

Bulgarians' Motivation for Participation in Private Military Companies

Hristo Tutunarov, Ph.D.¹

Received: 14.12.2022
Available online: 28.04.2023

Abstract

Private military companies are becoming increasingly popular; their manpower is higher than the manpower of some national armies. Nevertheless, they still exist in the shadows and are often called “shadow armies”. Recently PMC have been participating in various military conflicts including the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. National armies are losing manpower because soldiers prefer to join private military companies. When such companies recruit staff internationally, they directly weaken the national armies because the PMC contractors are mostly ex-militaries and ex-police staff. PMCs could promote the interests of the countries from where they originate and there can be a strong link with the state despite the private nature of PMC. In this case, mercenaries contribute to the foreign policy of their own countries and their motivation is affected accordingly.

The article aims at outlining the motives of Bulgarian citizens to join international private military companies, thus shedding light on this underresearched problem. It is usually considered that PMC contractors' motives are mostly related to profit. However, there are other strong motivations that need examination. It is argued that their motivation depends on both personal characteristics, as well as on the environmental factors (social, economic, political) in contractors' state of origin.

Keywords: PMC (private military companies), contractors, military motivation, mercenaries.
JEL: N40, F51, F52, F22

¹ Senior assistant professor, State University of Library Studies and Information Technologies, Sofia, e-mail address: h.tutunarov@unibit.bg

Introduction

Private armies or private military companies (PMCs) are a remarkable phenomenon that owes its existence to the transformations of the global security environment, including international political attitudes. The emergence of PMCs is a consequence of the growth of conflicts after the end of the Cold War, the globalization processes, the development of technological and communication processes, negative public attitudes towards the use of national armies in foreign military missions, the hybridization of war, combined with the growing use of proxy wars and the expansion of grey areas. These have led to a sharp increase in the use of private military companies. Globalization has expanded the influence of the private sector and international companies while the expansion of proxy conflicts is indicative of the increase of indirect aggressive confrontation between states. These are situations when two countries are at war with each other, but on the territory of a third country. The use of PMC in such scenarios is almost mandatory nowadays. The increasing conflicts are usually of the grey zone conflict type. Grey zone conflicts constitute an increasingly popular model for conducting aggressive external politics. Grey zones are intended to circumvent international legal norms because it is difficult to establish whether there is a state of peace or war. In such conflicts, the open (official) use of governmental structures is not advisable and hence PMCs are usually used. Consequently, PMCs have multiplied significantly as they are now involved in many all armed conflicts all over the planet. As Sean McFate writes, "Private force has become big business, and global in scope. No one truly knows how many billions of dollars slosh around this illicit market. All we know is that business is booming. Recent years have seen major mercenary activity in Yemen, Nigeria, Ukraine, Syria, and Iraq. Many of these for-profit warriors outclass local militaries, and a few can even stand up to America's most elite forces, as the battle in Syria shows" (McFate, 2019: 2).

Private military companies are a modern type of mercenaries. Curiously, mercenaries are older than the national armies. Indeed, it was not state armies but mercenary units that were the first armed structures in the world, frequently used by many countries in different centuries. In the early 20th century, mercenaries were not popular and were rarely used. They had average abilities and average equipment. About 30 years ago there was 1 mercenary for every 50 soldiers. Since the Cold War, we have witnessed a high escalation of non-state actors on battlefields worldwide. The rapid growth of PMCs began after the 1997 creation of the PMC Blackwater in the United States. PMCs provide private military services around the world and use modern mercenary contractors. In the last decades PMCs are growing exponentially in number – companies are being created in the US, Europe, Africa, China, Russia. They become highly skilled, with advanced weapons and equipment, and can perform a wide range of tasks, from static security to anti-terrorist missions. States outsource military tasks to private companies because they are very effective and fast, sometimes they need less funding than the national armies and they can perform tasks that national armies cannot because of the international law (Pałka, 2020).

