

## Chapter 14 – MILITARY-CIVILIAN PERSONNEL SURVEY (MCPS): CROSS-NATIONAL QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

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Several open-ended questions were included in the Military-Civilian Personnel Survey (MCPS) in order to complement the quantitative information gathered using the closed-ended survey items. These open-ended questions allowed personnel to express their attitudes, perceptions, and experiences related to military-civilian personnel collaboration and integration using their own words. Six of the participating nations administered the open-ended questions, including Canada, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden, Estonia, and New Zealand.

### 14.1 METHODOLOGY

#### 14.1.1 Open-Ended Questions

Three open-ended questions were included in the MCPS. These questions inquired about the views of personnel with respect to working in an integrated military-civilian environment. More specifically, the questions asked respondents to identify the most important factors for establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian personnel work culture and relations, the challenges they experienced working in a military-civilian environment, and what they viewed to be the main advantages of working in a military-civilian environment. The specific open-ended questions are provided in Table 14-1.

**Table 14-1: Open-Ended Questions Included in the Military-Civilian Personnel Survey.**

Question Number	Question
1	What do you consider to be the most important factors in establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian personnel work culture and relations?
2	What are the main challenges you experience in working in a mixed military-civilian work environment?
3	What are the positive aspects to working in a mixed military-civilian work environment?

#### **14.1.2 Qualitative Analyses and Coding Responses**

For each of the three open-ended questions, the responses were coded into categories using pre-established coding schemes [1], [2]. The coding scheme for each question had 12 to 14 themes or categories. Complex responses, which pertained to multiple themes, were coded under all pertinent categories. All responses deemed to be unrelated to the initial question were coded as “Not Applicable” (N/A). Comments that were idiosyncratic or unique and could not be aggregated into a single category and that did not clearly fit with the existing categories in the coding scheme were coded as “Other.”

The analysis of responses included the identification of the most common themes for each question, as well as differences in the prevalence of themes for military and civilian personnel. The proportion of responses per theme was based on the number of times each theme was mentioned by survey participants. Responses to each question were complex and contained multiple themes. Because multiple themes were often extracted from each participant’s response, the number of theme categorisations for each question exceeded the number of survey respondents. For each question, the most prevalent themes that captured the majority of open-ended responses across the participating nations are summarised for the military and civilian subgroups, respectively. Following this, the five most prevalent themes that captured the majority of open-ended responses across the nations are discussed in greater detail and example quotes representing each of these themes are provided. **Of note, the proportion of theme categorisations that each identified theme represents refers to the percentage of times this theme was noted in relation to the total number of themes noted in response to the question. It does not represent the proportion of respondents who agreed with that theme.**

Given the significant variability in sample sizes across the nations, the frequency with which the themes for each question were cited were first ranked *within* each nation, followed by estimation of the average ranking across the nations. This approach was taken so that nations with larger numbers of respondents would not influence the ranking of the themes more so than nations with fewer respondents. However, percentages of theme categorisations for all military and all civilian respondents, taken together across all the nations, were also calculated and are presented following the cross-national results.

Given that the top 5 themes identified as being important for maintaining military and civilian relations are similar for military and civilian respondents, these themes will be discussed for military and civilian respondents together so as to avoid repetition. Following this, example quotes expressed by military and civilian respondents will be provided separately to illustrate the types of responses within each theme for each group.

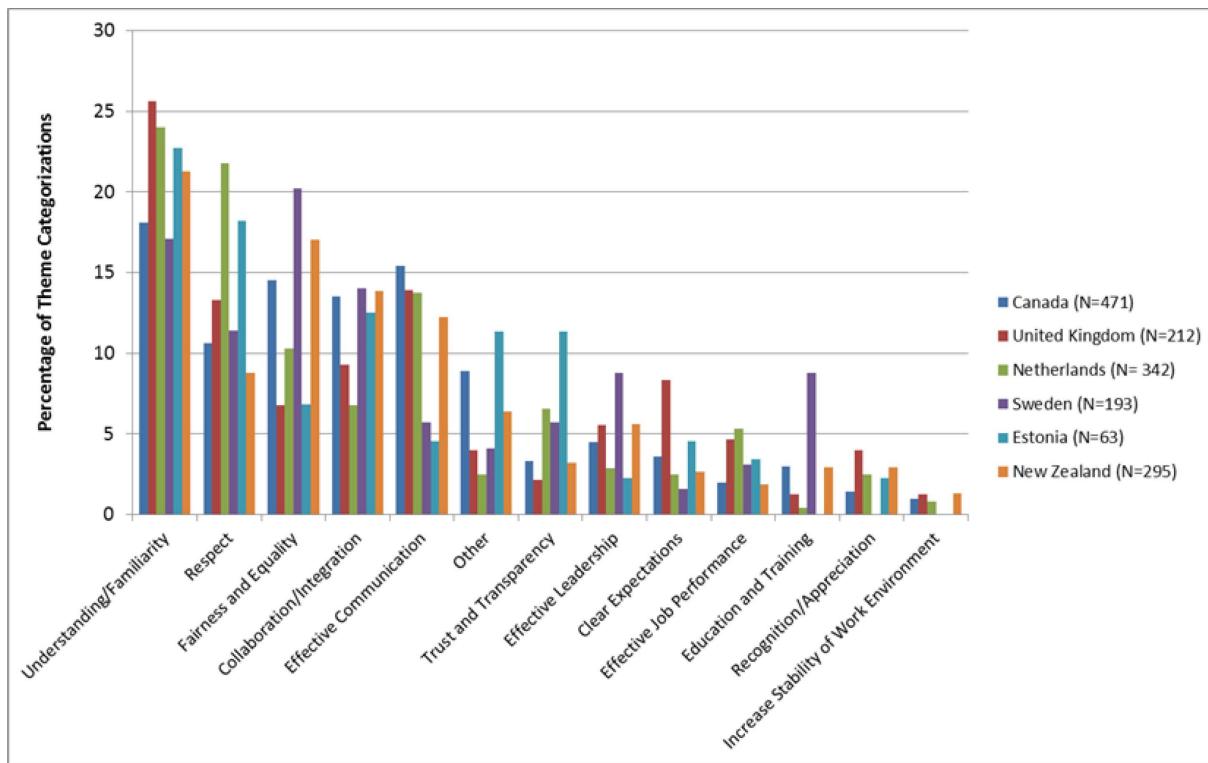
## 14.2 RESULTS: MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS IN ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING POSITIVE MILITARY-CIVILIAN WORK RELATIONS

The first open-ended question asked respondents: “What do you consider to be the most important factors in establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian personnel work culture and relations?”

### 14.2.1 Military Respondents

A total of 1,584 military respondents provided answers to this question after accounting for nonresponses and responses that were deemed “Not Applicable.” A total of 2,167 theme categorisations were extracted, which were categorised into a total of 12 themes (excluding the “Other” category). Table 14-2 and Figure 14-1 provide the proportions (%) of each theme categorisation for this question for military respondents in each nation.

As shown in Figure 14-1, there is a fair amount of cross-national variability in the responses. Some of this may stem from differences in the level of importance attributed to the different themes, perhaps based on different cultural and/or organisational factors, while some may be related to differences in sample sizes or other characteristics. Nonetheless, the general decrease in the proportion of endorsements across the 12 themes provides clear evidence of the overall pattern across nations, with the most frequent themes being endorsed most often across the majority of the nations, and with the least frequent themes being endorsed least often across the nations for the most part.

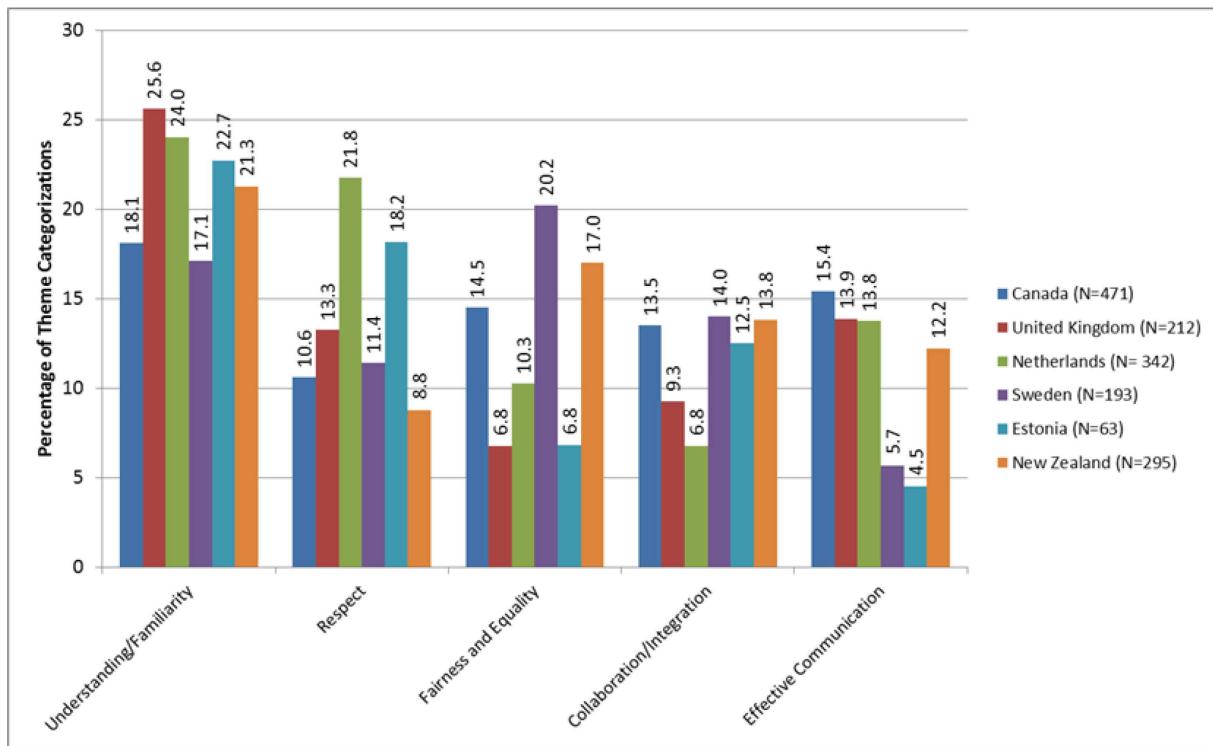


**Figure 14-1: Factors in Establishing and Maintaining Positive Military-Civilian Relations: Military Respondents.**

**Table 14-2: Factors in Establishing and Maintaining Positive  
Military-Civilian Relations: Military Respondents.**

Theme #	Theme Name	Percentage of Theme Categorisations by Country (%)					
		Canada (n = 471)	United Kingdom (n = 212)	Netherlands (n = 342)	Sweden (n = 193)	Estonia (n = 63)	New Zealand (n = 295)
1	Respect	10.6	13.3	21.8	11.4	18.2	8.8
2	Trust and Transparency	3.3	2.2	6.6	5.7	11.4	3.2
3	Understanding/Familiarity	18.1	25.6	24.0	17.1	22.7	21.3
4	Fairness and Equality	14.5	6.8	10.3	20.2	6.8	17.0
5	Effective Leadership	4.5	5.6	2.9	8.8	2.3	5.6
6	Collaboration/Integration	13.5	9.3	6.8	14.0	12.5	13.8
7	Clear Expectations	3.6	8.3	2.5	1.6	4.5	2.7
8	Effective Communication	15.4	13.9	13.8	5.7	4.5	12.2
9	Effective Job Performance	2.0	4.6	5.3	3.1	3.4	1.9
10	Education and Training	3.0	1.2	0.4	8.8	0.0	2.9
11	Recognition/Appreciation	1.4	4.0	2.5	0.0	2.3	2.9
12	Increase Stability of Work Environment	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.0	0.0	1.3
13	Other	8.9	4.0	2.5	4.1	11.4	6.4

Figure 14-2 provides the national proportions (%) of theme categorisations for the five themes cited most commonly by military respondents regarding the most important factors in establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian work relations. The top five themes represent 72.1% of all theme categorisations coded for this question.

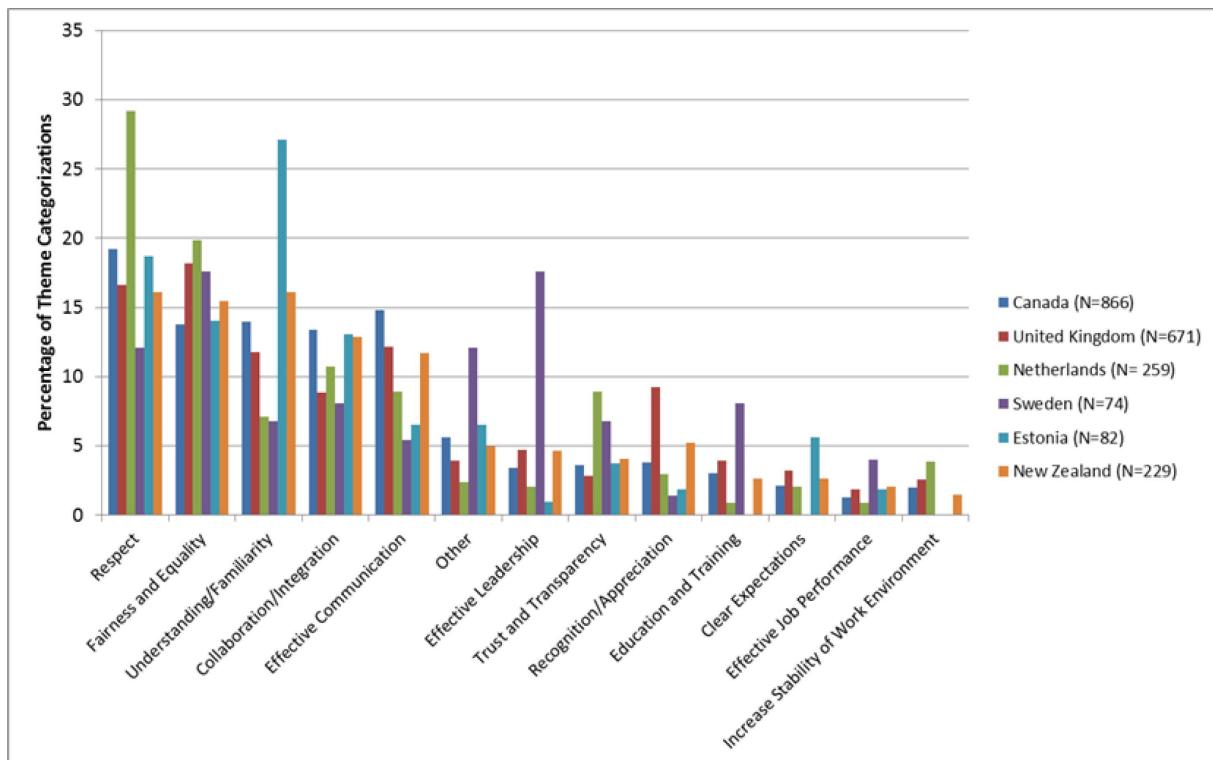


**Figure 14-2: Top Five Factors in Establishing and Maintaining Positive Military-Civilian Relations: Military Respondents.**

In particular, military respondents in most nations indicated understanding/familiarity, respect, fairness/equality, collaboration/integration, and effective communication among the most important factors for establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian relations. Respect, although important for military personnel across the nations, was endorsed particularly frequently by Dutch and Estonian military personnel. Further, fairness and equality were emphasised most frequently in Sweden and New Zealand, and much less so by military personnel in the United Kingdom and Estonia in relation to the other nations. In addition, although effective communication represented at least 12% of theme categorisations for most nations, this theme did not appear in the top five most common themes reported nationally for Sweden and Estonia, and only represented 5.7% and 4.5% of theme categorisations in these nations, respectively. Further, Sweden was the only nation in which education and training and effective leadership were reported among the top five most important factors in establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian work culture and relations (each at 8.8% of theme categorisations). Estonia was the only national case where trust and transparency appeared in the top five most common responses (11.4% of theme categorisations).

