



# THE FINANCE GUARD SERVICE IN THE LIGHT OF RECRUITMENT

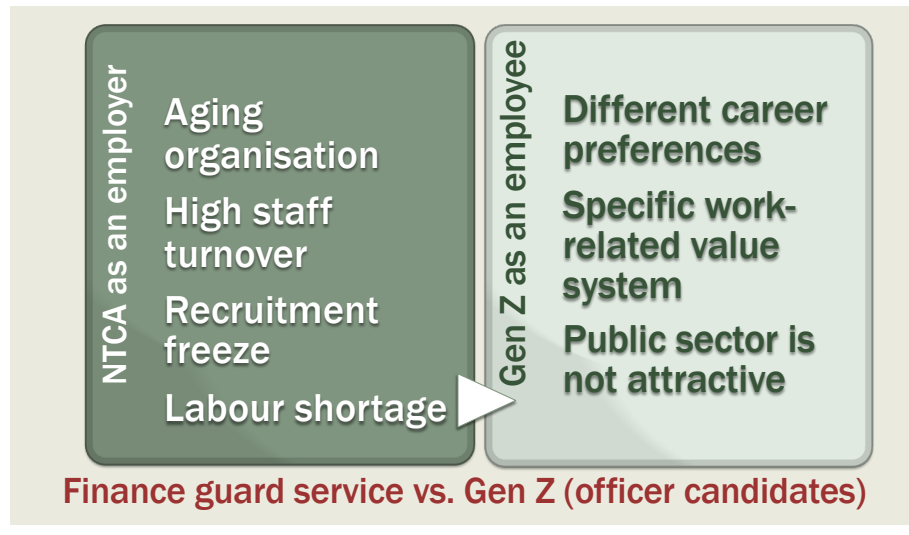
by associate professor  
Adrienn Magasvári

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen!

My name is Adrienn Magasvári. I am an associate professor at the Faculty of Law Enforcement of the Ludovika University of Public Service. I am delighted to be here today to talk about the results of an empirical study.

The central topic of my presentation is whether the customs and finance guard profession is attractive to Generation Z. The results of an empirical analysis I did in 2022 I would like to share with you.

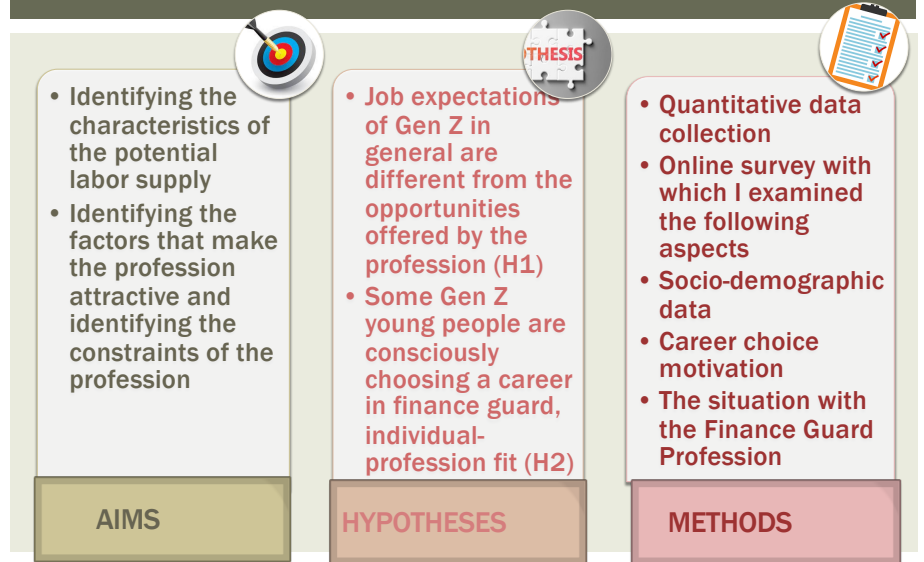
## THE RESEARCH PROBLEM



Where did I start, and what was the research problem?

As an employer, the National Tax and Customs Administration (NTCA) is an ageing organisation from its human resources point of view. These two factors of those four (mentioned in the slide) are the key drivers: the Staff Turnover and the Recruitment Freeze. The average age of its employees is 45 years. Nearly 70 per cent (%) of employees are 42 years or older, and the proportion of young people is an insufficient 2.25%. These data are not better even if we focus on the age profile within the Revenue Service of those working in the Customs and Finance Guard Profession. It causes a labour shortage and does not help the age or generational diversity either. The Customs and Finance Guard Profession has long been struggling with recruitment problems, for which the solution is recruiting Generation Z. These young people have different workplace preferences than the needs of previous generations and have specific work-related value systems. Therefore, public administration organisations need to be more attractive employers for newcomers.