„PMCs are agencies employed by government forces to undertake security work that the state is unable or does not want to do it itself. These companies and their employees are paid lucrative amounts of money to operate as independent and private security contractors. However, PMCs operate in a legal vacuum. These companies are often given immunity by the state with which they are operating, have no legal responsibilities to the foreign government which enlists their services, nor is the company responsible to the country in which it is registered. Essentially, PMCs are only responsible to their shareholders. (...) Some may argue that PMCs are actually modern-day mercenaries and therefore are bound by the rules of engagement under the 1977 Additional Protocol to the Geneva Convention. Article 47 states that mercenaries are allowed to be neither combatants nor prisoners of war (Protocol, 1977). However, it could be argued that contractors at PMCs are not mercenaries and that they have a much broader involvement in conflict. They will claim that they are not in direct hostilities and in the event that they do engage in warfare, it is only defensive actions. If this is true, there is no law directly governing the actions of PMCs“ (Monash LSS, 2019).

According to Article 47 of the *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions* of 12 August 1949, mercenaries are people that are „specially recruited locally or abroad in order to fight in an armed conflict; does, in fact, they take a direct part in the hostilities; are motivated to take part in the hostilities essentially by the desire for private gain and, in fact, is promised, by or on behalf of a Party to the conflict, material compensation substantially in excess of that promised or paid to combatants of similar ranks and functions in the armed forces of that Party; are neither a national of a Party to the conflict nor a resident of territory controlled by a Party to the conflict; are not a member of the armed forces of a Party to the conflict; and has not been sent by a State which is not a Party to the conflict on official duty as a member of its armed forces“ (Protocol, 1977). Most PMCs are legal and usually operate under a contract by a state or an international organization. However, if a PMC has performed wrongly, for example by killing civilians or committing embargo violations, it would not be the state to take responsibility, but the private company (Pałka, 2020).

By using PMC, states have a new and powerful instrument for their foreign policy. Mercenaries are forbidden by international law, however PMC are legal in many countries, and they can legally hire mercenaries, i.e. contractors. Significantly, PMCs recruit contractors mostly internationally. For example, in Afghanistan the USA used a lot of American PMC with many non-American contractors. This way Americans cannot be killed in this conflict and American society cannot hold accountable the state administration for this foreign policy. Every state has its own legislation about the participation of its citizens in different military or paramilitary organizations.

PMCs, on their part, are primarily international. They operate on the territory of different countries, and they are part of most of the existing military conflicts. They can perform different tasks such as providing security, body guarding, securing intelligence, sea security, transportation in risk areas, escort in risk areas, military operations, border and customs control and security, sapper work, engineering work, etc. PMCs are private and everyone

can use their services. States are usually their employers via the ministry of defence or the intelligence agencies. Hence, employing PMCs represents a kind of military outsourcing. Private military companies operate on each continent except Antarctica.

Private military companies and the state

Greater and more powerful and influential countries “own” PMCs for which many international contractors work. Nowadays, some states create and use PMCs, while others hire them or supply them with employees (contractors). States hire a PMC when they need fast and effective military support. Alternatively, PMCs are hired to provide training to states’ national military or police forces. The latter is due to the high levels of professionalism, flexibility, experience and effectiveness of PMC. Not least is the fact that by using a PMC, states can transfer the responsibility of their actions to the private company which is rather useful in cases when something goes wrong and the hiring state can blame the hired PMC and deny responsibility.

Thus, on the one hand, the PMCs’ abilities to avoid some aspects of the international law make them a rather effective tool for the states. On the other hand, by using them the states cannot lose reputation. Additional argument for hiring PMC is that oftentimes local communities would perceive foreign army personnel as occupational forces even if they are on a peacekeeping mission. The tolerance of local communities might be higher to forces of PMCs. Moreover, sometimes a PMC can employ some local fighters as contractors which would not be possible for a national army. The high capability of PMCs makes them perfect for all kinds of tasks and often they provide military services and at the same time training to local forces. Because of the international profile of the contractors, they rarely show antagonism to local people and that makes them better professionals. However, there are reported cases for contractors that act very violently and aggressively.