### 14.2.2 Civilian Respondents

A total of 2,181 civilian respondents provided answers to the first open-ended question after accounting for nonresponses and responses that were deemed “Not Applicable.” A total of 3,266 theme categorisations were extracted, which were categorised into a total of 12 themes (excluding the “Other” category). Table 14-3 and Figure 14-3 provide the proportions (%) of theme categorisations for the most common themes offered by civilian respondents for each nation.



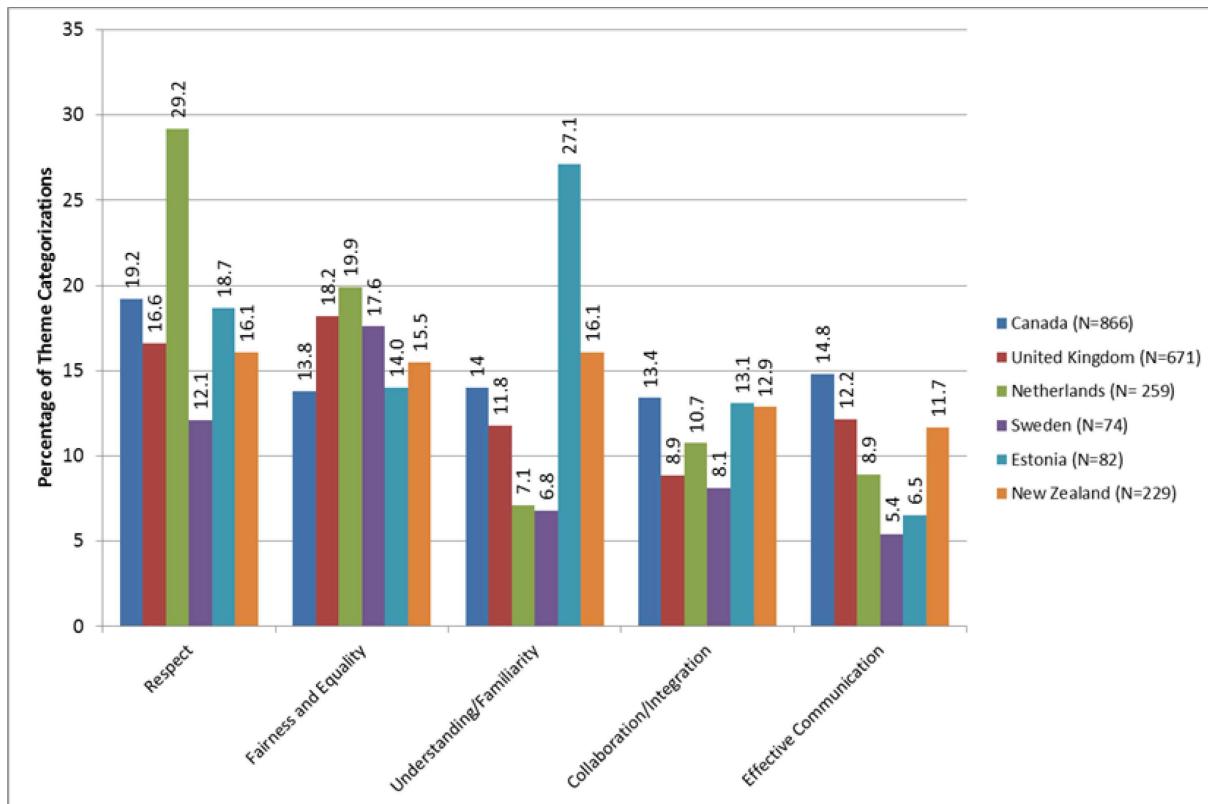
**Figure 14-3: Factors in Establishing and Maintaining Positive Military-Civilian Relations: Civilian Respondents.**

As for military respondents, although there is a fair amount of cross-national variability in the responses, the general decrease in proportion of endorsements across the 12 themes also provides clear evidence of the overall pattern across nations, with the most frequent themes being endorsed most often across the majority of the nations, and with the least frequent themes being endorsed least often across the nations for the most part.

**Table 14-3: Factors in Establishing and Maintaining Positive  
Military-Civilian Relations: Civilian Respondents.**

Theme #	Theme Name	Percentage of Theme Categorisations by Country (%)					
		Canada (n = 866)	United Kingdom (n = 671)	Netherlands (n = 259)	Sweden (n = 74)	Estonia (n = 82)	New Zealand (n = 229)
1	Respect	19.2	16.6	29.2	12.1	18.7	16.1
2	Trust and Transparency	3.6	2.8	8.9	6.8	3.7	4.1
3	Understanding/Familiarity	14.0	11.8	7.1	6.8	27.1	16.1
4	Fairness and Equality	13.8	18.2	19.9	17.6	14.0	15.5
5	Effective Leadership	3.4	4.7	2.1	17.6	0.9	4.7
6	Collaboration/Integration	13.4	8.9	10.7	8.1	13.1	12.9
7	Clear Expectations	2.1	3.2	2.1	0.0	5.6	2.6
8	Effective Communication	14.8	12.2	8.9	5.4	6.5	11.7
9	Effective Job Performance	1.3	1.9	0.9	4.0	1.9	2.0
10	Education and Training	3.0	4.0	0.9	8.1	0.0	2.6
11	Recognition/Appreciation	3.8	9.2	3.0	1.4	1.9	5.3
12	Increase Stability of Work Environment	2.0	2.5	3.9	0.0	0.0	1.5
13	Other	5.6	4.0	2.4	12.1	6.5	5.0

Figure 14-4 provides the proportions (%) of theme categorisations for the five most common themes cited by civilian respondents in each nation related to the most important factors in establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian work relations. The top five themes represent 63.6% of all theme categorisations coded for this question.

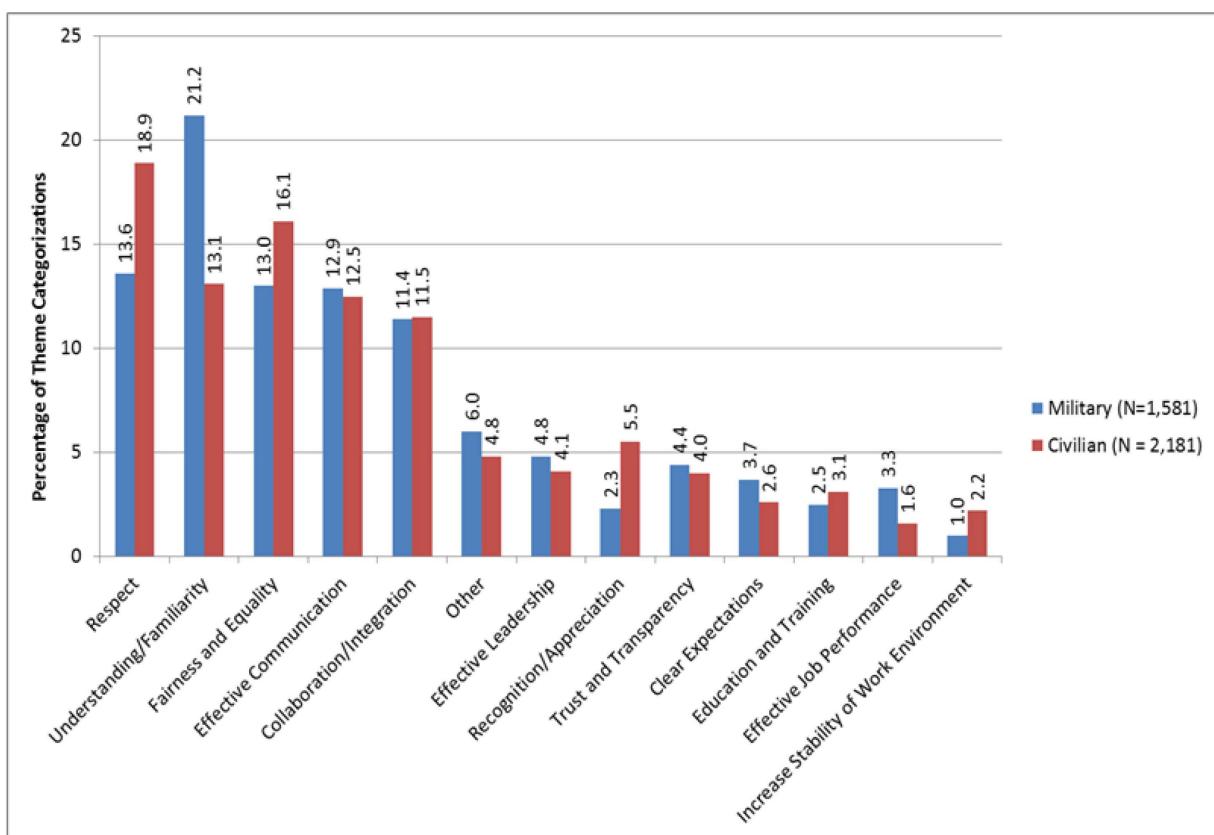


**Figure 14-4: Top Five Factors in Establishing and Maintaining Positive Military-Civilian Relations: Civilian Respondents.**

Civilian respondents in most nations indicated respect, fairness and equality, understanding/familiarity, collaboration/integration, and effective communication as the most important factors for establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian relations. A notable exception is Sweden, the only national case in which effective communication was not among the top five most frequently cited factors important for establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian relations (5.4% of theme categorisations). Effective leadership was given a high level of importance in Sweden, at 17.6% of theme categorisations, which, along with fairness and equality, was the most common theme in response to this question (compared to less than 5% of theme categorisations in the remaining nations). Although respect was noted as a key theme by civilian respondents across the nations, this theme was particularly prevalent in the Netherlands (representing 29.2% of theme categorisations in response to this question). Fairness and equality was a key theme for civilian personnel, and was cited with similar frequency across nations. Understanding and familiarity was noted at a much higher rate in Estonia (27.1% of theme categorisations) than in the other nations. In the Netherlands and Sweden, responses relating to understanding and familiarity represented approximately 7% of theme categorisations, and as such this theme was not among their most frequently cited responses, contrary to the overall trend.

### 14.2.3 Most Important Factors in Establishing and Maintaining Positive Military-Civilian Work Relations – Overall Comparison of Military and Civilian Perspectives

Percentages of theme categorisations for all military and all civilian respondents combined across all the nations were also calculated and are presented below.<sup>1</sup> As shown in Figure 14-5, military and civilian personnel identified very similar factors as being important for establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian work relations, with the same five factors emerging as being most important between these two groups of personnel: respect, understanding/familiarity, fairness and equality, effective communication, and collaboration/integration. With that said, civilians were somewhat more likely than military personnel to indicate respect as a key factor (18.9% vs. 13.6% of theme categorisations for civilian and military personnel, respectively), whereas military personnel were much more likely to indicate that understanding/familiarity is a key factor (21.2% vs. 13.1% of theme categorisations for military and civilian personnel, respectively). Civilians were also slightly more likely to identify fairness and equality, although this was an important factor identified by both groups.



**Figure 14-5: Most Important Factors in Establishing and Maintaining Positive Military-Civilian Relations: Comparison of Responses of Military and Civilian Personnel Combined Across all Nations.**

<sup>1</sup> For this analysis responses within each group (military and civilian) were combined across nations. Given the variability in sample sizes among the nations, responses of personnel in some nations were larger than those in other nations. However, these data were not weighted by sample size as this was taken into account in the presentation of results for the cross-national analyses and was well-represented therein.

#### 14.2.4 Top Five Most Important Factors in Establishing and Maintaining Positive Military-Civilian Relations

Although in slightly differing orders of frequency, generally both military and civilian personnel across the nations indicated the same five most important factors for establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian relations (when considering the order within each nation accounting for sample size, as presented in Figure 14-2 and Figure 14-4 in the previous sections). Each of these themes – respect, understanding/familiarity, effective communication, fairness and equality, and collaboration/integration – is elaborated below, and illustrative examples are provided.

##### 14.2.4.1 Respect

When respondents were asked to indicate the most important factors for establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian work relations, the most common theme cited by civilians (an average of 18.6% of theme categorisations) and the second most commonly-cited theme by military respondents (an average of 21.5% of theme categorisations) was respect. Respondents reported that mutual respect between military and civilian personnel was important for maintaining positive relations. More specifically, this included respect for group differences, respect for personnel regardless of affiliation or rank, and being respectful of each other's opinions.

The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- *Mutual respect for the differences in vocational culture. (Canada).*
- *Treating each other with respect and not imposing military ethos as the only option. (United Kingdom).*
- *Mutual respect; Respect each other's work. (Netherlands).*
- *Respect for each other's roles and working tasks. (Sweden).*
- *Having respect for each other's competencies. (Estonia).*
- *The most important factor in maintaining positive military-civilian work relations is to create and/or maintain respect and make each of the parties think they are equal to each other. For example the military personnel need to not think that civilians are below them or anything similar and civilians need to not think of military personnel as overpaid young hooligans and as their equals. (New Zealand).*

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- *Respect for individual's/member's job. Respect for individual's position, and respect for the individual. (Canada).*
- *Mutual respect and understanding. Knowing one another as people first, military or civilian second. (United Kingdom).*
- *To accept one another and treat each other with respect; respect and appreciate each other's knowledge and skills. (Netherlands).*
- *Respect for each other as human beings and professionals. (Sweden).*
- *Respect toward one another; the understanding that no one is better than anyone else solely because they wear a uniform or based on their position in the structure. (Estonia).*
- *That all personnel respect that others work differently not only due to rules and regulations but due to life experiences, this is can be cultural as well as general views of life and work. (New Zealand).*

#### 14.2.4.2 Understanding/Familiarity

Another prominent theme that respondents indicated was important for establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian collaboration was understanding and/or familiarity between military and civilian personnel with one's co-workers (an average of 21.5% of theme categorisations for military respondents and 13.8% of theme categorisations for civilian respondents). Responses indicated that a willingness to understand each other's perspectives, roles and tasks, terms and conditions of employment, cultures, and generally getting to know one another were important factors for establishing positive relations between military and civilian personnel.

