizational development of the Honvédelmi Sportszövetség (Defense Sports Association - the legal successor of the program) in order for the development to be sufficiently effective.

Establishing Honvédelmi Sportszövetség was a huge achievement, but at the present stage of development the added value of the operations as compared to the initial idea cannot be seen. Nor can any significant added value be seen compared to the situation before. We still can state that it is possible to establish an organization that is within the area of responsibility of the

Ministry of Education and that deals with the patriotic and / or national defense education of the youth. The creation of such an organization has its own specific set of considerations, which I present in the dissertation. Of course, the model I have presented is not the only possible one, but I have proved in the dissertation that HS does not work according to this system of criteria today.

#### Findings related to the hypotheses of the educational subsystem

In the chapter on the education subsystem, I also carried out the following scientific results: I surveyed the patriotic education practice of Hungarian secondary schools with a questionnaire survey. A total of 842 responses were received from 1,443 secondary schools in Hungary. 100% of the responses received were evaluable, and none of the responses had to be excluded from the analysis due to self-contradiction or obvious frivolity. In the dissertation, I analyze the correlations between the answers and the hard variables characteristic of the respondents, and then I make a summary of the analysis. The results can be said to have confirmed the assumption that the relationship of Hungarian secondary schools with the army is very heterogeneous. There are very few high schools that have an ongoing and live relationship with an organization in the military. These are mainly the schools that participate in the Katonasuli (Military School) program. In the vast majority of schools, the principal recognizes that patriotic and defense education has all its significance, but is not fully aware of what and how they should do to advance the cause. Accordingly, the relationship of these schools with the army is contingent but could be developed.

I processed the content of a government proposal on public education and the process of its adoption in a case study, showing how changes in certain elements of patriotic education can be transferred to the subsystem of public education.

It is clear from research that the current education system is fundamentally based on the individual development of children, which does not support the goal of educating children to establish communities. The education system is not currently intended to create cooperative communities, so it should come as no surprise that these cooperative communities do not even exist.

The current education system deals with patriotic and national defense education as a goal in a completely contingent way. It is included as a horizontal goal in the curricula, however, there is no training or curriculum in the methodological training of teachers in terms of practical aspects.

There are two points in the education system that allow the state to intervene effectively in the system of patriotic education: one is the National Core Curriculum and the other is the system of teacher training. The two must happen together, otherwise one will extinguish the positive effect caused by the other. It should be noted that these effects can be measured at all over a period of 15-20 years, so their design should take this into account. The issue of teacher training, on the other hand, is basically a matter of training trainers, so it is also a matter of higher education.

Of course, partial reforms can be introduced in the education system. In the case study that is part of the dissertation, I present the measures along which school education in bare-handed martial arts and shooting, as two nationally important sports, can be introduced. I will show that this is possible if there is a good political will, but it can be implemented most effectively not from the defense subsystem but from the education subsystem.

#### Verification of the hypotheses related to Hungarian scouting

In the chapter on Hungarian Scouting, I present Hungarian Scouting. The sketchy history of Hungarian Scouting is suitable for the presentation of the training and trial system of Hungarian Scouting: I was the first to describe the latter in terms of military science, so it can be considered a new scientific result.

Hungarian Scouting as a movement and the Hungarian Scout Association as a social organization in Hungary, and the Forum of Hungarian Scout Associations and its member organizations worldwide operate a system suitable for achieving patriotic educational goals. Scouting performs this task on a voluntary basis, within the framework of non-governmental organizations, with minimal state support.

Given that the result of my research is that Scouting, although limited in capacity, achieves the desired educational goal by orders of magnitude more cost-effectively than the presented state subsystems. its cooperation in order for the Scouting to be able to carry out its educational activities in relation to several Hungarian children.

The training and trial system of the Hungarian Scouts fulfills all the goals that we have formulated in the previous chapters among the patriotic and national defense education goals and which have been declared as such goals by the state. Accordingly, Hungarian Scouting is especially suitable for achieving patriotic and national defense goals.

Scouting is a voluntary organization and it has its effectiveness. Accordingly, the high rate of direct financial support only worsens efficiency, however, ways can be found to further

improve the effectiveness of education through indirect support for the Scout movement. Perhaps the most effective of these is to provide them with the tools and real estate they need to operate as scouts. This is best achieved by discounting or free of charge camping equipment, equipment, and forests suitable for camping for the duration of the camps. In case these devices are identical in type to those operational in the Hungarian Armed Forces, scouts will be trained to use the devices in question, which can be greatly facilitated if necessary.