There is another important advantage of PMCs – national publics do not approve of national soldiers dying in foreign conflicts outside the national borders. This is related to the belief that soldiers must be used to protect the state and its people and not for any other political or economic reasons. By employing PMCs and contractors, the states do not use soldiers from the national army. Thus if there are deaths, they are deaths of contractors and not of national soldiers and the public at home would not stage protests. Even when the contractors are from the same state as the PMC and/or when there is a direct connection between the state and the PMC, the state still could not be held responsible because the contractors do not work for the state but for a private company. While the contractors’ job can be considered as riskier than the soldiers’ work, it is at the same time better paid.

In recent decades the use of contractors has been growing significantly. For example, from 2007 to 2009, the number of contractors in Iraq grew by 140% from 5,481 to 13,232 people. In Afghanistan, the figures are even more shocking – for only one year (2009) the contractors increased from 3,184 to 10,117 or by 236%. The increase in the number of PMCs is also indicative of the increase of contractor’s job offers. Against this general picture, it

is important to study the motivation of contractors to work for PMCs and particularly the motives of Bulgarians to participate as contractors in PMCs.

The motivation to become a soldier and a contractor

Conventional wisdom is that the main reason for a person to serve in the army or the police is the desire to serve his/her own country; it is related to patriotism and duty. Certainly, there are other reasons too, some of them not necessarily noble. Motivation can stem from desire for authority or power over “ordinary” people, owning a firearm that brings added self-confidence, wearing a uniform which could be perceived as a kind of fetish. Working as a police officer or in the military gives the opportunity to legally use violence, which is a unique characteristic of these professions. Not least, these professions are generally well-paid with different benefits, and are perceived as a vocation and honour. Research by Grigorov and Spirodinov about the motivation of Bulgarians that choose a military career in Bulgaria shows interesting results. Some 56% of the surveyed soldiers are satisfied with their service in the army, while about 35% of the respondents had not have a clear idea of their job before they began working in the army. This is not a specifically Bulgarian issue, but in Bulgaria it is particularly poignant. Because of insufficient relevant information, motivation for working in the army and the police builds on primarily romantic ideas, and not on awareness of the nature of this type of work (Grigorov and Spiridonov, 2018).

A study of American soldiers’ motivation to join the army reveals that the reasons to join the army can be divided into two groups – institutional and occupational reasons. One of the key findings of the study is that among the strongest motivations of a person to join the army is the family tradition. Additionally, various factors affect soldiers’ intent to (re)enlist, such as family concerns, injuries, promotions, civilian opportunities, and the likelihood of deploying to war. The majority of soldiers believed their Army service would help them find future work. The occupational values are defined by self-interest motivations related also to salary and benefits. The conclusions are that the most important institutional motivators for Americans to join the army are “call to serve” and “family history”, the most important occupational reasons are: “adventure/travel and benefits” (Helmus et al., 2018: 28). Another survey revealed that majority of contractors would not be motivated primarily by financial gain but rather “by a desire to “face and meet new challenges” and to “help others” (Schaub and Franke, 2009: 100).

Based on these studies, it can be concluded that the motives to join the army in the USA and in Bulgaria are rather similar with the exception of salary and benefits. In Bulgaria the budget of Bulgarian Ministry of Defence as a percentage of the GDP cannot be compared to that of its American counterpart. Low level of salaries in the Bulgarian army has a direct and indirect impact on the motivation of Bulgarians to become private military contractors. However, apart from that the motives seem alike.