The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- *Understanding. For civilians, they must understand the stresses that modern military life brings to the members and their families and that sometimes exceptions in normal operating procedures must be made in order to assist those families during times of tumultuous transition. For military members, they must understand the stressors that are affecting their civilian co-workers. From job security to retirement benefits to entitlements to sick leave, most military members have no idea what constraints civilian workers operate under. If more was understood of how each arm actually operated, day to day operations and not national directive driven, then that may open the lines of communication greatly.* (Canada).
- *The military need to understand what the civilians do for it and the civilians need to understand what they should be doing to enable the military to do their job effectively.* (United Kingdom).
- *Knowledge of each other's background and competences. Understanding of each other's motivation to do the job; Understanding of each other's culture and point of view.* (Netherlands).
- *An understanding for differences and a will to improve our mutual function.* (Sweden).
- *Understanding the work environment and the differences between military and civilian personnel. Accepting differences.* (Estonia).
- *A mutual understanding of each other's capabilities and goals.* (New Zealand).

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- *Understanding the different roles each bring to the organization and leveraging the different experiences and background.* (Canada).
- *Understanding of each other's roles, backgrounds, abilities. Mutual respect for each other's abilities capabilities and contribution.* (United Kingdom).
- *Understanding of each other's background; knowledge of each other's tasks and responsibilities.* (Netherlands).
- *To engage civilian personnel to a higher extent in military matters in order to increase the understanding of the SAF.* (Sweden).
- *Understanding of a different workplace culture and understanding (intent/attempt to understand it).* (Estonia).
- *Understanding of how each plays a part in the overall purpose of NZ and how each contributes to those outcomes.* (New Zealand).

#### 14.2.4.3 Effective Communication

Effective communication was another frequently mentioned theme (an average of 10.9% of theme categorisations for military respondents and 9.9% of theme categorisations for civilian respondents). This theme contains comments related to timely, effective, and/or respectful communication between military and civilian personnel. Others mentioned that frequent communication was important for establishing positive military-civilian work relations.

The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- *Adequate communication between military and civilian supervisors, in order to collectively achieve a common goal.* (Canada).
- *Communication at all levels is essential in developing a positive culture and relationships. Being able to give your opinion prevents a feeling of helplessness.* (United Kingdom).
- *Communication about what you are doing, about the organization's direction. To create mutual objectives; more communication; sufficient communication; good communication.* (Netherlands).
- *To share information and to talk to each other.* (Sweden).
- *Forthright communication.* (Estonia).
- *Communication!! Whether it is setting the tone for the 'work culture', target setting, talking with workers as to how they feel, conflict resolution or pretty much anything else regarding relations it all comes down to communication.* (New Zealand).

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- *Keeping communications open and honest, so there are no personnel who are left out of the loop or feel like they are left out of the loop.* (Canada).
- *Regular communication and exchange of views.* (United Kingdom).
- *Consulting each other; sharing information; open communication.* (Netherlands).
- *Effective communication.* (Sweden).
- *Communication between each other, joint events.* (Estonia).
- *Open lines of Communication at all times - not a need to know basis as often happens.* (New Zealand).

#### 14.2.4.4 Fairness and Equality

Respondents also cited the theme of fairness and equality with relatively high frequency (an average of 12.6% of theme categorisations for military respondents and 16.5 % of theme categorisations for civilian respondents). This theme encompasses comments pertaining to fairness and/or equal treatment across many aspects of the military-civilian working environment. Examples included fairness in regard to workload, pay, training opportunities, and recognition.

The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- *Equality among pay/benefits, workload, and responsibility.* (Canada).
- *Maintaining equity across the board and ensuring that one group is not being treated differently to the other.* (United Kingdom).

- *Being open to differences. Equal treatment where possible, differences where necessary; uniformity.* (Netherlands).
- *The justice factor, the same pay for the same work.* (Sweden).
- *Equal treatment, if exceptions made for one or another side, there has to be a good reason. Treating each other based on the principle of professionalism, not based on “what uniform they wear.* (Estonia).
- *I think you need to treat people fairly and offer the same opportunities for training/promotion etc. to both groups doing the same job.* (New Zealand).

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- *Equal training, equal treatment when training is offered, equal wages, equal time off, equal medical and dental benefits.* (Canada).
- *Equal treatment and equal opportunities. I have found in the past military line managers are better than civilian line managers, as they manage all staff fairly.* (United Kingdom).
- *Equal opportunities for everyone; equal treatment and regulations.* (Netherlands).
- *Equal treatment regarding work conditions, pay/benefits and career opportunities.* (Sweden).
- *Creating equal opportunity and rights.* (Estonia).
- *Respect for each other’s skills and experience, fair and equitable treatment, remuneration fairly benchmarked against equivalent non-military positions, equal opportunities, promotion on merit.* (New Zealand).

#### 14.2.4.5 Collaboration/Integration

Another prominent theme was collaboration and/or integration between military and civilian personnel (on average 11.6% of theme categorisations for military respondents and on average 11.2 % of theme categorisations for civilian respondents). Comments under this theme emphasised that establishing positive military-civilian work relations requires opportunities for military and civilian personnel to integrate and interact both professionally and socially.

The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- *The sense of team-work. Everyone working together to achieve set goals.* (Canada).
- *Monthly mil/civ staff co-ord meetings, periodic staff lunches.* (United Kingdom).
- *Joint tasks and activities; teambuilding; working in teams; working together towards one goal; solidarity.* (Netherlands).
- *The HQ great mix of different individuals with different background. Important with different perspectives, and the combination of civ/mil competencies.* (Sweden).
- *Cooperation between military and civilian side.* (Estonia).
- *The two cultures have some necessary differences, but they can collaborate to maximise results. Perhaps encourage more mixing or working together, to understand what the other side offers, and get used to how the other operates.* (New Zealand).

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- *Teamwork in the workplace. Social events, both during and after work hours.* (Canada).
- *I would like to see more mixed opportunities for expeditions to help build mixed relationships.* (United Kingdom).
- *Working together at the same projects with a shared goal; joint social activities and work-related activities.* (Netherlands).
- *Mutual goals and working methods.* (Sweden).
- *Engaging civilian personnel in military topics.* (Estonia).
- *Inclusion of civilians where appropriate – including seminars/symposia, this is happening in Navy.* (New Zealand).

## **14.3 RESULTS: MAIN CHALLENGES OF WORKING IN A MIXED MILITARY-CIVILIAN WORK ENVIRONMENT**

The second open-ended question asked respondents: “What are the main challenges you experience working in a mixed military-civilian work environment?

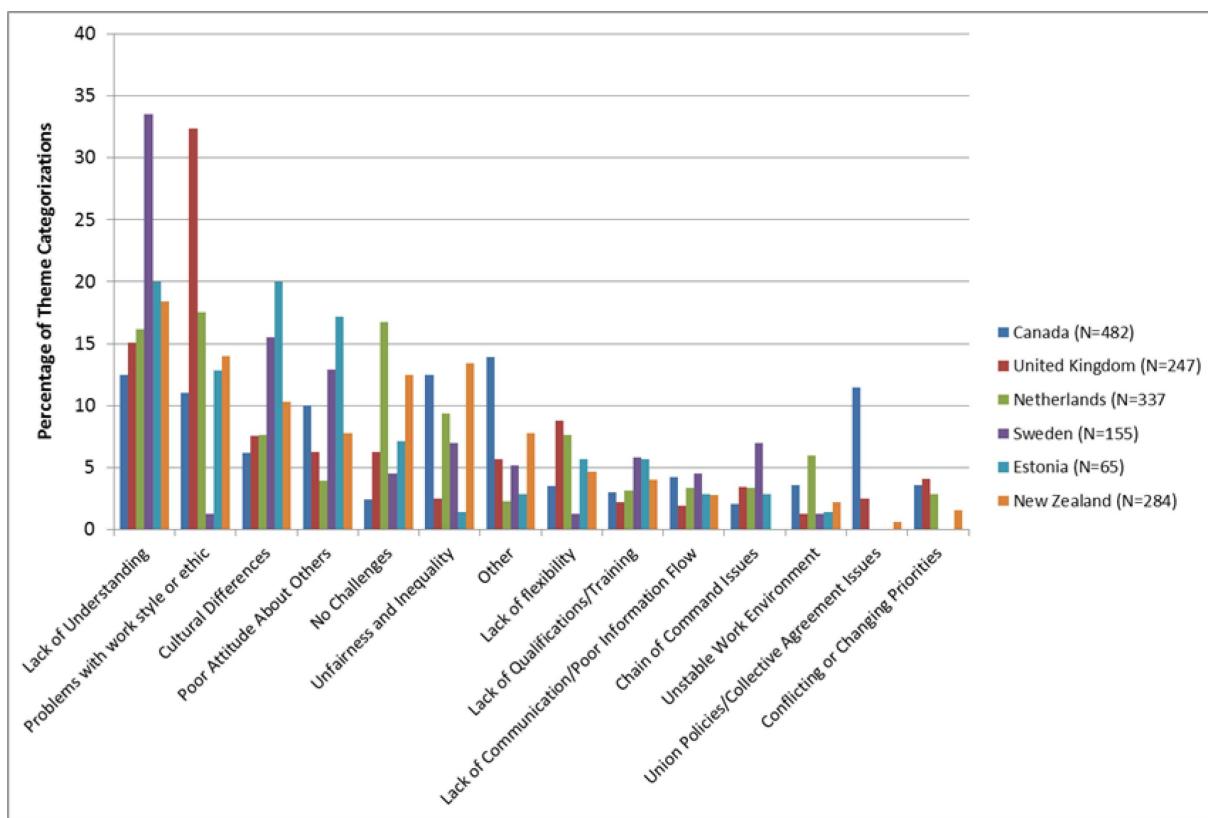
### **14.3.1 Military Respondents**

A total of 1,570 military respondents provided answers to this question after accounting for nonresponses and responses that were deemed ‘‘Not Applicable.’’ A total of 1,880 theme categorisations were extracted, which were categorised into a total of 13 themes (excluding the ‘‘Other’’ category). Table 14-4 and Figure 14-6 provide the proportions (%) of all theme categorisations for military respondents for each nation.

As shown in Figure 14-6, although a general cross-national pattern is evident, there is a fair amount of cross-national variability in the responses – more so than in responses to the previous question. Nonetheless, the most important five themes tend to be amongst the most commonly mentioned across the majority of nations and will be discussed in greater detail below.

**Table 14-4: Main Challenges of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Environment: Military Respondents.**

Theme #	Theme Name	Percentage of Theme Categorisations by Country (%)					
		Canada (n = 1,319)	United Kingdom (n = 247)	Netherlands (n = 337)	Sweden (n = 209)	Estonia (n = 145)	New Zealand (n = 284)
1	Unfairness and Inequality	12.5	2.5	9.3	7.0	1.4	13.4
2	Unstable Work Environment	3.6	1.3	5.9	1.3	1.4	2.2
3	Lack of Communication/ Poor Information Flow	4.2	1.9	3.4	4.5	2.9	2.8
4	Lack of Qualifications/Training	3.0	2.2	3.1	5.8	5.7	4.0
5	Lack of Understanding	12.5	15.1	16.1	33.5	20.0	18.4
6	Poor Attitude About Others	10.0	6.3	4.0	12.9	17.1	7.8
7	Conflicting or Changing Priorities	3.6	4.1	2.8	0.0	0.0	1.6
8	Union Policies/Collective Agreement Issues	11.5	2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6
9	Chain of Command Issues	2.1	3.5	3.4	7.0	2.9	0.0
10	Cultural Differences	6.2	7.5	7.6	15.5	20.0	10.3
11	Problems with work style or ethic	11.0	32.4	17.6	1.3	12.9	14.0
12	Lack of flexibility	3.5	8.8	7.6	1.3	5.7	4.7
13	No Challenges	2.4	6.3	16.7	4.5	7.1	12.5
	Other	13.9	5.7	2.3	5.2	2.9	7.8

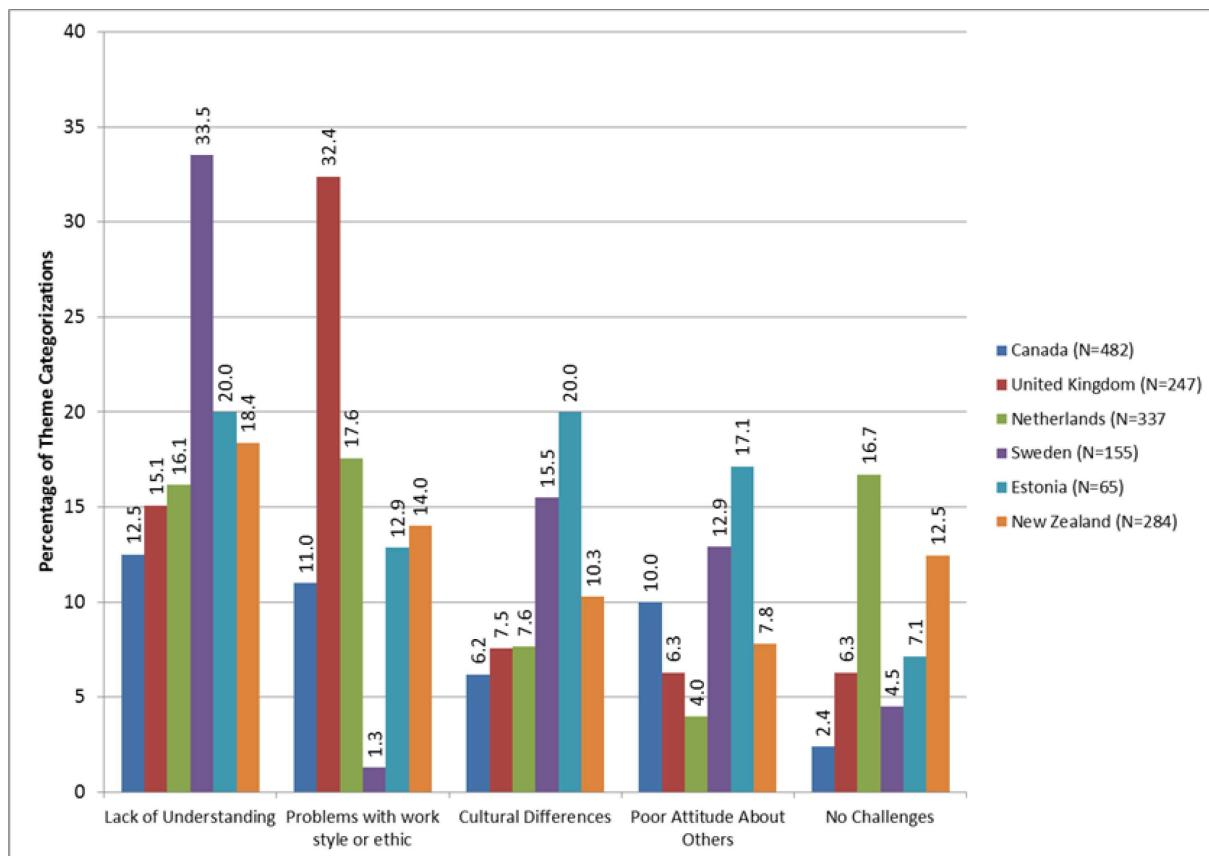


**Figure 14-6: Main Challenges of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Environment: Military Respondents.**

Keeping in mind the cross-national variability, Figure 14-7 provides the proportions (%) of theme categorisations that tend to be among the five most common themes cited by military respondents in most nations related to the main challenges of working in a mixed military-civilian environment. The top five themes represent 57.1% of all theme categorisations coded for this question. Military respondents in all nations indicated lack of understanding as either the most, or second-most, significant challenge to working in a mixed military-civilian environment. Additionally, problems with work style or ethic, cultural differences, poor attitude about others, and no challenges were among the top five responses for most nations, with some notable exceptions.

