



**European Organisation
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EUROMIL Statement on Pensions

“Full-time professional members of the armed forces should be entitled to an adequate retirement pension ...”¹

The European Organisation of Military Associations (EUROMIL) is an umbrella organisation composed of 39 military associations and trade unions from 26 countries. It is the main Europe-wide forum for cooperation among professional military associations on issues of common concern. EUROMIL strives to secure and advance the human rights, fundamental freedoms and socio-professional interests of military personnel of all ranks in Europe and promotes the concept of “Citizen in Uniform”. As such, a soldier is entitled to the same rights and obligations as any other citizen. EUROMIL particularly calls for recognition of the right of servicemen and -women to form and join trade unions and independent associations and for their inclusion in a regular social dialogue by the authorities.

During EUROMIL’s Presidium Meetings and throughout the national reports delivered six-monthly by our member associations, our particular attention has been drawn on the ubiquitous and profound changes in the field of (military) pensions. EUROMIL understands that the financial and economic crisis pushed governments to take some initiatives to keep the state budget healthy or at least survive the toughest period. But EUROMIL always was and still is convinced that retired soldiers should continue to be treated in a way to keep their living conditions on the same level as during their active serving period. It is unacceptable to reduce pensions suchlike that retired soldiers and the members of their families have to abandon their most basic needs such as health care, other basic care or the participation in social activities. The right to an adequate retirement pension is one of the elements of the Recommendation CM/Rec (2010) 4 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on ‘Human rights of members of the armed forces’ and as such accepted by all member states of the Council of Europe.

Since several years, EUROMIL has been remarking that soldiers pay twice for this crisis. We share the efforts that every citizen is making, but we pass for a second time at the pay desk as members of the armed forces. More than any other, our institution ‘the defence forces’ and our military profession are influenced by this crisis. And once again, this has a negative influence on retired soldiers, because several European pension systems base the calculation of their retirement pension on the payment scheme of active serving soldiers.

Pension system is one of the basic elements of a military career that should be discussed between the Government and representatives of military personnel. Pension systems are inextricably linked with the active career and should therefore be treated with due attention and commitment.

¹ Art 65 of the Recommendation CM/Rec (2010) 4 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on ‘Human rights of members of the armed forces’