Usually, the contractors first want to be soldiers and after that they start to desire to become contractors. Franke Volker and Marc von Boemcken have conducted a survey with more than 200 contractors and published the results in the report "Guns for Hire: Motivations and Attitudes of Private Security Contractors". The profile of the respondents (200 contractors) is rather specific since they are all former police officers. Contractors are generally ex-military, some police officers and sometimes civilians who have completed different military courses. There are reported cases when PMCs have also hired local extremists to help them with certain tasks. A number of motives were tested in that particular survey such as patriotism, warriorism, Machiavellianism, social dominance orientation, masculinity, job engagement, etc. The results reveal that the main reason to join a PMC is financial. Private companies pay more than the regular armies for the same job and for the same military rank. But there are also other motivators to join the PMC (Franke and Boemcken, 2011).

At the beginning of the expansion of PMCs around the globe, among the contractors there were people with low morality that did not fit in the national armies, but they had good skills in tactics and violence. They found an opportunity through the PMCs to do what they could and liked and for good money, and also without the principles, restrictions and rules in the regular armies. Subsequently, throughout the years, participation in the PMCs has become more widespread as a real profession. The PMCs significantly expanded their services and structures, as both the UN and the EU have begun to use them. On the other hand, PMCs also work under secret contracts for various governments.

A large part of the respondents shared an income-related motivation, and also a desire for adventure and new emotions. Most respondents were male (97%), 77.5% were white-skinned and 77% were married. All had completed at least high school, and 15% had higher education. The average length of service of the respondents in the PMC was under 5 years and 60% did not expect to enter into direct combat, nearly 93% believed that war was sometimes necessary to protect a country's national interest. Some 77% of them believed that the main role of an army was to prepare for conducting military operations. Hence, other types of jobs and tasks must be performed by non-army structures like PMCs and others. Almost all (96%) of the surveyed contractors accepted their work for the PMC as their patriotic duty (when the PMCs are from the same state and the state hires the PMC). It is important to emphasize the last point because PMCs often operate/fight for interests which have nothing to do with the interests of the contractors' states. Also 62% of the respondents believe that a person should first work for their home country for a few years and then work outside it (in PMC or otherwise) and 83.4% believed that a citizen should be able to fight for his/her country. Over 80% believed that patriotism should play a key role in children's education (Franke and Boemcken, 2011).

According to Alison Hawks, contractors die 4.5 times more than regular soldiers, which means that in this type of job people are pushed to the limit of their own capabilities. This is directly related to the motivation in its "desire for adventure" aspect. Among contractors' motivation, desire for adventures undoubtedly play role and the reasons behind that are

rather complex. The contractors face the same problems and illnesses as the national army soldiers: post-traumatic stress, depression, suicidal thoughts, alcoholism, etc. Many of them suffer severe physical injuries during their work as contractors, and the care they receive in civilian life after the job is done is not at the best level possible. Contrary to the PMC critics' opinions, Alison Hawks argues that financial motivation cannot by itself explain why individuals become security contractors. Hawks argues that "to understand military veterans-turned-private security contractors, two things are more important than motive alone. The first is the 'environmental continuity' security contracting provides by way of operational environment, language and similar experience of peers; and the experience the individual seeks by way of becoming a security contractor" (Hawks, 2013).

For example, in the military conflict that broke out between Ukraine and Russia, many contractors from different countries have joined the fighting on the side of Ukraine. Some might be very well-paid by foreign companies, respectively supported by foreign countries. Others are joining the conflict as simple volunteers in the International Legion of Defence of Ukraine (ILDU). The salaries and conditions in ILDU are the same as in the Ukrainian army, which could imply that many foreign contractors work in low standards and for lower salaries by joining ILDU (compared to those of PMCs). Nevertheless, foreign contractors join for other reasons. One American contractor in Ukraine shared that he believed in what Ukraine was fighting for and wanted to be part of it "to contain it there, so it didn't come here" (Jones, 2022).