## Scientific achievements included in the dissertation

After confirming and refuting the hypotheses formulated at the beginning of the dissertation, I formulate the following scientific achievements in the dissertation:

1. I proved that within the governmental subsystem of national defense it is possible to create a national school competition system dealing with patriotic education, and the organization operating it, but the organization thus established will not develop organically into a mass organization with today's state and social system.
2. I have shown that in the system of Hungarian public education, the system of goals and means of community education, teamwork and thus patriotic education is pushed into the background, because it focuses primarily on the individual development of children.
3. I have proved that - although it is a very time-consuming and complicated process to prioritize the system of goals and means of patriotic education and to change the system of public education - today's negatively strengthening security processes necessitate such research and development.
4. I proved that apart from Hungarian Scouting, there is no initiative of similar quality in Hungary today, which puts the realization of patriotic educational goals at its focus.
5. I have shown that the training and trial system of the Hungarian Scouts fulfills all the goals declared by the state among the patriotic and national defense education goals, so it is especially suitable for the implementation of the patriotic and national defense education goals therefore it should be in the focus of civil-military relations.

## Recommendations

During my research work since 2013, I had the opportunity to get to know many areas of the state institutional system and public administration. Of course, I also used these experiences in the preparation of the dissertation.

I have shown that the system of tasks of patriotic education - if we consider it as a state task - belongs to the ministries responsible for both public education and national defense. The development of the formal framework is in any case the task of the public education subsystem, however, a significant part of the content elements and the elements showing the connection of patriotism with national defense can be added to the system by the experts of the Ministry responsible for national defense. I think the dissertation can be used to understand the connections between the national subsystems of national defense and public education. It can also be used well in the integration of educational content related to national defense into the public education system.

In my opinion, the chapter presenting Hungarian Scouting is suitable for experts in military science to better understand the essence of Hungarian Scouting. Within that, I also consider it very important for military science to be clear about the values of Hungarian Scouting in terms of national defense. I have shown what scouting can be used for and what it cannot be used for. I also showed where there are possible areas of cooperation that are useful for both national defense and Scouting. At the same time, it is important to see areas where cooperation is only seemingly in the interests of the parties, but may in fact be particularly harmful.

I personally consider the understanding of the essence of Scouting to be especially important for the issue of national defense, as we are talking about an area of social relations of the Armed Forces, which is currently untapped and has a very significant potential. This potential can be further expanded by further research in the areas of cooperation, by testing the proposals formulated in the dissertation and by processing the experiences for scientific purposes.

In summary, the scientific results formulated in the dissertation can, in my opinion, be used in practice for the current unit of the Ministry of Defense responsible for civil-military relations, and I am confident that the results of my work will be used in this field.

## Practical applicability of research results

The research results of the dissertation can be widely applied in practice in the following areas:

1. The practices described in the second chapter are in practice suitable for further planning the development of the system of national defense competitions. What is described there contains the experience of designing the competition system, which can be used as a basis for further development of the system.
2. The second chapter deals with organizational development, which contains the development aspects of patriotic education organizations. Taking these aspects into

account, the development of organizations engaged in such activities can be seriously promoted in practice.

3. The case study presented in the third chapter can be of help to theoreticians involved in patriotic education and its development on how to plan the practical implementation of development ideas and what to expect during the practical implementation.
4. The results of the questionnaire survey presented in the third chapter can help theoreticians and state decision-makers involved in patriotic education and its development to assess the current situation and establish the initial situation. In addition, as the survey covered institutions and their leaders, it can be used to develop teacher training.
5. The fourth chapter describes Hungarian Scouting, which can be of good service to state leaders and decision-makers and decision-makers involved in the development of the patriotic education system and the public education system who do not have their own experience of Hungarian Scouting. This description can also be an important reference for decision-makers who are planning collaborations with an organization in Hungarian scouting through their organizations.

## Relevant publications of the author

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## Professional-scientific biography of the submitter of the dissertation:

dr. Márton Lacsny

He was born in 1977 in Budapest

He made a scout vow in 1991

In 1994, he qualified as a patrol leader

He graduated from the Piarist High School in Budapest in 1996

He graduated in law in 2001 from Eötvös Loránd University

In 2005, he passed the bar exam

From 2010 he participated in the exploration of the fate of the MHSZ property as a government adviser to the Ministry of Public Administration and Justice

From 2012, he worked at the Ministry of Defense on the implementation of the Defense Forces program as the developer of the program and the head of the program office.

He started his doctoral studies at NKE HDI in 2013, where he graduated in 2018

Since 2014, he has been the head of the department of the Ministry of Human Resources and then the chief adviser. In this capacity, he participated in the elaboration of the Chancellery System for Higher Education, in the preparation of its impact studies, in the development of the common SAP system for higher education, in the introduction of the SAP and eCrete systems and in the preparation and coordination of the new National Core Curriculum.

In 2018, he qualified as a scoutmaster

From 2015 to 2021, he was the chairman of the supervisory board of the Hungarian Scout Association

In 2018-2019, he was a member of the Advisory Board of the NKE delegated by the Minister of EMMI

From 2019 he is the Deputy Secretary General of the Eötvös Loránd Research Network

Since September 2020, he has been the director of the National Data Asset Agency, then the National Data Economy Knowledge Center, and then a permanent expert.

She speaks advanced English and intermediate German

Married, father of two children