In terms of variability, although lack of understanding was cited as a main challenge across the nations, this factor was identified more frequently by Swedish military personnel as compared to military personnel in the other nations (35% of theme categorisations). Further, contrary to the overall trend, Sweden was the only nation in which problems with work style or ethic were not considered a major challenge relating to working in a mixed military-civilian work environment (1.3% of theme categorisations). Another outlier, Canada was the only nation where union policies/collective agreement issues (11.5% of theme categorisations) were reported among the top five challenges. This theme was nearly non-existent in comments by military respondents in the remaining countries. Conversely, Canada was the only nation where cultural differences between military and civilian personnel were not included among the five most frequently cited themes. Four of the six nations reported unfairness and inequality among the top five challenges of working in a mixed military-civilian work environment. However, this theme was not one of the top five overall themes presented in Figure 14-6 due to

low frequencies with which it was reported in the United Kingdom (2.5% of theme categorisations) and in Estonia (1.4% of theme categorisations), where it was among the least-cited themes among military respondents. In contrast, the United Kingdom reported significantly more comments relating to problems with work style or ethic than any other nation (32.4% of theme categorisations).



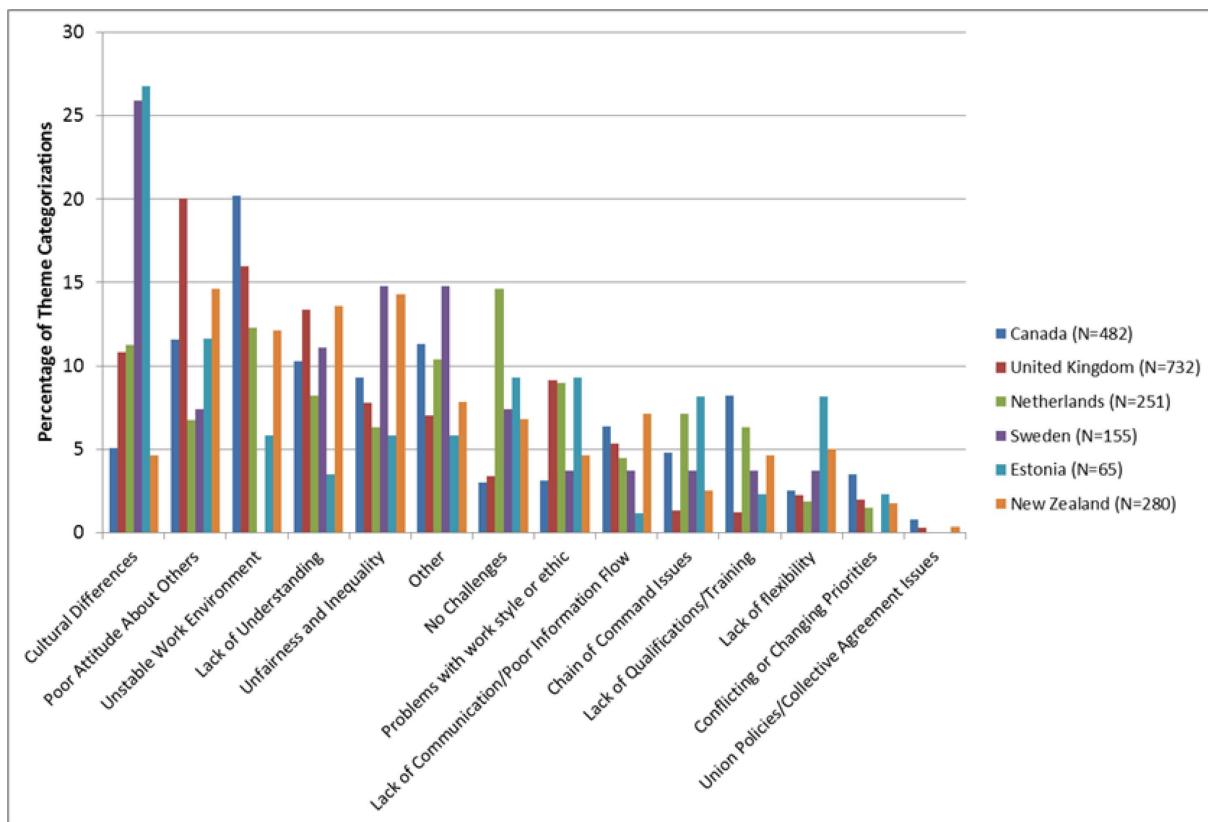
**Figure 14-7: Top Five Challenges of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Environment: Military Respondents.**

### 14.3.2 Civilian Respondents

A total of 2,175 civilian respondents provided answers to this question after accounting for nonresponses and responses that were deemed “Not Applicable.” A total of 2,918 theme categorisations were extracted, which were categorised into a total of 13 themes (excluding the “Other” category). Table 14-5 and Figure 14-8 provide the proportions (%) of all theme categorisations for civilian respondents for each nation.

**Table 14-5: Main Challenges of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Environment: Civilian Respondents.**

Theme #	Theme Name	Percentage of Theme Categorisations by Country (%)					
		Canada (n = 482)	United Kingdom (n = 732)	Netherlands (n = 251)	Sweden (n = 155)	Estonia (n = 65)	New Zealand (n = 280)
1	Unfairness and Inequality	9.3	7.8	6.3	14.8	5.8	14.3
2	Unstable Work Environment	20.2	16.0	12.3	0.0	5.8	12.1
3	Lack of Communication/ Poor Information Flow	6.4	5.3	4.5	3.7	1.2	7.1
4	Lack of Qualifications/Training	8.2	1.2	6.3	3.7	2.3	4.6
5	Lack of Understanding	10.3	13.4	8.2	11.1	3.5	13.6
6	Poor Attitude About Others	11.6	20.0	6.7	7.4	11.6	14.6
7	Conflicting or Changing Priorities	3.5	2.0	1.5	0.0	2.3	1.8
8	Union Policies / Collective Agreement Issues	0.8	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
9	Chain of Command Issues	4.8	1.3	7.1	3.7	8.1	2.5
10	Cultural Differences	5.1	10.8	11.2	25.9	26.7	4.6
11	Problems with work style or ethic	3.1	9.1	9.0	3.7	9.3	4.6
12	Lack of flexibility	2.5	2.3	1.9	3.7	8.1	5.0
13	No Challenges	3.0	3.4	14.6	7.4	9.3	6.8
	Other	11.3	7.0	10.4	14.8	5.8	7.9

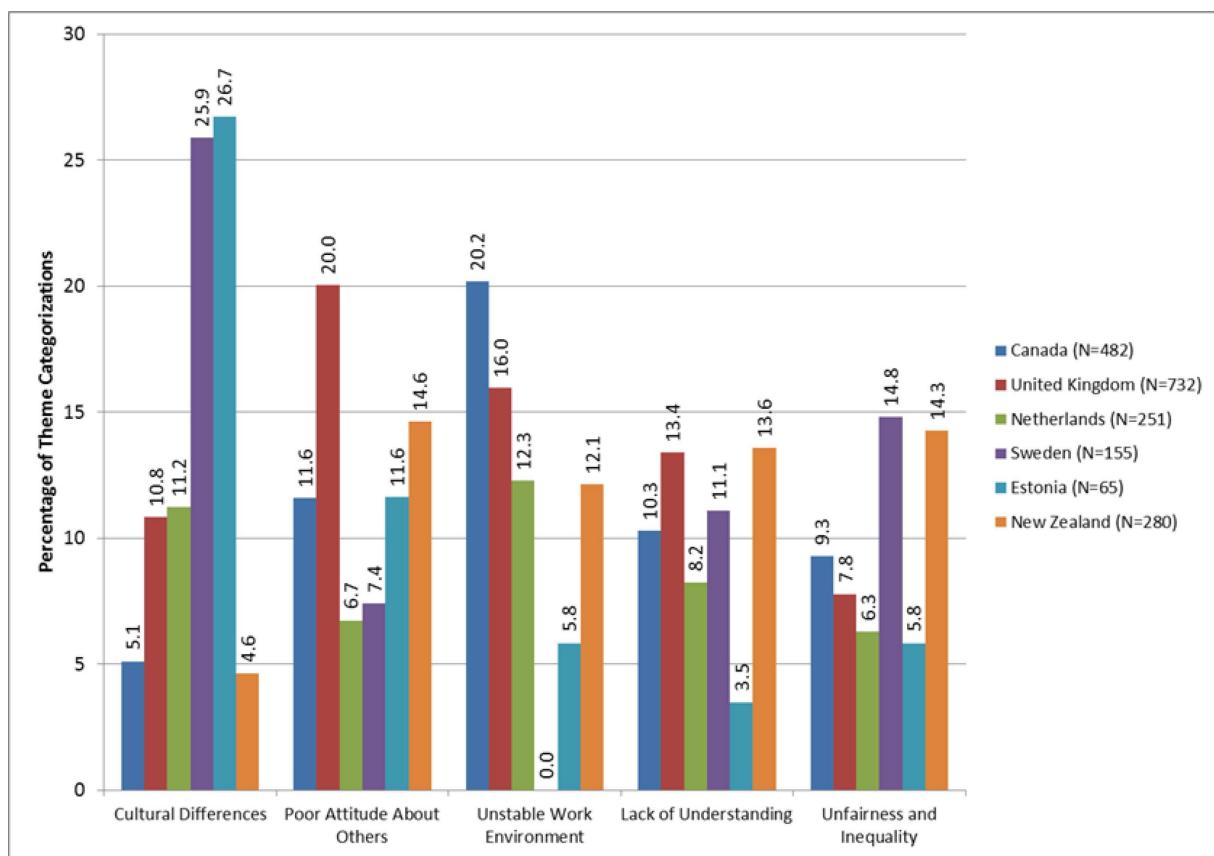


**Figure 14-8: Main Challenges of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Environment: Civilian Respondents.**

As was the case for military respondents, although a general cross-national pattern is evident, there is a fair amount of cross-national variability in the responses of the civilian personnel in the different national defence organisations. Nonetheless, the most important five themes tended to be amongst the most commonly mentioned across the nations and will be discussed in greater detail below.

Figure 14-9 provides the proportions (%) of theme categorisations of the top five most common themes on average cited by civilian respondents across all six nations relating to the main challenges of working in a mixed military-civilian environment. The top five themes for all nations combined represent 59.8% of all theme categorisations coded for this question.

Similar to military respondents, comments from civilian respondents showed a great deal of cross-national variability. No themes came up among the five most frequently cited themes for all of the nations, but unstable work environment and poor attitude about others were among the top themes reported by five of the six nations in the study. Additionally, unfairness and inequality, lack of understanding, and cultural differences were among the top five responses for most nations, with notable exceptions.

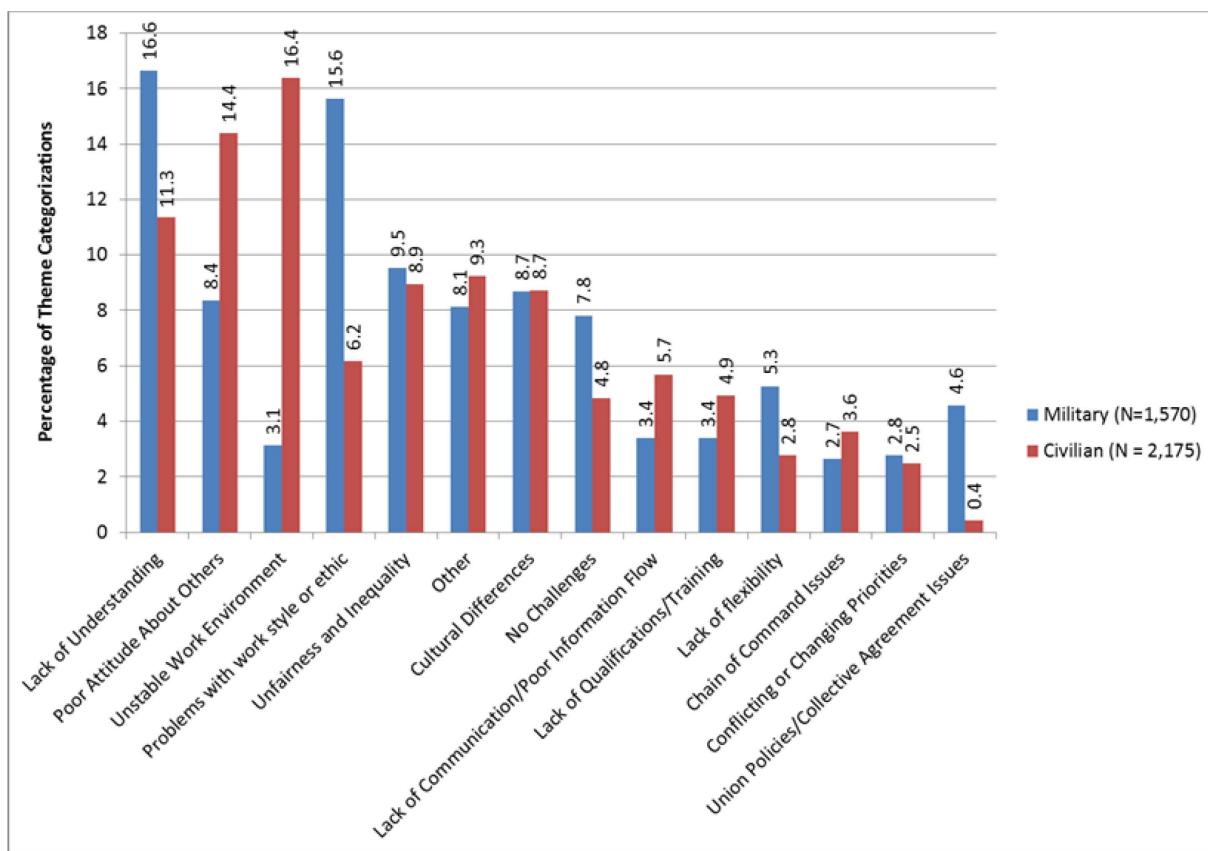


**Figure 14-9: Top Five Challenges of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Environment: Civilian Respondents.**