The PMCs give the contractors the possibility to work for causes that their country cannot offer or cannot provide officially, but a PMC could. Contractors can also choose among a lot of job opportunities, which is not possible within the frame of a national army. Moreover, in PMCs contractors have more freedom and this should not be underestimated when analysing contractors' motivation. For instance, working as a contractor gives a greater choice of deployments while regular soldiers cannot freely choose which conflict to take part in. This is also a serious motivator for choosing to be a PMC contractor (Barnett et al., 2022). In the current situation, with the war between Russia and Ukraine, it could be assumed that the antagonism towards Russia also had a serious impact as a motive for participation of Westerns contractors, especially given the fact that the conditions of the contractors' work in Ukraine are worse than those contractors traditionally are used to. This is so not only because of the higher risks on the field, but also the lack of safety in the bases, poor living conditions and food.

According to the sociologist C. Wright Mills (quoted in Hawks, 2013), the motives are "fluid and flexible, influenced by the individual's environment" and they depend on the individual character of each person and the environment in which that person lives. The environment is a key element when we are trying to define and understand contractors' motivation. Therefore, we have to analyse the environment in Bulgaria if we want to understand what motivates Bulgarians to become private military contractors.

The motivation of Bulgarian contractors

In the period February–August, 2022, a survey was conducted by means of in-depth interviews with 20 Bulgarian contractors (17 are ex-militaries, 2 are from ex-special police units and 1 who did not serve previously in the army or the police). The questionnaire included 20 open-ended questions, and additional questions were asked based on the answers. The results reveal that contractors with Bulgarian citizenship are driven by the classical motivation that can be found in contractors with a different nationality and especially Western contractors. At the same time, they are also motivated by specific factors that are related to life in Bulgaria. Usually, people conclude that the motivation of the contractors, including Bulgarian contractors, is purely financial, but the overall motivation is shaped by various factors. The financial aspect is not the only leading factor for the participation of Bulgarians in PMCs, even though Bulgaria is the country with the worst economy in the EU. We can say that the Bulgarian emigration is driven by the same motivation as the Bulgarian military contractors – better professional realization and opportunities for professional development, better urban and social environment and, certainly, larger salaries. What makes the difference is that when on a leave from working for PMCs, Bulgarian contractors live in Bulgaria and spend their salaries against lower living standards. Usually, the contractors' schedule is based on the formula "two months working and then one month resting".

A significant difference that emerges from a comparative analysis of the motivation of contractors from other countries and contractors with Bulgarian citizenship is the fact that it can happen that other contractors serve in PMCs originating from their home countries while Bulgarian contractors can serve in only PMCs created in other countries. Given the fact that PMCs often might implement the foreign policy of the country of their origin, the contractors themselves appear to be sub-executors of the will of their states. Hence, they can be contractors and patriots at the same time, although they do not serve in their national armies (patriotism being one of the strongest motives for serving in the army). This is unattainable in the case of Bulgarian contractors, since there is no PMC originating from Bulgaria. Accordingly, through their work for PMCs, contractors from Bulgarian origin cannot have the satisfaction of serving their nation and implementing their country's policy. Still, there are chances the PMC to take on tasks that are in the spirit of the interests and foreign policy of the country of the contractors, which implicitly might relate to patriotic motives of contractors so that they are not (self)perceived as pure mercenaries.

Particular attention should be paid to the fact that the main reason for the Bulgarians to become PMCs' contractors is the opportunity to develop professionally. This is indicative of their dissatisfaction with the available opportunities for professional development in the army or the police in Bulgaria. One of the respondents shared that for him/her working for the Bulgarian army would practically lead to the loss of his/her abilities and this is the major reason to become a contractor. It can be said that the revealed dissatisfaction also confirms that people might have unrealistic and idealized ideas of the service in the power

structures, which applies also to the Bulgarian army and police. Hence, because of their dissatisfaction with the security structures people seek different career paths. Indicatively, 18 of the respondents (90%) are generally not satisfied with their job as soldiers or police officers in Bulgaria. One of the main reasons pointed out is the unfair treatment in these structures where some people enjoy unfair privileges based on activities that are not directly related to the job aspects. The people with privileges may work or train less, their professional performance may be worse, but still they would get promotions and bigger salaries. In addition, as many as 16 of the respondents (80%) believe that they do not receive modern and adequate professional education and training from the state, while 14 respondents (70%) think that they do not work with good weapons and equipment because of corruption in the state. Some 60% believe that by serving in the Bulgarian army they do not necessarily serve the state's interest. Altogether 70% of the interviewed contractors are looking for more dynamic work, more adventurous tasks and want to feel like "true soldiers". In other words, in Bulgaria they do not see good opportunities to develop their capabilities, and to apply their skills and expertise.

