**New scheme aims to help Czech veterans re-enter workforce**

12/17/2018



[https://english.radio.cz/new-scheme-aims-help-czech-veterans-re-enter-workforce-8143262?\_gl=1\*1bm257p\*\_up\*MQ..\*\_ga\*NjI0NDMwNzkxLjE2ODU5MDc0MzQ.\*\_ga\_NHXTP7RWNV\*MTY4NTkwNzQzMy4xLjAuMTY4NTkwNzczNi4wLjAuMA](https://english.radio.cz/new-scheme-aims-help-czech-veterans-re-enter-workforce-8143262?_gl=1*1bm257p*_up*MQ..*_ga*NjI0NDMwNzkxLjE2ODU5MDc0MzQ.*_ga_NHXTP7RWNV*MTY4NTkwNzQzMy4xLjAuMTY4NTkwNzczNi4wLjAuMA)..

A novel database featuring thousands of companies has been created to help Czech soldiers secure jobs when they leave the army. Around 800 soldiers depart the force every year and for some it can be difficult to find their feet in the jobs market once they return to civvy street.

The Czech Army has been fully professional since the beginning of 2005, when a long tradition of compulsory military service was brought to an end.

At present the army has over 24,000 soldiers, with around 800 leaving every year.

Jiří Kašpárek signed up at 19 and, after serving in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Kosovo, eventually decided to try something else. He spoke to Czech Radio.

*“I found myself in a situation where I didn’t want to continue for personal reasons. I decided to make the change. I had served for 25 years. I was at an age where I could start again so I decided to leave, voluntarily. But if you work for one firm for 25 years, it’s not so easy to make the change.”*

Now the Ministry of the Interior and the Czech Confederation of Industry have teamed up to create a database of companies offering jobs to former soldiers.

The minister of defence, ANO nominee Lubomír Metnar, described the scheme.

*“Things will be much easier for modern-day soldiers who have returned from international missions. They will have access to a database of over 11,000 companies. Depending on their fields of expertise, they will be able to find a position that suits them.”*

The president of the Confederation of Industry, Jaroslav Hanák, told Czech Radio that veterans could be suited to employment in fields such as transport, energy or the auto industry.

*“We post job offers in individual regions on a website. Then it depends on their experience. They may have been clerks who worked in an office or the military staff, military vehicles drivers, or paratroopers who are in great shape physically.”*

Eduard Stehlik is the head of the Ministry of Defence department that oversees veterans’ affairs. He said ex-soldiers had a lot to offer.

*“There are people who have served in the army for 15 or 20 years. During that time they have driven millions of kilometres with heavy gear. They’re capable of reorientation to road haulage, working cranes, in construction – to the kind of heavy machinery that is used in the army. They have so much experience. But they have to undergo basic courses to receive the papers they need in the civilian world.”*

As well as the new database, former soldiers can also draw on dozens of existing retraining courses offered by the Czech Army.

Author: [Ian Willoughby](https://english.radio.cz/ian-willoughby-8044289)