While, on average, cultural differences between military and civilian personnel was the most common challenge cited by civilian respondents, this stemmed from the high frequency with which this theme was cited by Swedish and Estonian defence civilians (25.9% and 26.7% of theme categorisations, respectively), and to a lesser extent, civilians in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands; this theme was not particularly prevalent in Canada and New Zealand (5.1% and 4.6% of theme categorisations, respectively). Poor attitudes about others was identified as another key challenge, but was particularly so in the United Kingdom (20.0% of theme categorisations), followed by New Zealand (14.6% of theme categorisations), and was cited with moderately high frequency in Canada and Estonia, but less so by civilian respondents in the Netherlands and Sweden (6.7% and 7.4% of theme categorisations, respectively). Although unstable work environment came up among the five most common challenges of a military-civilian work environment in five of the six nations, particularly by Canadian respondents (20.2% of theme categorisations), Sweden stood apart as having no responses that fell under this theme. Also contrary to the overall trend, lack of understanding was not among the most frequently occurring themes among civilian responses in the Netherlands (though was still an important theme constituting 8.2% of theme categorisations) and Estonia (3.5% of theme categorisations). Additionally, at 14.8% and 14.3% respectively, Sweden and New Zealand had a noticeably higher frequency of civilian respondents that indicated unfairness and inequality to be a major challenge compared to the other nations.

### 14.3.3 Main Challenges of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Context – Overall Comparison of Military and Civilian Perspectives

Percentages of theme categorisations for all military and all civilian respondents combined across all the nations were also calculated and are presented below.<sup>2</sup> As shown in Figure 14-10, there were some notable differences in the responses and perspectives of military and civilian personnel. In particular, military personnel identified lack of understanding and problems (or perhaps differences) with work style and ethic as the key challenges (16.6% and 15.6% of theme categorisations for each of these issues, respectively), whereas these were endorsed less frequently by civilians (11.3% and 6.2% of theme categorisations for these issues, respectively). Conversely, civilians highlighted unstable work environment and poor attitudes about others as the key challenges (16.4% and 14.4% of theme categorisations for each of these issues, respectively), whereas these were indicated much less frequently by military personnel (8.4% and 3.1% of theme categorisations for each of these issues, respectively). Both groups identified unfairness and inequality as well as cultural differences with moderate frequency.



**Figure 14-10: Main Challenges of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Context: Comparison of Responses of Military and Civilian Personnel.**

<sup>2</sup> For this analysis responses within each group (military and civilian) were combined across nations. Given the variability in sample sizes among the nations, responses of personnel in some nations were larger than those in other nations. However, these data were not weighted by sample size as this was taken into account in the presentation of results for the cross-national analyses and was well-represented therein.

#### 14.3.4 Top Five Main Challenges of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Environment

Although there is overlap, military and civilian personnel across the nations indicated somewhat different themes as the five main challenges of working in a mixed military-civilian environment. The top five themes among both military and civilian respondents<sup>3</sup>, albeit in differing orders of frequency, included lack of understanding, poor attitude about others, and cultural differences. Among military respondents, work style/ethic and no challenges appeared among the top five most frequent responses. In contrast, unfairness and inequality and unstable work environment appeared among the most frequently cited responses for civilian respondents. Each of these themes is elaborated below and illustrative examples are provided.

##### 14.3.4.1 Lack of Understanding

When respondents were asked to indicate the main challenges they experienced working in a mixed military-civilian work environment, the most common theme cited by military (an average of 19.6% of total theme categorisations) and the fourth most commonly-cited theme by civilian respondents (an average of 10.0% of total theme categorisations) was lack of understanding. More specifically, respondents indicated that military and/or civilian personnel lacked knowledge or understanding of one or more areas such as: not understanding their own role, not understanding each other's roles, cultures, or perspectives, as well as not understanding organisational policies and procedures.

The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- *Lack of understanding of what each other does and the importance of each other's work.* (Canada).
- *Understanding the needs of others who [have] not been exposed to some of the environments as military and vice versa.* (United Kingdom).
- *Mutual understanding; familiarize with the work of military personnel and the experience of military personnel in their workplace. Civilian personnel often have no idea about the day-to-day practice in which military personnel have to work.* (Netherlands).
- *To get civilians to understand that the SAF is no ordinary corporation, working 9-5. To get them to understand which demands are put to them, international service with the risk of getting hurt or killed.* (Sweden).
- *Lack of understanding of the reference system the personnel comes from. People see things only from their own narrow perspective.* (Estonia).
- *Lack of understanding of how the other approaches work (e.g., military are expected to work to achieve a task even if it dictates longs hours verses someone who may be paid for hours worked and therefore unable to simply remain until the task is completed).* (New Zealand).

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- *Misunderstandings of roles and responsibilities. Misunderstandings about the rules and guidelines that military and civilians work within.* (Canada).
- *Lack of understanding of work, home, life relationship.* (United Kingdom).
- *Incomprehension; understanding of each other's situation.* (Netherlands).
- *Some career officers have great difficulties in listening to people who are not in uniform.* (Sweden).

<sup>3</sup> When considering the order within each nation accounting for sample size, as presented in Figure 14-7 and Figure 14-9 in the previous sections.

- *Understanding one another as the context systems are different. Over time it decreases.* (Estonia).
- *Lack of understanding that civilian personnel don't fall under the Armed Services Act and all that goes with that.* (New Zealand).

#### 14.3.4.2 Poor Attitudes About Others

Another common theme that respondents indicated represented a major challenge of working in a mixed military-civilian work environment was poor attitude about others (an average of 9.7% of theme categorisations for military respondents and 12.0% of theme categorisations for civilian respondents). Responses classified under this theme indicated that a main challenge of working in a military-civilian environment was having to deal with personnel who possessed feelings of personal entitlement and/or lacked respect for their co-workers. The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- *Too much of an attitude that: 'I'm unionized/Public Servant and I resent military authority telling me I have to perform outside of my Collective Agreement'. The Military members come and go....the Civilian staff just hold out and wait for the 'new batch to come in for indoctrination.* (Canada).
- *In some areas I have seen a jealousy/envy of the time we spend away from the office doing sport, adventure training. We see it as necessary development and reward for the service away that they didn't see.* (United Kingdom).
- *To respect each other; lack of appreciation of each other's customs, experience, and knowledge.* (Netherlands).
- *To reduce the criticism / questioning / disapproval of the military sector and its foundations.* (Sweden).
- *Mutual respect. Both sides often display a disparaging attitude and prejudices.* (Estonia).
- *Lack of respect from Military officers towards civilians.* (New Zealand).

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- *Chain of command butt kissing. Disrespect for the role of public servants. Disrespect for the conditions of service of public servants. Letting the military know that public servants have the same oath of office and serve Her Majesty as well.* (Canada).
- *Civilians are treated as second-class citizens, their work is undermined. Military always take the credit; but moreover, military regardless of rank do not listen or acknowledge their civilian counterparts/ seniors authority.* (United Kingdom).
- *Mutual respect; to remove the everlasting prejudices.* (Netherlands).
- *Certain career officers have a hard time listening to people that are not in a uniform or have a certain degree/rank.* (Sweden).
- *Military personnel often consider public servants as being in the way.* (Estonia).
- *Some Military personnel, thankfully a minority in my experience, seem to view Civilian personnel as an inconvenience or Wannabe's filling positions that should be Military, rather than figuring out that Civilian staff are there to enable the Military personnel to concentrate on the Military aspects of the job.* (New Zealand).

#### 14.3.4.3 Cultural Differences

Both military and civilian respondents also cited the theme of cultural differences with a high frequency (an average of 11.2% of theme categorisations for military respondents and 14.1% of theme categorisations for civilian respondents). Comments under this theme emphasised differences between military and civilian workplace cultures and issues that sometimes arise from resulting differences in viewpoints, values, and language, among others.

The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- *The differing cultures and processes that drive civilian and military careers. This creates a cultural divide that must be effectively bridged to ensure that the defence team is all moving in the same direction.* (Canada).
- *The lack of flexibility of some civilians can be immensely frustrating and leads to a divisive them and us culture.* (United Kingdom).
- *Cultural differences; trying to speak the same language.* (Netherlands).
- *Fundamentally different view of why to work in the SAF.* (Sweden).
- *Above all, it is hard for civilian personnel to understand the military lifestyle, thought patterns and culture and for the military world to identify with civilian personnel (although both come from the same environment). Civilian personnel is bothered by “military games” and the military’s constant watching the clock and 8-5 attitude.* (Estonia).
- *Getting the military culture and the civilian cultures to work together. Military personnel are quite loud and happy; Civilians sometimes don’t like the noise when working.* (New Zealand).

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- *The clash of cultures. Unless civilians have served in the military, there are things they will never truly understand, and the military members know this.* (Canada).
- *The military expect everyone to be like them and they struggle to adapt if they aren’t. Not everyone is as assertive and self-confident as they are.* (United Kingdom).
- *Cultural differences; speaking the same language; a good connection between military customs, norms, and values and that of civilian personnel.* (Netherlands).
- *The military culture is built on a buddy spirit that is hard to infract as a civilian.* (Sweden).
- *Difference in workplace cultures: civilian personnel have significantly more independence.* (Estonia).
- *The main challenges I experience are getting used to the military way of doing things from their perspective. Very organised, task-orientated and planned to the last detail.* (New Zealand).

#### 14.3.4.4 Problems with Work Style or Ethic

Problems with work style or ethic was the second most frequent theme relating to the challenges of a mixed military-civilian work environment cited by military respondents (an average of 14.9% of theme categorisations). Responses indicated issues arising from incompatible work styles, particularly approaches that are results-oriented, in contrast to focusing on meeting objectives quickly, as well as incompatible commitment levels.

The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- *Unionized mentality of civilians not conducive to military efficient production.* (Canada).
- *Having to reduce my expectations regarding speed of response. Coming from a can do, get it done front line environment to one that gets there eventually.* (United Kingdom).
- *Different views of job and work perceptions; different views and work ethos; different mentality.* (Netherlands).
- *The demands on civilians regarding to: be in right time right place right equipment, should be developed.* (Sweden).
- *Different attitude to work and service, views of results and goals.* (Estonia).
- *Drive to extra effort from some civilians is lacking – not all. Civilians expecting the same privileges as Military personnel with rank despite not putting in the same effort or unwillingness to stray away from their JD's.* (New Zealand).

#### 14.3.4.5 No Challenges

A high frequency of military respondents indicated that there are no challenges to working in a mixed military-civilian work environment (an average of 8.3% of theme categorisations).

The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- *None, at least none related to the work environment being mixed.* (Canada).
- *Generally there are no problems with both parties working together.* (United Kingdom).
- *None.* (Netherlands).
- *Never experienced any problems.* (Sweden).
- *No problems, it all comes down to the will to do something.* (Estonia).
- *I find there are no difficulties that specifically relate to a mixed Military and Civilian work environment.* (New Zealand).

#### 14.3.4.6 Unstable Work Environment

The most common challenge of working in a mixed military-civilian work environment mentioned by civilian respondents was the experience of an unstable work environment (an average of 11.1% of theme categorisations). Sweden was the exception to this trend, with no comments falling under this theme. More specifically, this theme encompassed comments pertaining to frequent turnover due to posting and deployments of military personnel, too many absences by military personnel, and/or poor timing of postings.

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- *The 2 to 3 years cycle for military position rotation is for me the most challenging aspect. I have to retrain mil employee every 2-3 years in a very complex environment. In addition, military colleagues' rotation is often an obstacle to ensure continuity in initiative, core business or projects. The same is applicable to Military Managing Position, civilians have to adjust to new manager, change in command and priority accordingly.* (Canada).

- *The initial engagement can be difficult, especially with the Army (depending on their trade group) and keeping a profitable relationship with someone who will leave in two years or less.* (United Kingdom).
- *Military personnel leaving after 3 years or if they are deployed. Colleagues' competences are lost. Lessons learned are lost.* (Netherlands).
- *Constant rotation of Defence Forces personnel (i.e. low continuity).* (Estonia).
- *Job rotation in senior positions makes decision making and continuity of decisions challenging as new people often want to revisit previous decisions/directions. The speed to make a decision once all relevant information available is slow.* (New Zealand).

#### 14.3.4.7 Unfairness and Inequality

The fourth most frequently cited challenge of working in a military-civilian work environment reported by civilian respondents was the experience of unfairness and/or inequality in the workplace (an average of 9.7% of theme categorisations). Responses categorised under this theme involved a perceived lack of fairness in terms of working hours, pay, procedures, professional development and career advancement, and other policy-related issues.

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- *Unequal amount of training opportunities. Unequal opportunities for team building activities and rewards.* (Canada).
- *There can also be a sense of unfairness when military personnel enjoy perks and discounts that their civilian counterparts don't get although they are effectively doing a similar job.* (United Kingdom).
- *Differences in regulations; differences in salaries and rights that military personnel have and civilians not.* (Netherlands).
- *Prejudice and the perception of young, civilian women.* (Sweden).
- *A distinction is drawn in remuneration, benefits, and training depending on whether you're military or civilian; it leads to rifts within the organization. If wages are cut, they're cut for everyone according to one standard; but if wages rise, military gets a bigger raise than civilians do, if civilians get a raise at all.* (Estonia).
- *Bias given to military personnel for job opportunities, regardless of merit.* (New Zealand).