Having said that, it should be noted that some contractors are motivated also by the fact that the units they work for are elite ("the best of the best"). And to be the best, one needs to have a lot of factors in place, some of which should presumably be provided by the state. Such people are demotivated when people with average capabilities get places in special units or receive awards that they do not deserve. In general, it can be said that a large part of the soldiers become contractors due to disappointment with the Bulgarian army. There are people in Bulgaria who want to develop as soldiers but the conditions force them to choose different profession or become contractors. As contractors, they can at least develop themselves professionally.

Not least on the list of motives is the ambition to test yourself and to investigate one's own limits. These are people who seek to challenge themselves seriously. In that respect being a private military contractor poses a greater challenge than serving as a soldier in the Bulgarian army. On that account the motivation of the American and Bulgarian citizens to become private military contractors shows certain similarities. The conclusion would be that the Bulgarian state cannot develop the military profession as an attractive one. Hence, there are Bulgarians with a strong motivation to advance professionally as soldiers. However, due to the problems in the Bulgarian army, such Bulgarians tend to seek professional accomplishment in private military companies, rather than in the army.

To sum up, the reasons for dissatisfaction with the service in the Bulgarian army as a professional career are: outdated training methodology, outdated equipment, lack of opportunities for professional development, bad and unfair attitude and injustice, various manifestations of corruption, etc. Corruption stands out as a serious problem. Soldiers witness that the state spends a significant amount of money on equipment but because of corruption they still get inadequate equipment for the price that has been paid for it. Those are the main reasons why soldiers leave the Bulgarian army and join the private military companies.

Certainly, there are also financial motives. However, problems in the army are the first ones to be mentioned as motivation for becoming PMCs' contractors and only then come the financial reasons. In terms of financial motives, higher payment is the direct financial motive, while the low budget of the army seems to be an indirect one. The low budget does not allow for high-quality equipment, weapons and training and thus makes the military profession unattractive. Consequently, candidates for the army do not usually come with best physical or intellectual qualities. Thus, when a highly motivated person joins the army, oftentimes s/he is faced with peers of less motivation and capacities (this is also due to the lower salaries). And the better soldiers would like to work in professionally better teams. What is more, joining the army does not seem to be very prestigious in Bulgaria. In the eyes of the general public, the Bulgarian army is not an attractive employer. Rather, it is seen as an redundant structure that only costs taxpayers' money. Its fighting abilities are seriously doubted, despite the fact that it might be performing well internationally.

For the sake of truth, there are high-quality professionals in the Bulgarian army and some of divisions are up-to-date. However, as a whole the Bulgarian army needs modernization and reforms. Its insufficient modernization leads to a serious outflow of candidates for professional career in the army. In the last 20 years, vacant positions in the army have increased and the military have lowered the minimum requirements for the different jobs in the army. In an attempt to reverse somewhat these negative trends the Ministry of Defence (during the mandate of Krasimir Karakachanov as Minister of defence in 2017-2021) launched the "Be a Soldier" campaign. It aimed to change the public attitude towards the army and raise its authority and prestige. The campaign produced very good results. Nevertheless the problems in the army have pertained. In recent years, the army has been attracting more people precisely because of their wish to become PMCs' contractors since PMC require prior military experience.