## RESEARCH AIMS, HYPOTHESES, METHODS



The primary objective of the research was to identify the characteristics of the potential labour supply, identify the factors that make the profession attractive, and explore the constraints of the profession.

At the beginning of the research, I had two hypotheses.

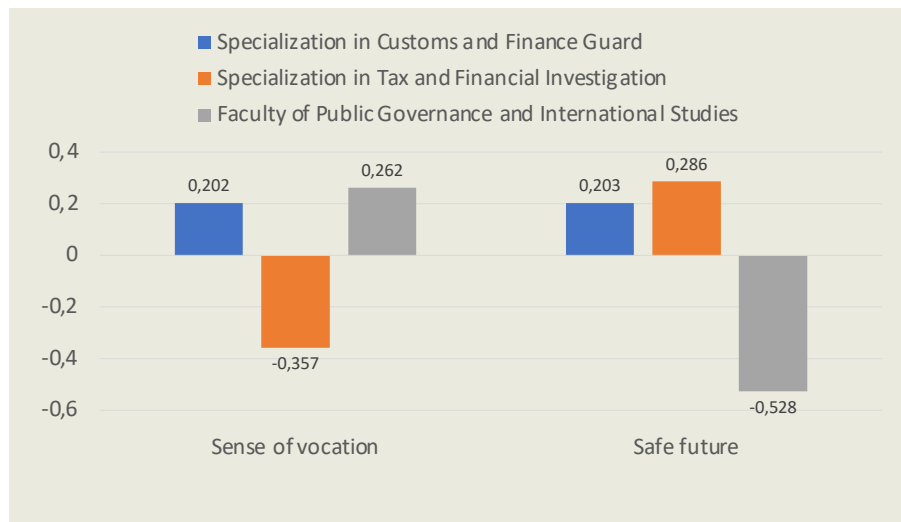
First, the job expectations of Gen Z, are fundamentally different from the opportunities offered by the Customs and Finance Guard Profession or the NTCA.

Second, some young Gen Z people consciously choose a career in customs and finance guard because they fit to this particular profession as an individual.

I collected quantitative data from a focal group during the study using a questionnaire. In addition to the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, I examined their career choice and knowledge of the Customs and Finance Guard Profession with the questionnaire. 192 university students participated in the comparative questionnaire survey.

130 were Customs and Finance Guard Cadets and 62 were students of the Faculty of Public Governance and International Studies of the Ludovika University of Public Service.

## RESULTS - CAREER CHOICE



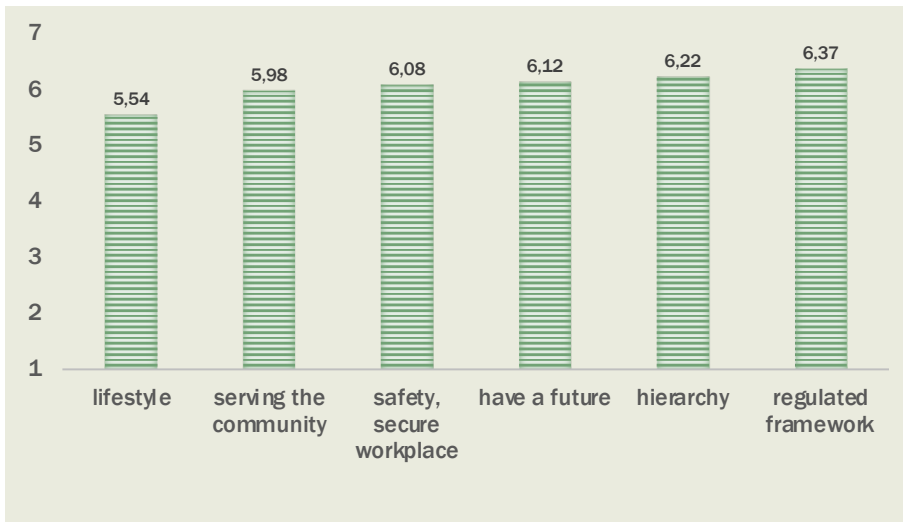
I examined 19 factors in connection with career choice motivation, from which I formed 5 factors with the help of factor analysis. Based on this analysis, only two factors were acceptable. The first indicator shows the level of commitment, generosity and interest in the profession (I called it a „sense of vocation”). The second factor includes claims about financial security, career development, and job security (I called it believes in a „safe future”).

On the one hand, the graph shows that customs and finance guard officer candidates choose this profession, hoping for a safe future.