### 14.4 POSITIVE ASPECTS OF WORKING IN A MIXED MILITARY-CIVILIAN WORK ENVIRONMENT

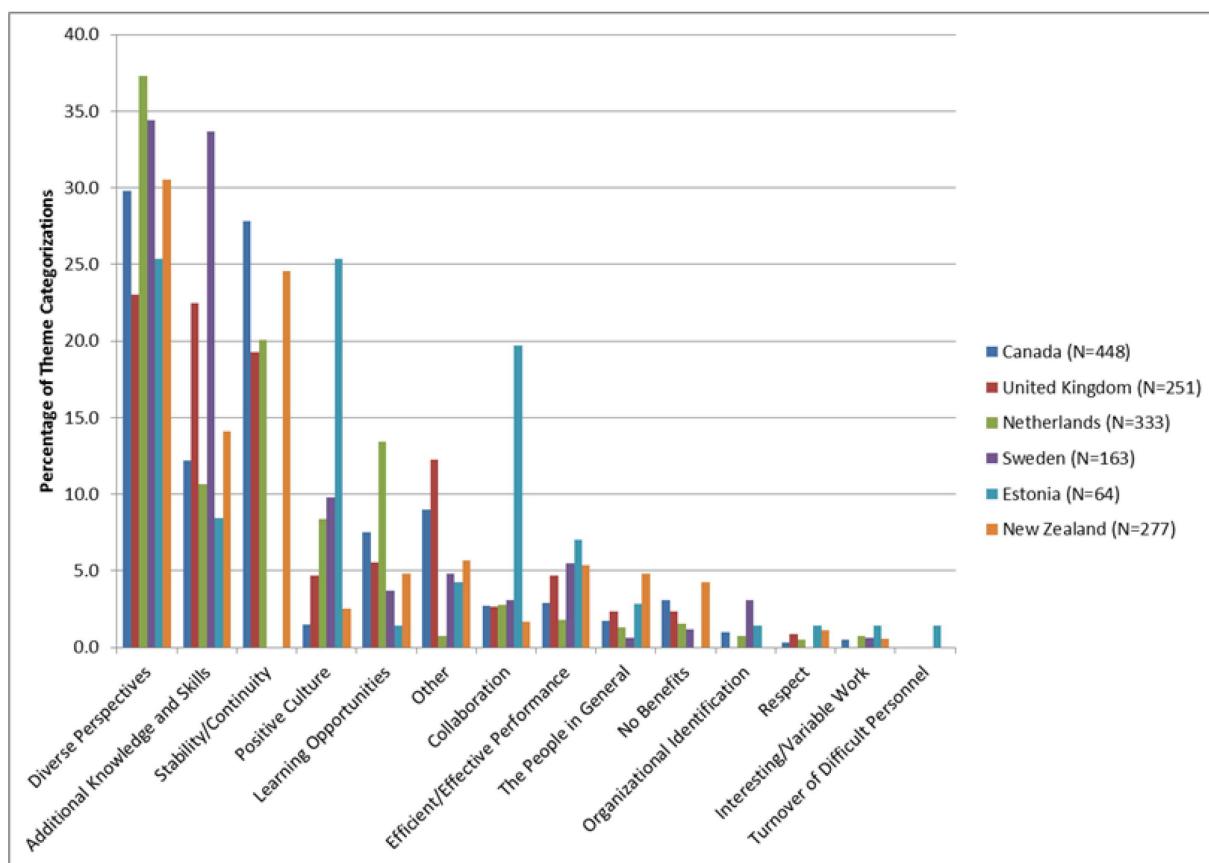
The third open-ended question asked respondents: “What are the most positive aspects to working in a mixed military-civilian work environment?

#### 14.4.1 Military Respondents

A total of 1,523 military respondents provided answers to this question after accounting for nonresponses and responses that were deemed “Not Applicable.” A total of 1,916 theme categorisations were extracted, which were categorised into a total of 13 themes (excluding the “Other” category). Table 14-6 and Figure 14-11 provide the proportions (%) of theme categorisations for the most common themes offered by military respondents for each nation.

**Table 14-6: Positive Aspects of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Environment: Military Respondents.**

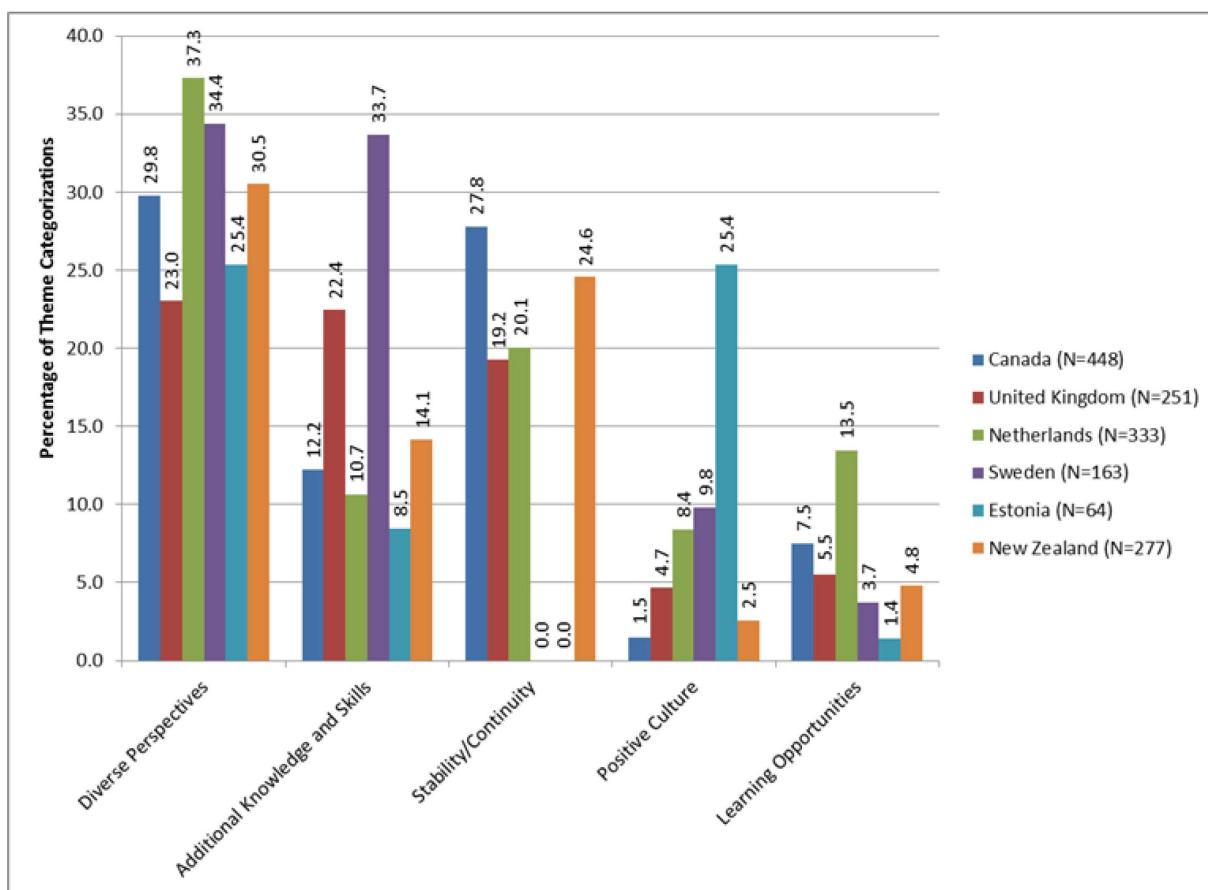
Theme #	Theme Name	Percentage of Theme Categorisations by Country (%)					
		Canada (n = 448)	United Kingdom (n = 251)	Netherlands (n = 333)	Sweden (n = 163)	Estonia (n = 64)	New Zealand (n = 277)
1	Diverse Perspectives	29.8	23.0	37.3	34.4	25.4	30.5
2	Learning Opportunities	7.5	5.5	13.5	3.7	1.4	4.8
3	The People in General	1.7	2.3	1.3	0.6	2.8	4.8
4	Positive Culture	1.5	4.7	8.4	9.8	25.4	2.5
5	Stability/Continuity	27.8	19.2	20.1	0.0	0.0	24.6
6	Organisational Identification	1.0	0.0	0.8	3.1	1.4	0.0
7	Efficient/Effective Performance	2.9	4.7	1.8	5.5	7.0	5.4
8	Collaboration	2.7	2.6	2.8	3.1	19.7	1.7
9	Turnover of Difficult Personnel	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0
10	Interesting/Variable Work	0.5	0.0	0.8	0.6	1.4	0.6
11	Additional Knowledge and Skills	12.2	22.4	10.7	33.7	8.5	14.1
12	Respect	0.3	0.9	0.5	0.0	1.4	1.1
13	No Benefits	3.1	2.3	1.5	1.2	0.0	4.2
	Other	9.0	12.2	0.8	4.8	4.2	5.6



**Figure 14-11: Positive Aspects of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Environment: Military Respondents.**

As shown in Figure 14-11, although a general cross-national pattern is evident, there is a fair amount of cross-national variability in the responses, similar to the previous question. Nonetheless, the most important five themes tended to be endorsed the most often across most of the nations, with a few exceptions, with the least frequent themes being endorsed the least often across most of the nations. The top five themes and significant national outliers will be discussed in greater detail below.

Keeping in mind the cross-national variability, Figure 14-12 provides the proportions (%) of theme categorisations that tended to be among the five most common themes cited by military respondents in most nations related to the main benefits of working in a mixed military-civilian environment. The top 5 themes represented 79.5% of all theme categorisations for this question.



**Figure 14-12: Top Five Most Positive Aspects of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Environment: Military Respondents.**

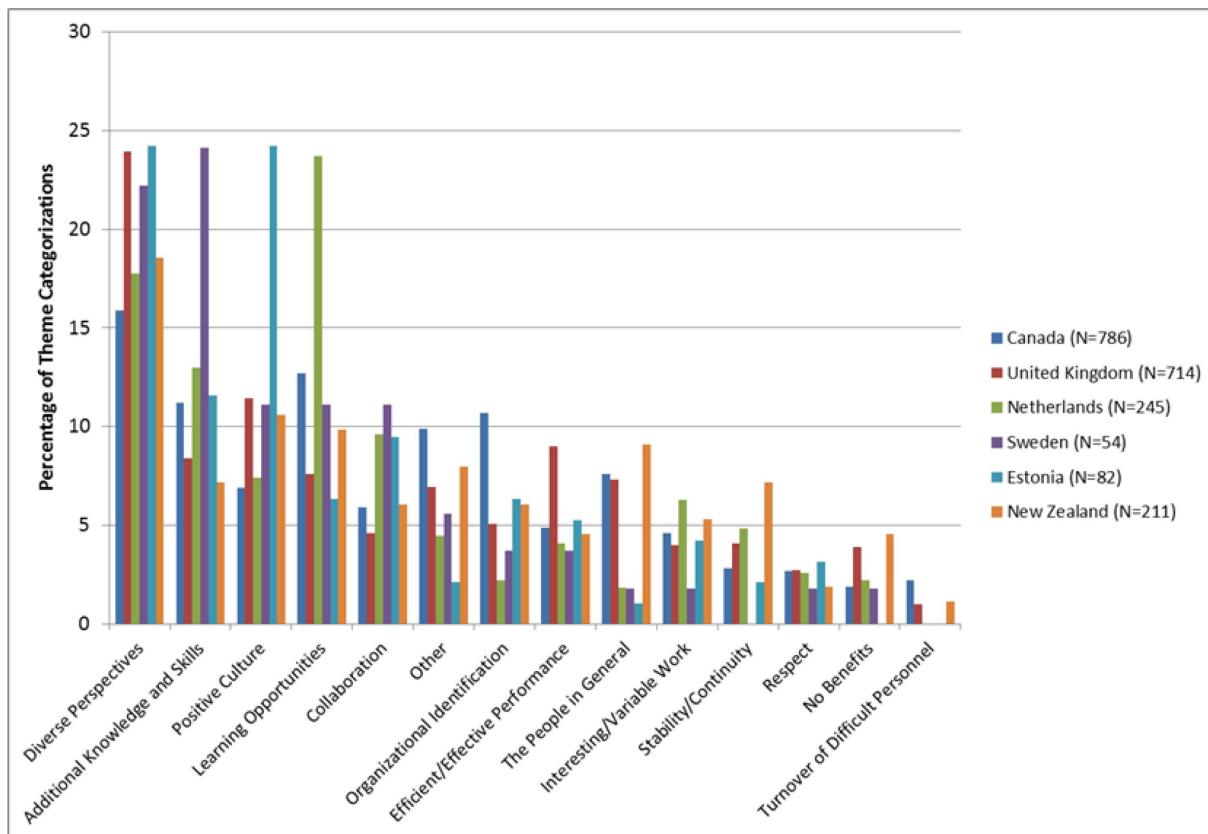
Military respondents in all nations indicated diverse perspectives as among the top five most positive aspects of working in a mixed military-civilian environment. The theme additional knowledge and skills was also one of the five most frequently cited by respondents in all six nations. Responses of military respondents on the remaining themes were less consistent across the nations, but on average were ranked among the top five themes: positive culture, stability and continuity, learning opportunities, and responses classified as “Other.” Despite the high amount of cross-national variability, these themes were each among the top five responses for at least three of the six nations included in the study.

The benefit of diverse perspectives was uniformly cited as a key advantage of a mixed military-civilian work environment (23.0% to 37.3% of theme categorisations across the nations). Additional knowledge and skills, while also being one of the most frequently-cited benefits of working in a mixed military-civilian environment in all nations, was cited most frequently as a key benefit by Swedish military respondents (33.7% of theme categorisations), followed by military respondents in the United Kingdom (22.4% of theme categorisations), as compared to those of other nations. Stability and continuity, despite being on average the third most common theme, was not reflected in any comments among military respondents in Sweden or Estonia. At 19.7% of theme categorisations, collaboration was the second most frequently cited positive aspect of a mixed military-civilian work environment in Estonia, contrary to the overall trend, in which it did not make up more than 3.1% of

comments in any of the other nations. Military respondents in Estonia also reported positive culture at a much higher frequency (25.4% of theme categorisations) than was the case for the remaining nations, including the Netherlands (8.4% of theme categorisations) and Sweden (9.8% of theme categorisations), who also reported positive culture among their top five most common positive aspects of a mixed military-civilian work environment. Learning opportunities and responses classified as “Other” had an equal frequency (6.1% of theme categorisations) on average across the nations studied. Learning opportunities tended to be cited most often as a benefit of working in a mixed military-civilian context, most frequently by military respondents in the Netherlands (13.5% of theme categorisations). Despite the relatively low frequency of theme categorisations across nations overall (less than 7% on average), efficient and effective performance was still among the top five most frequently cited themes in Sweden, Estonia and New Zealand (5.5%, 7.0% and 5.4% of theme categorisations, respectively).

#### 14.4.2 Civilian Respondents

A total of 2,111 civilian respondents provided answers to this question after accounting for nonresponses and responses that were deemed “Not Applicable.” A total of 3,579 theme categorisations were extracted, which were categorised into a total of 13 themes (excluding the “Other” category). Table 14-7 and Figure 14-13 provide the proportions (%) of theme categorisations for the most common themes offered by civilian respondents for each nation.