Conclusion

Bulgarian contractors choose PMCs because there they believe they can better develop their capabilities and enjoy a more professional treatment. Similarly to their Western counterparts, they prefer to work for PMCs because of the greater choice PMCs provide as to where to work, which is very limited in the national armies. They perceived the work in PMCs as more risky compared to that in the army, and yet as safer when it comes to equipment, weapons and teamwork. Contractors believe that their work and efforts are held at higher esteem in the PMCs than among the Bulgarian military and consider their job more prestigious. The dynamics of life in the PMCs is high, which also attracts contractors of a more adventurous nature. Typically, after spending a few years in the PMC, contractors become "addicted" to this type of work and to the higher income, and find it hard to quit. When they are not working as contractors and they are at home in Bulgaria, some of them are instructors in different PMC courses in the country and their appearance in full equipment and professional aura makes other Bulgarians to want to become contractors

too. It could be expected that the number of Bulgarians opting for work in PMCs would increase as military training courses held in Sofia, Plovdiv and Gabrovo are becoming increasingly popular.

References

- Barnett, L., Karsen, F. and Castro, P.A. (2022). "U.S. Private Military Contractor Killed in Ukraine". In: *DBA Attorney Blog* at Barnett, Lerner, Karsen, Frankel, & Castro, P.A. Attorneys at Law. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.injuredoverseas.com/u-s-private-military-contractor-killed-in-ukraine/> (last visited December, 2022).
- Efflandt, S.L. (2014). „Military Professionalism & Private Military Contractors“. In: *Parameters*, Vol. 44/Number 2 (Summer, 2014), pp. 49-60. DOI:10.55540/0031-1723.2884. [Online]. Available at: <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2884&context=parameters> (last viewed December, 2022).
- Franke, V. and von Boemcken, M. (2011). "Guns for Hire: Motivations and Attitudes of Private Security Contractors". In: *Armed Forces & Society*, vol. 37, issue 4. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095327X11412913>
- Grigorov, G. and Spiridonov, S. (2018). "Research on the Motivation for Choosing the Military Career". In: *International conference KNOWLEDGE-BASED ORGANIZATION 24(1)*, June 2018, pp: 302-307. DOI:10.1515/kbo-2018-0048
- Hawks, A. (2013). "Why becoming a Private Security Contractor cannot be explained by motivation" [Online]. Available at: <https://www.strifeblog.org/2013/11/07/why-individuals-become-private-security-contractors/> (last visited December 2022).
- Helmus, T., Zimmerman, R., Posard, M., Wheeler, J., Ogletree, C., Stroud, Q. and Harrell, M. (2018). "Life as a Private: A Study of the Motivations and Experiences of Junior Enlisted Personnel in the U.S. Army". Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. [Online]. Available at: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2252.html (last visited, December 2022).
- Jones, D. (2022). "A former U.S. Marine was killed fighting in Ukraine, his family says". NPR (April 29, 2022). [Online]. Available at: <https://www.npr.org/2022/04/29/1095623383/marine-veteran-killed-fighting-in-ukraine> (last visited December, 2022).
- McFate, S. (2019). "Mercenaries and War: Understanding Private Armies Today". National Defense University Press / News (Dec. 4, 2019). [Online]. Available at: <https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/Article/2031922/mercenaries-and-war-understanding-private-armies-today/> (last visited December, 2022).
- Monash LSS (2019). "The Legal Ambiguity Surrounding Private Military Companies". Monash Law Student Society, Post (May 3, 2019, updated Feb 9, 2021). [Online]. Available at: <https://www.monashlss.com/post/the-legal-ambiguity-surrounding-private-military-companies> (last visited December, 2022).

- Pałka, W. (2020). *The Awakening of Private Military Companies*. Special Report. Warsaw Institute (20/08/2020). [Online]. Available at: <https://warsawinstitute.org/awakening-private-military-companies/> (last visited December 2022).
- Protocol (1977). Article 47 "Mercenaries" of the *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions* of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977. [Online]. Available at: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/api-1977/article-47> (last visited December, 2022).
- Schaub Jr., G. and Franke, V. (2009). "Contractors as Military Professionals?". In: *Parameters: US Army War College* 39.4 (2009), pp. 88-104. [Online]. Available at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1024&context=facpubs> (last visited December, 2022).