

The 5th Erasmus Gender Seminar

Military Gender Studies
Multiplier Event

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

19 - 20 JUNE 2023
ACADEMIA MILITAR, PORTUGAL

The Organizing Committee shows the utmost appreciation to all the
Authors and Participants that contributed to the success of this event!

June, 2023

erasmus+
PORTUGAL EDUCAÇÃO E FORMAÇÃO



ACADEMIA MILITAR
MILITARY ACADEMY

Published by Academia Militar, PORTUGAL

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ISBN: 978-989-35199-2-9

Title:

Book of Abstracts from 5th Erasmus Gender Seminar 2023

Editors:

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Design:

Seargent Diogo Silva

Print:

Centro de Audiovisuais do Exército, Portuguese Army,
Portugal

Fostering the New Elites

The Gender Perspective in the View of Military and Civilian University Students in Italy

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In this paper perceptions and opinions expressed by two groups of university students sharing the same University study course are compared. Observed students are Italian Army cadets and civilian of both genders, sharing the same courses and subjects of study (data from MGS Erasmus+ Project). The paper presents the generational change within two different future elites, considering cadets and university students as a unique social group oriented to reach medium-high and high positions in various economic and professional sectors within national and global society. Starting from theories about the so-called culture gap between civilian and military elites as it was studied around the 2000 (Feaver & Kohn eds. (2001) *Soldiers and civilians. The Civil-Military Gap and American military security*; Forster, Edmonds & Cottey (2003) *Soldiers and Societies in post-communist Europe*; Forster (2006) *Armed Forces and Society in Europe*), the research presents the substantial culture similarity of the two groups, according to the set of orientations towards gender diversities and gender relations within the military organisation,

perceived and expressed by university students of both genders and status (civilians and military) of the so-called Z generation. To check the cultural change regarding gender relationships within the military, a comparison is made with a sample of military and civilian university students from the previous generation (the Millennials) thanks to a comparative research with similar data collected in the same institution in 2003 and 2004 (G. Caforio ed. (2007) Cultural Differences between the Military and Parent Society in Democratic Countries).

Themes: Gender equality in European Military Educational Institutions, Relevance of Gender differences in professional relationships, Gender and the Workplace

Keywords: Gender Relations, Military Organization, Cultural Gap, Cultural Change