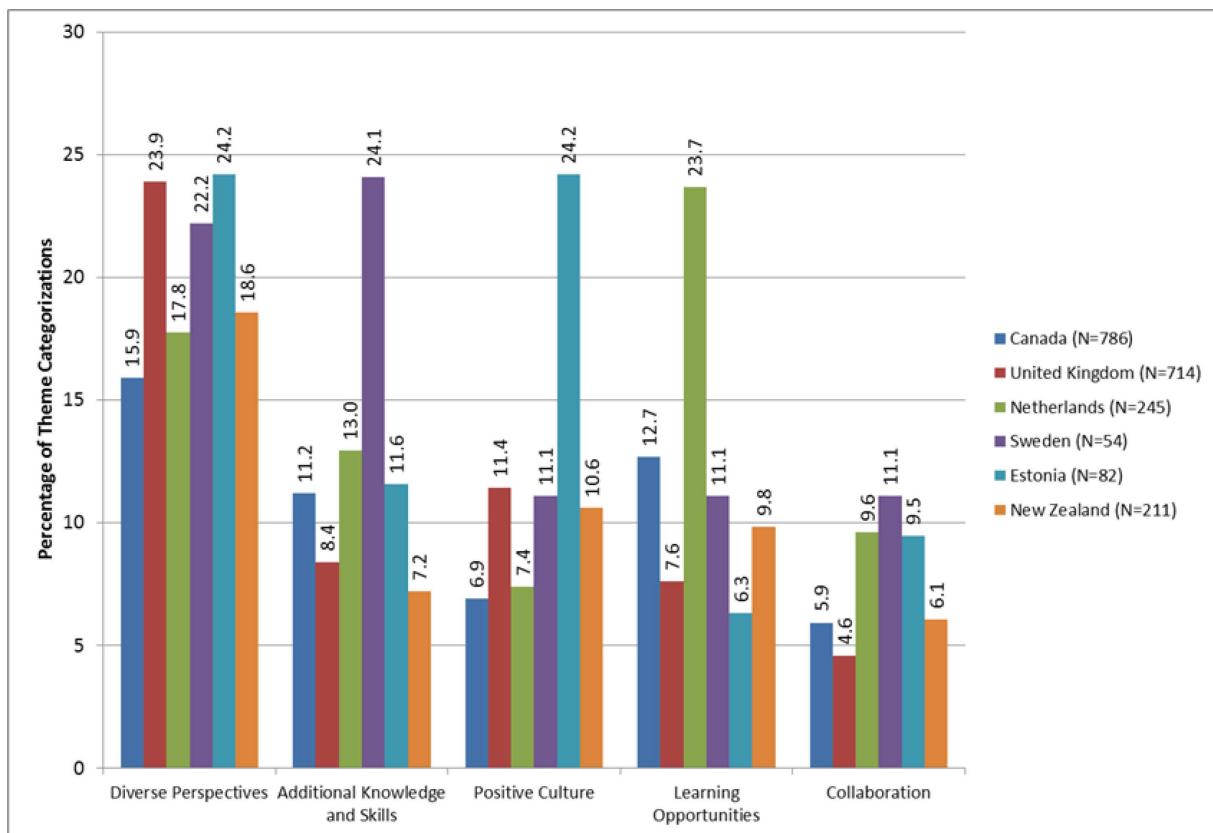
**Figure 14-13: Most Positive Aspects of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Environment: Civilian Respondents.**

**Table 14-7: Most Positive Aspects of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Environment: Civilian Respondents.**

Theme #	Theme Name	Percentage of Theme Categorisations by Country (%)					
		Canada (n = 786)	United Kingdom (n = 714)	Netherlands (n = 245)	Sweden (n = 54)	Estonia (n = 82)	New Zealand (n = 211)
1	Diverse Perspectives	15.9	23.9	17.8	22.2	24.2	18.6
2	Learning Opportunities	12.7	7.6	23.7	11.1	6.3	9.8
3	The People in General	7.6	7.3	1.9	1.8	1.1	9.1
4	Positive Culture	6.9	11.4	7.4	11.1	24.2	10.6
5	Stability/Continuity	2.8	4.1	4.8	0.0	2.1	7.2
6	Organisational Identification	10.7	5.1	2.2	3.7	6.3	6.1
7	Efficient/Effective Performance	4.9	9.0	4.1	3.7	5.3	4.5
8	Collaboration	5.9	4.6	9.6	11.1	9.5	6.1
9	Turnover of Difficult Personnel	2.2	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1
10	Interesting/Variable Work	4.6	4.0	6.3	1.8	4.2	5.3
11	Additional Knowledge and Skills	11.2	8.4	13.0	24.1	11.6	7.2
12	Respect	2.7	2.7	2.6	1.8	3.2	1.9
13	No Benefits	1.9	3.9	2.2	1.8	0.0	4.5
	Other	9.9	6.9	4.4	5.6	2.1	8.0

As seen in Figure 14-11, although a cross-national pattern is evident, there was a fair amount of cross-national variability in the responses. The most important five themes tended to be endorsed the most often across most of the nations, with some exceptions, and the least frequent themes tended to be endorsed least often across most of the nations. However, this trend is less defined than was the case for the previous questions in that the responses tended to be spread out more evenly across a larger number of themes (which is also reflected in the top 5 themes only accounting for 44.1% of civilians' theme categorisations for this question, as noted below). The top five themes, as well as significant national outliers, will be discussed in greater detail below.

Keeping in mind the cross-national variability, Figure 14-14 provides the proportions (%) of theme categorisations for the five most common themes cited by civilian respondents in each nation related to the most positive aspects of working in a mixed military-civilian environment. The top 5 themes represent 44.1% of all theme categorisations for this question.



**Figure 14-14: Top Five Most Positive Aspects of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Environment: Civilian Respondents.**

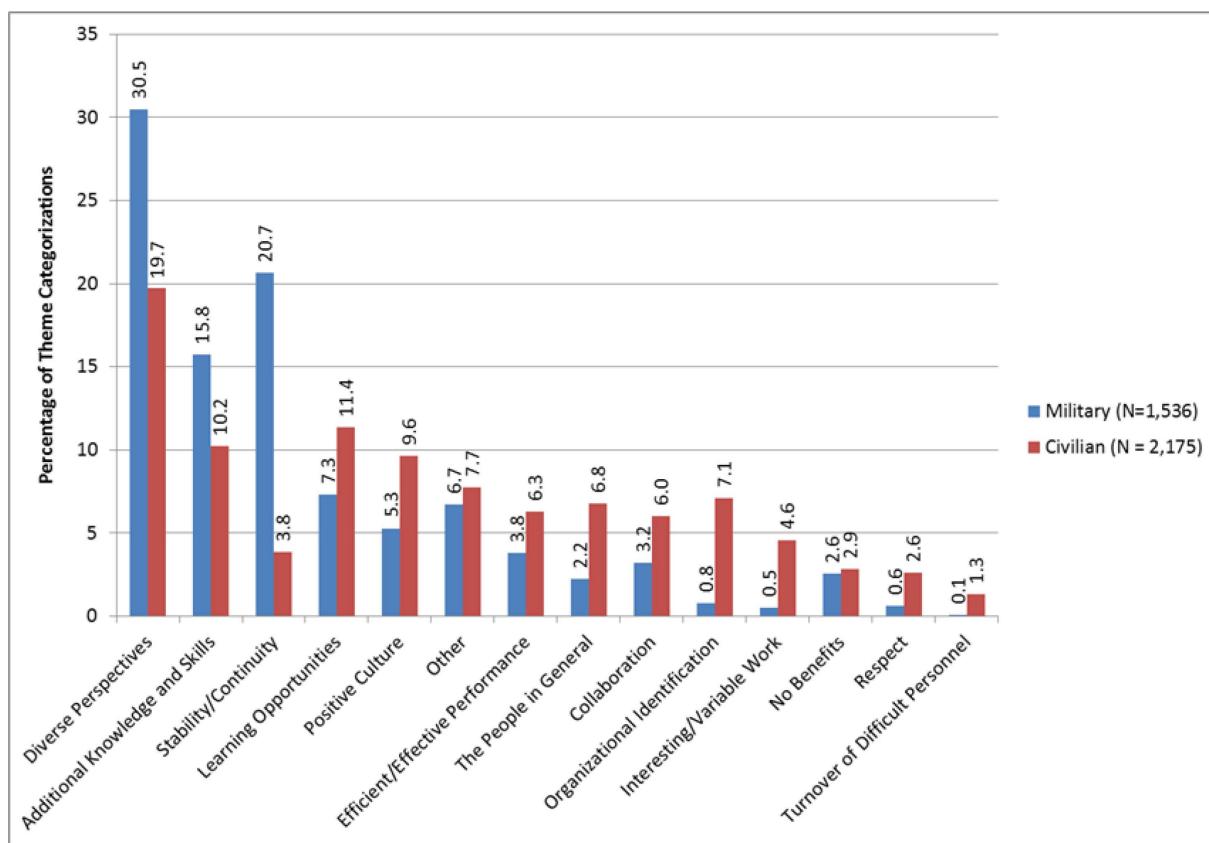
Civilian respondents in all nations indicated diverse perspectives and learning opportunities as two of the most prominent positive aspects to working in a mixed military-civilian environment. Additionally, positive culture, collaboration, and additional knowledge and skills were among the top five responses for most nations, with some exceptions.

As was the case for military personnel, the theme of diverse perspectives was uniformly cited as a key benefit of a mixed military-civilian work environment (15.9% to 24.2% of theme categorisations across the nations). Additional knowledge and skills was most frequently endorsed by Swedish defence civilians (24.1% of theme categorisations) but was reported with moderate frequency by civilians across the other nations (7.2% to 13.0% of theme categorisations across the nations). At 7.2% of theme categorisations, additional knowledge and skills was not among the top five theme categorisations in New Zealand. Similarly, positive culture was most frequently endorsed by one nation – Estonia (24.2% of theme categorisations) but was reported with moderate frequency by civilians across the other nations (6.9% to 11.4% of theme categorisations). Canada was the only nation in which positive culture did not appear among the top five positive aspects of working in a mixed military-civilian environment, at 6.9% of theme categorisations. Despite being one of the five most common themes in civilian responses to this question overall, collaboration was cited most frequently by civilian respondents in the Netherlands, Sweden, and Estonia (9.6%, 11.1%, and 9.5% of theme categorisations, respectively), but was not one of the top five themes cited by civilian respondents in Canada, the United Kingdom and New Zealand (reflecting 5.9%, 4.6%, and 6.1% of theme categorisations, respectively).

#### **14.4.3 Most Positive Aspects of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Context – Overall Comparison of Military and Civilian Perspectives**

Percentages of theme categorisations for all military and all civilian respondents combined across all the nations were also calculated and are presented below.<sup>4</sup> As shown in Figure 14-15, there were some notable differences in the responses and perspectives of military and civilian personnel. In particular, although military and civilians both identified diverse perspectives as the main benefit of a mixed military-civilian work environment, military personnel were much more likely to endorse this factor (30.5% of theme categorisations) as compared to civilians (19.7% of theme categorisations). Further, military were much more likely than civilians to indicate stability and continuity as being a key benefit (20.7% versus 3.8% of theme categorisations for military and civilian personnel, respectively). This pattern is not particularly surprising given that civilians were much more likely than military personnel to indicate that one of the main challenges is unstable work environment, as discussed in the analyses above.

<sup>4</sup> For this analysis responses within each group (military and civilian) were combined across nations. Given the variability in sample sizes among the nations, responses of personnel in some nations were larger than those in other nations. However, these data were not weighted by sample size as this was taken into account in the presentation of results for the cross-national analyses and was well-represented therein.



**Figure 14-15: Main Positive Aspects of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Context: Comparison of Responses of Military and Civilian Personnel.**

#### 14.4.4 Top Five Positive Aspects of Working in a Mixed Military-Civilian Environment

Similar to the previous question, despite there being overlap, military and civilian personnel across the nations indicated somewhat different themes as the five most positive aspects of working in a mixed military-civilian work environment. The top five themes among both military and civilian respondents<sup>5</sup>, although differing in order of frequency, included diverse perspectives, positive culture, additional knowledge and skills, and learning opportunities. Among military respondents, stability and continuity also appeared among the top five most frequent responses. Collaboration appeared among the most frequently cited responses for civilian respondents. Each of these themes is elaborated below and illustrative examples are provided.

##### 14.4.4.1 Diverse Perspectives

When respondents were asked to indicate the positive aspects of working in a mixed military-civilian work environment, the most common theme cited by military respondents (an average of 30.1% of total theme categorisations) and civilian respondents (an average of 20.4% of total theme categorisations) was diverse perspectives. This theme specifically pertains to getting exposure to new and/or diverse perspectives from

<sup>5</sup> When considering the order within each nation accounting for sample size, as presented in Figure 14-12 and Figure 14-14 in the previous sections.

individuals with different backgrounds. Respondents also frequently cited the diverse perspectives of personnel as beneficial for making more effective decisions.

The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- *Diversity of thought (no group think), Fresh ideas through military, continuity though Civilian.* (Canada).
- *Develops wider understanding, improves management skills, and offers different perspectives.* (United Kingdom).
- *Exchanging different (new) insights, different points of view, creativity, Different ways of handling problems, no tunnel vision, A different approach to issues, not just on the basis of military operations but also the human side.* (Netherlands).
- *It is good with different backgrounds and perspectives in order to avoid a stereotypical environment.* (Sweden).
- *Difference enriches us. The different experiences of one complement the other and this way it is possible to find the optimum end result.* (Estonia).
- *A broader spectrum of ideas and considerations that helps the organisation agility to adapt and overcome problems better and more quickly.* (New Zealand).

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- *A military-civilian work environment provides a diversified environment, allows for exchanges of ideas, which promotes creativity and affords an environment whereby both entities gain a broader perspective, complement each other and create an integrated approach to the goals of the CF.* (Canada).
- *Opportunities to learn from different approaches and perspectives.* (United Kingdom).
- *If you are open to it, to view things from a different perspective. It keeps you sharp.* (Netherlands).
- *A great variety of different kind of competencies that contributes to something good for the society.* (Sweden).
- *Complementing each other. Different worldviews.* (Estonia).
- *Different cultural ways of thinking that gives you a great variety to get a better outcome.* (New Zealand).

#### 14.4.4.2 Positive Culture

When respondents were asked to indicate the positive aspects of working in a mixed military-civilian work environment, another frequently cited theme was positive culture (an average of 8.7% of total theme categorisations for military respondents and 11.9% for civilian respondents). Respondents indicated experiencing a sense of belonging to the environment or culture of the organisation as well as an appreciation of the diverse military and civilian cultures, organisational structure and supportive environment.

