

CZECH REPUBLIC

1. OVERALL NUMBERS

The Czech Republic has a population of 10.3 million inhabitants. In 2007, the armed forces military personnel strength was 24,700; the target number 26,200 is to be reached by the end of 2009. As for the Usability initiative, from the land force strength 11,233, the deployable personnel was 5,797 (51.6%), and the sustainable personnel was 1,000 (8.9%). The Czech Republic intends to gradually increase the deployability of its land forces with the aim of reaching 60% in 2014.

2. RESOURCES

The defence expenditure share on GDP was 1.56% in 2007 (2 billion EUR). Expenditure on operations went up representing nearly 4% of defence expenditure in 2007 (7.4 MEUR). The 4% level will be maintained in the following years. The Czech Republic's share on NATO civilian and military budgets represented 0.89%.

3. OPERATIONS IN 2007

In 2007, CZE deployment averaged approximately 820 land force personnel in operations, of which 670 were land forces in NATO-led operations, and 150 in non-NATO operations

- The Czech Republic has maintained its most numerous military presence in the Western Balkans region having roughly 500 personnel in the field. Contribution to KFOR continued within Multinational Task Force-Centre and included deployment of a reserve company during the 2007 autumn Kosovo parliamentary elections, and a 9-month deployment of 2 medium transport helicopters. A Czech platoon participated until the end of June 2007 in the EU operation ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina; since then, the CZE involvement in ALTHEA has been 4 officers at HQ EUFOR in Sarajevo.
- In Afghanistan, the Czech Republic maintained its military presence at the level of approx. 220 personnel. Its ISAF contribution at the Kabul International Airport (around 100 personnel) included leading role of Field Hospital and leading role in the CBRN area. Further, a Special Operations Group of the Military Police (around 35 personnel) was serving in the South of the country and a Force Protection Unit (around 85 personnel) in the North within the German-led Provincial Reconstruction Team.
- The Czech Republic has continued to contribute to the stability of Iraq with around 100 personnel. CZE provided three military instructors for NTM-I in Baghdad and force protection of a British base in the South of the country within the Multinational Forces – Iraq (MNF-I).
- In addition, up to 15 military observers were serving in UN peacekeeping missions.

Operations – Further Ambitions

The Czech Republic plans to maintain at least the current level of its contributions to NATO operations. As the ongoing armed forces transformation achieves further steps, the Czech Republic will strengthen qualitative aspects of its contributions:

- In Afghanistan, this includes an establishment of a Provincial Reconstruction Team in the Loghar province in 2008 and plans to deploy three medium transport helicopters under ISAF in 2009. In 2008, in connection with the Czech donation of 12 helicopters, CZE will deploy up to 10 specialists within a new OMLT to train ANA air and ground personnel. CZE also intends to contribute approx. 60 personnel to the NLD-led PRT in Uruzgan in the second half of 2008. The overall presence in Afghanistan is mandated to increase to 415 personnel in 2008.
- The Czech Republic also plans a 4-month deployment of Gripen aircraft to conduct the NATO Air Policing mission over the Baltic States in 2009.

4. STANDBY FORCES

The NATO Response Force represents an important vehicle driving Czech Armed Forces transformation. In 2007, the Czech Republic contributed to the NRF rotations predominantly with CBRN capabilities being the lead nation for the NATO Multinational CBRN Battalion with 400 personnel within the NRF-8 rotation (first half of 2007).

In line with its active involvement in the ESDP, the Czech Republic plans to act as the lead nation of the CZE-SVK EU Battlegroup in the second half of 2009 – the Czech part will consist of 1,000 to 1,200 personnel drawn from a pool of up to 2,500 personnel.

The Czech Republic has also offered 50 personnel for the UN Standby Arrangement System.

NRF Ambitions

For the future NRF rotations, the Czech Republic intends to provide significant contributions of balanced capabilities. The major ambition with regard to the NRF is that all types of deployable units, declared in the national response to the NATO Defence Planning Questionnaire, should be gradually committed to the NRF. The Czech Republic plans to respect the (not consensually agreed) 1.45 % share of the overall NRF personnel strength over the following six years (approx. 362 personnel on average per NRF rotation).

For up-to-date information on current deployments see: www.army.cz