On the other, commitment and a sense of vocation motivate students of Customs and Finance Guard Specialisation better than students of the other study programme, called Tax and Financial Investigation.

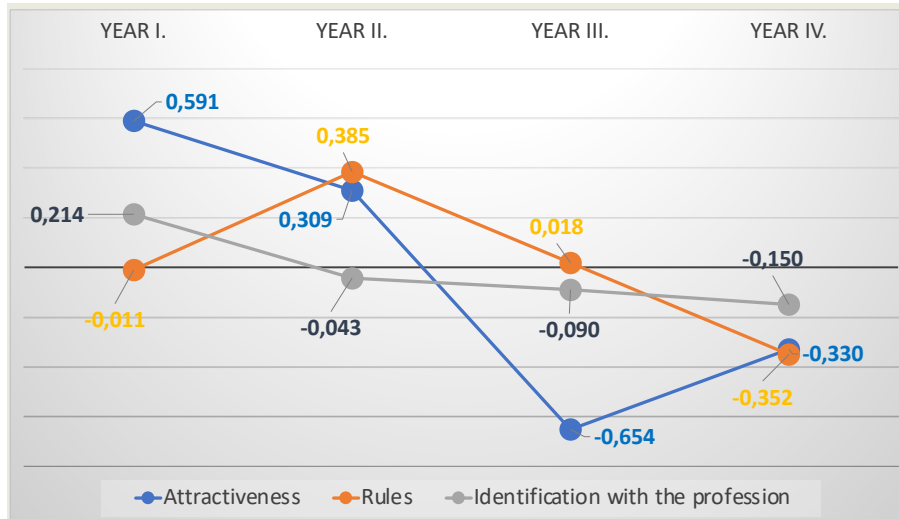
It is not visible on this slide, but I also examined the relationship between the two factors and the grades. According to the result, graduates are getting less and less motivated by the service to the community; they have lower interest in the profession, the commitment (sense of vocation), and surprisingly, a secure job and career (safe future).

## RESULTS – SITUATION OF THE PROFESSION



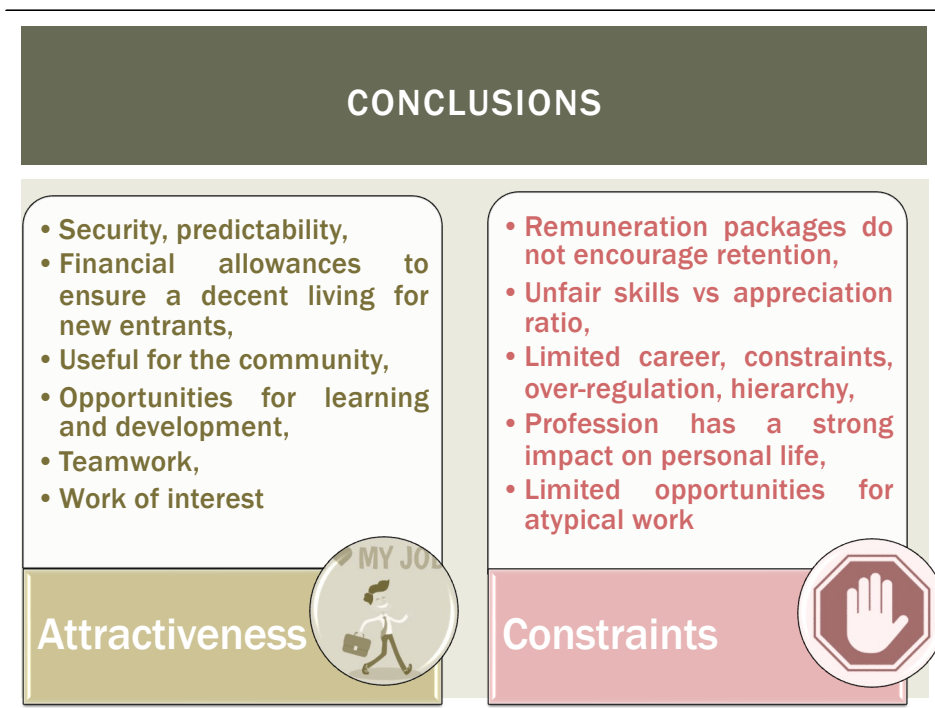
I was also curious about how cadets assess the Customs and Finance Guard Profession and I asked specific questions only for this group of respondents. I formulated 21 statements, among which the customs and finance guard profession is most characterised by over-regulated operation, hierarchy, security, service to the community, and living as a lifestyle, according to the respondents. The figure in this slide illustrates this.