The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- *The environment is relaxed, perhaps less strict and stringent. Many of my friends at work are civilian.* (Canada).
- *They (civilians) can bring a lighter edge to work as they do not necessarily feel the same pressures placed upon military personnel.* (United Kingdom).

- Variation in culture and experiences; Making use of differences in culture and approach; gentler manners. (Netherlands).
- It becomes a totally different culture that is positively mixed. (Sweden).
- More flexible workplace culture, the military side makes concessions in the rigidity stemming from the hierarchy and the work environment is more pleasant. (Estonia).
- More laid back, I find management is better if people have to manage civilian staff as well as military. (New Zealand).

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- The military has a particular culture and esprit-de-corps that civilians could learn and benefit from. (Canada).
- The military have (in my department) a good sense of humour and a very positive morale, the banter is brilliant (never personal). (United Kingdom).
- Cross-pollination of cultures. By working in a mixed environment one does get understanding and insight into the process of the Defence organisation and the interrelationships. (Netherlands).
- A positive basic view to work and the employer. Less internal opposition and fighting compared to pure civilian workplaces. (Sweden).
- Synergy from successfully merging experiences and cultures, better understanding of military national defence throughout the entire spectrum, etc. (Estonia).
- Compared with other civilian organisations I believe the values that have grown out of the military context underpin the entire organisation in a very positive way. (New Zealand).

#### 14.4.4.3 Additional Knowledge and Skills

Additional knowledge and skills was another theme frequently cited by respondents when asked to indicate the positive aspects of working in a mixed military-civilian work environment (an average of 16.9% of total theme categorisations for military respondents and 12.6% for civilian respondents). Responses involved the experience of working with high performing or skilled individuals who possess unique and valuable skillsets. Another dominant aspect of this theme was the high level of competence of military and civilian personnel and their willingness to pass on corporate knowledge.

The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- A vast array of knowledge, skills and a broader network of professionalism. (Canada).
- Civilian project managers have experience in procurement and do a great deal to support the equipment required. (United Kingdom).
- Military and civilian personnel complement each other. The knowledge and experience is more diverse and broader than in a purely military environment. (Netherlands).
- The SAF have been professionalized with the influx from civilian competence. (Sweden).
- Multifaceted nature. The military side has to be represented at every level in national defence. Civilians are often better specialists in certain fields. (Estonia).
- A better range of experience and skills to draw on. (New Zealand).

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- *Military members bring with them new work experiences and knowledge from other locations that benefit local operations.* (Canada).
- *Supplementing each other's knowledge. Civilian and military personnel complement each other, whereby the civilian component may help better guarantee continuity and military personnel help guarantee the continuing connection with the core tasks.* (Netherlands).
- *From my perspective as a civilian: insight into another world, an understanding for different ways of working.* (Sweden).
- *There are also experts in an area who are committed to the matter at hand. And also a positive, decent end result.* (Estonia).
- *Civilians can definitely lean on the military personnel's experience and knowledge. When I first started with Defence, I knew nothing about military ways, but the military personnel we have here are more than happy to help explain.* (New Zealand).

#### 14.4.4.4 Learning Opportunities

Another common theme among both military and civilian respondents relating to the positive aspects of working in a mixed military-civilian work environment was learning opportunities (an average of 6.1% of total theme categorisations for military respondents and 11.9% for civilian respondents). For military respondents, this theme had equal frequency with comments that did not fit any of the 13 themes and were labelled as “Other.” Responses reflected in learning opportunities often mentioned learning through training and new experiences provided by the mixed military-civilian work environment. This theme also includes comments regarding the opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the nature and/or importance of tasks that are performed by others.

The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- *When you find a civilian employee who is willing, military members can learn a great deal and gain experience with one particular trade.* (Canada).
- *The depth and wealth of experience and knowledge to be gained from each other.* (United Kingdom).
- *You can get the most out of both civilians and military's, stimulating and enriching.* (Sweden).
- *Learning from each other's experiences (general operation experiences vs. specialist knowledge) and learning from each other's culture.* (Netherlands).
- *Learning from each other and developing.* (Estonia).
- *Learning from each other. Respecting each other's skills and knowledge from both a military and civilian perspective.* (New Zealand).

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- *Can't beat the military-civilian environment for supporting continuous learning and professional development. Always results for Canadians that we can be proud of.* (Canada).
- *As a civilian you see how the military works and not just the front line fighting being broadcast on the evening news.* (United Kingdom).
- *We contribute with different mind-sets.* (Sweden).

- *Learning from each other's competences; the opportunity to learn from each other; learning from each other's experiences.* (Netherlands).
- *You learn something new every day (and that's the way it's been for the last 10 years).* (Estonia).
- *Learning from each other is a huge plus as I feel coming from a civilian working background I have contributed a lot of useful ideas to the team and implemented changes.* (New Zealand).

#### **14.4.4.5 Stability and Continuity**

The third most common overall positive aspect of working in a mixed military-civilian work environment mentioned by military respondents was stability and continuity (an average of 15.3% of theme categorisations). Despite no comments falling under this theme in Sweden or Estonia, it had high frequencies in the remaining nations. Comments falling under this theme discussed the benefits associated with civilian personnel maintaining corporate knowledge and continuity. Respondents frequently indicated that the continuity provided by civilian personnel is beneficial because it supplements areas of discontinuity (or instability) resulting from the military rotational cycle associated with military postings and deployments.

The following military responses illustrate this theme:

- *Continuity of civilians in positions increases corporate knowledge. They are often the ones who have the history and background on issues.* (Canada).
- *Due to high tempo, civilians do offer continuity to the section whilst personnel are deployed.* (United Kingdom).
- *Civilian personnel remain longer on function so that continuity is guaranteed. Civilian personnel possess a large part of our organization memory because they often are longer in a certain position. Military personnel can cleverly make use of that.* (Netherlands).
- *Because civilian personnel are not subject to the posting churn, they are able to build corporate knowledge in a position over time which makes them very valuable.* (New Zealand).

#### **14.4.4.6 Collaboration**

Another frequently cited positive aspect of working in a military-civilian work environment reported by civilian respondents was collaboration (an average of 7.8% of theme categorisations). Responses indicated that the mixed military-civilian environment encourages collaboration and teamwork. Others reflected on the positive aspects of working towards a common goal.

The following civilian responses illustrate this theme:

- *Good comradery, sense of humour, can do attitude, working for the mission as one cohesive team.* (Canada).
- *A recognition that we are here to defend the nation together, all parts of the same team.* (United Kingdom).
- *Realizing it all together as a team; to strengthen the 'combined team' of civilian and military personnel together by 'looking in each other's kitchen'.* (Netherlands).
- *The dynamics and mix of civilian and military skills.* (Sweden).
- *Closer communication, cooperation flows better.* (Estonia).

- *Different backgrounds, experiences and knowledge create an awesome environment for collaboration. There is a wealth of knowledge in any given situation for any given topic. It's really great to have.* (New Zealand).

## 14.5 SUMMARY

This Chapter presents an analysis of three open-ended questions contained within the MCPS that examine issues related to working in an integrated military-civilian context. In particular, these three questions pertain to:

- 1) The most important factors for establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian work relations;
- 2) The main challenges experienced when working in a mixed military-civilian work environment; and
- 3) The positive aspects to working in a mixed military-civilian work environment.

Coding schemes were developed for each open-ended question, and these were then used to code each of the responses into appropriate themes. The frequencies of theme categorisations for each question were analysed for each nation and compared cross-nationally, and were then analysed and compared for military and civilian respondents as a whole.

### 14.5.1 Overall Results

With respect to the most important factors for establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian work relations, both military and civilian respondents emphasised understanding/familiarity, respect, fairness/equality, collaboration/integration, and effective communication among the most important factors. Results were fairly consistent across the nations with some notable exceptions. This was evidenced by the fact that the top five themes represented 72.1% and 63.6% of all theme categorisations coded for this question for military and civilian respondents, respectively. Comparisons of military and civilian respondents combined across all the nations indicated that military and civilian personnel identified very similar factors as being important for establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian work relations, with the same five factors emerging as being most important between these two groups of personnel. However, civilians were somewhat more likely than military personnel to indicate respect as a key factor, and were also slightly more likely to identify fairness and equality as important, whereas military personnel were much more likely to indicate that understanding and familiarity with the other group is a key factor.

With respect to the main challenges of working in a military-civilian context, although a general cross-national pattern emerged, there was also a fair amount of cross-national variability in the responses. The main challenges identified by military personnel across the nations included lack of understanding as either the most, or second-most, significant challenge to working in a mixed military-civilian environment, and also indicated problems with work style or ethic, cultural differences, and poor attitude about others (with the top five themes representing 57.1% of all theme categorisations coded for this question across the nations). Similar to military respondents, comments from civilian respondents showed a fair degree of cross-national variability, although the top five themes for all nations combined represented 59.8% of all theme categorisations coded for this question, also indicating a good degree of consistency. Although none of the themes came up among the five most frequently cited themes for all of the nations, unstable work environment and poor attitude about others were among the top themes reported by five of the six nations in the study, and unfairness and inequality, lack of understanding, and cultural differences were also among the top five responses for the civilians of most nations. Further, although military and civilian personnel (combined across nations) identified some common challenges, some notable differences also emerged. In particular, military personnel identified lack of understanding and issues

with work style and work ethic as the key challenges, whereas these factors were endorsed less frequently by civilians. Conversely, civilians highlighted unstable work environment and poor attitudes about others as the key challenges, whereas these themes were indicated much less frequently by military personnel. Both groups identified unfairness and inequality as well as cultural differences with moderate frequency.

In terms of the main benefits of working in a mixed military-civilian environment, despite some cross-national variability, a general cross-national pattern emerged. The main benefits identified by military personnel across the nations included diverse perspectives, additional knowledge and skills, positive culture, stability and continuity, and learning opportunities. These top five themes represented 79.5% of all military respondents' theme categorisations for this question. Civilian respondents in all nations indicated diverse perspectives and learning opportunities as two of the most prominent positive aspects to working in a mixed military-civilian environment. Additionally, positive culture, collaboration, and additional knowledge and skills were among the top five responses for the civilians of most nations. However, the top five themes represented only 44.1% of civilian theme categorisations for this question, indicating a fair degree of cross-national variability. There were also some notable differences between the responses of military and civilian respondents taken together. In particular, although both groups identified diverse perspectives as the main benefit, military personnel were much more likely to endorse this theme as compared to civilians. Further, military were much more likely than civilians to indicate stability and continuity as being a key benefit (20.7% versus 3.8% of theme categorisations for military and civilian personnel, respectively). This pattern is not particularly surprising given that civilians were much more likely than military to indicate that one of their main challenges is unstable work environment.

#### **14.5.1.1 Commonly Cited Themes**

Given that some themes consistently emerged across nations and in the responses of military and civilian personnel across the questions, these themes likely represent some of the most important defining characteristics of working in an integrated military-civilian work environment and are discussed in greater detail below.

#### **14.5.1.2 Stability and Continuity in the Workplace**

One main theme that emerged as a main challenge and also a main benefit of working in a mixed military-civilian work environment was that of stability and continuity. In particular, military personnel tended to highlight stability as a main benefit of working in a mixed military-civilian context, whereas civilians often mentioned instability in the work environment as a challenge of working in such an environment. The nature of these responses indicates that the military operational requirements related to postings and deployments pose a challenge, particularly for civilian personnel. Responses frequently made mention of difficulties associated with retraining new personnel or losing skilled co-workers due to postings, training or deployments. These challenges were further compounded by difficulties associated with the change of priorities or management style experienced by personnel when a new supervisor was posted in. With that said some respondents also cited positive aspects associated with frequent postings such as meeting new personnel with different perspectives. Of note, stability and continuity was also a frequently cited benefit of working in a mixed military-civilian work environment by military personnel. In particular, military personnel emphasised the value of having a stable and knowledgeable force of civilian personnel who were capable of maintaining continuity and corporate knowledge over long periods of time and being prepared to offer support to military operations from home. To summarise the nature of this theme, the comments of civilian personnel indicate that they perceive their work to be affected by the frequent postings and deployments of their military co-workers. That said, military personnel recognise the challenges that may be posed by frequent turnover of positions and value the continuity provided by their civilian counterparts to ameliorate these effects.

#### 14.5.1.3 Fairness and Equality

Fairness and equality was another theme that emerged across the three questions, particularly as a challenge of working in a mixed military-civilian environment and also as an important factor to consider for establishing positive military-civilian personnel work culture and relations. Responses suggest that military and civilian personnel have concerns regarding the fairness of their pay, opportunities for training and development, career advancement, work arrangements, benefits, time off, and other policy-related issues. It is not surprising that this theme was often noted, given that fairness and equality is paramount in any type of diversity, including that inherent to military-civilian personnel differences.

#### 14.5.1.4 Respect

Another theme that is likely to be, and indeed was, evinced across the three questions was that of respect (although it may have been labelled somewhat differently in different themes). In particular, the main factor identified for establishing and maintaining positive military-civilian personnel work relations was mutual respect, including respecting differences in culture, views and opinions of military and civilian personnel.

#### 14.5.1.5 Understanding

Understanding of the “other” group was also a predominant theme across the questions. This included understanding what kind of work military and civilian personnel perform, understanding roles, and understanding divergent work cultures. Overall, it was suggested that to ensure optimal partnership and collaboration among military and civilian personnel working together, there needs to be an understanding on both sides with respect to having a common vision of the mission, and an understanding of each other’s perspectives and experiences.

### 14.5.2 Conclusion

Overall, the results of the open-ended questions in this cross-national survey highlighted important factors for enhancing collaboration in integrated military-civilian organisations. Furthermore, these results indicate that mixed military-civilian work environments present both unique challenges and advantages. For example, military and civilian personnel frequently cited challenges associated with fair treatment and a lack of understanding of each other’s roles, cultures, and perspectives, and reported experiencing challenges with the stability of their work environment related to the military rotational cycle. By the same token, the respondents also mentioned many ways in which military and civilian personnel complement each other, including by providing complementary knowledge/expertise, diverse perspectives, support, and continuity. Given the general cross-national patterns, these findings provide useful insights for enhancing military and civilian personnel integration and collaboration for many nations. However, some aspects are more prevalent in some nations and less important in others – individual nations should also take these differences into account when applying these findings. Despite some differences, military and civilian personnel revealed similar understandings of the benefits and challenges of working in mixed military-civilian contexts, and the main factors that require consideration to enhance the working relations between their two groups. As such, application of these findings is likely to improve the working environment for both groups and thus enhance military-civilian collaboration in general.

## 14.6 REFERENCES

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