## RESULTS – SITUATION OF THE PROFESSION



After that, I formed these 21 statements into groups using factor analysis. Here, I created three factors. The first measures the professional's opportunities (such as income, career, appreciation, learning and development, safety, working conditions, and workplace atmosphere). I named it „attractiveness“. The second focuses on rules, regulations, constraints, and expectations. I labelled it as „rules“. And the third one measures the generosity, altruism, the impact on the way of life. I named this as „identification with the profession“.

I also measured the correlation of the mentioned factors with grades. Based on the results, I saw the attractiveness factor significantly eroding year by year. A negative relationship could be demonstrated in how cadets identify with the profession. Every year, students feel they can identify with their future profession in a continuously decreasing manner.



Based on the quantitative study results, the factors that attract the profession for Generation Z can be well identified. It is also possible to specify the aspects that can hinder the choice of a profession and its long-term commitment.

The attractiveness factors can also be seen on the left side of this picture. These are, for example:

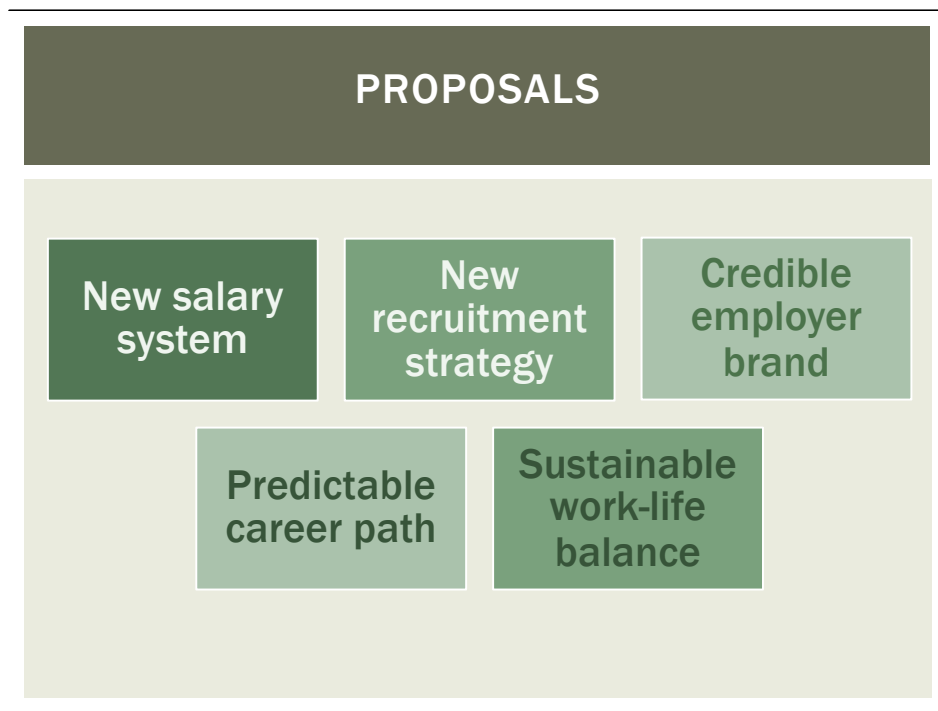
- Security, predictability,
- Initial financial allowances,
- Serving the community,
- Opportunities for learning and development,
- Teamwork,
- Work of interest.

Constraints and limitations are visible on the right. These are, for example:

- Remuneration packages do not encourage retention,
- Limited career and unfair skills vs appreciation ratio,
- Constraints, over-regulation, hierarchy,
- The profession has a strong impact on personal life,
- Limited opportunities for atypical work forms.

My first hypothesis was partially confirmed, as the Customs and Finance Guard Profession offers opportunities that meet most of the needs of Generation Z. However, it also raises limitations that make the profession unattractive. My second hypothesis was also partially confirmed, as certain professional traits are indeed strongly reflected in the career choice of officer candidates, such as internal motivation, long-term commitment, desire for a secure job, generosity, and interest in the profession. Moreover, some Z-generation characteristics are also evident in their particular case. Based on the results, the individual-profession fit is more characteristic of Customs and Finance Guard Specialization than the Tax and Financial Investigators.





My research proved that within every generation, some individuals appreciate the profession's values, respect its traditions and are well committed to the profession. We only need to find and target them with a reasonable offer. These efforts could be incorporated into a New Recruitment Strategy, a credible employer brand, a new and more equitable salary system, a predictable career path, a lower workload, and a more sustainable work-life balance.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!**

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Thank you for your attention! At the same time I would like to say goodbye as I have to join another online meeting. If you would like more information on this topic, our study with Zagon is available at the link on the slide.