# MGS

## MILITARY GENDER STUDIES

Erasmus+

# MGS ARMY HANDBOOK

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ACADEMIA MILITAR

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**MGS Army Handbook**

Academia Militar, "Nicolae Balcescu" Land Forces Academy, University of Turin and "Vasil Levski" National Military University

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national and international scientific events for teachers and students. She has always been interested in the subject of Gender Studies, so that topics related to this subject are part of the course and seminar taught at the "Nicolae Balcescu" Land Forces Academy in Sibiu, in the study discipline of Military Organizational Behavior. She also coordinated several bachelor and master's theses related to gender stereotypes in the military organization.

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Colonel Atanasova-Krasteva has long-standing interests in gender topics to which she has devoted much research and scientific reports. She continues to conduct research in the field of good gender policies, to improve her qualification as a gender advisor and to participate as a trainer in courses and seminars.

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He was involved in the project as a financial expert based on his desire to develop his professional knowledge and skills related to the proper allocation of funds under European programs, and the acquisition of new knowledge for implementation in a gender-mixed work environment.

# Introduction

## Grounds for a Military Gender Studies Module

*Portuguese Team*

This handbook was developed to be the central part of a *Military Gender Studies Module,* which we aim to implement at each of the partner military academies. The contents explored in each of the following chapters intend to clarify and educate its target audience on the importance of gender awareness. It demystifies commonly misunderstood concepts, informs on current gender dynamics in European military higher education institutions, and addresses a larger European framework of gender mainstreaming.

We consider the incorporation of gender topics into the curricula of military higher education institutions to be essential, as its lack hinders not only the plentiful integration of military women in the armed forces, but it can also potentially obstruct the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, and related ones.

## How the Military Gender Studies (MGS) Project was created

The MGS project originated from its participants desire to contribute to an active change in gender policies at their respective military higher education institutions. The Portuguese team, working from the Military Academy had the initiative to apply for an ERASMUS + fund, submitting

a project proposal that reflected our concerns regarding the current state of gender awareness in European military institutions, and our detailed plans and objectives. In 2020 the MGS project was granted a 30 month grant by the ERASMUS+ Program under Key Action 203. As this particular key action stands on international partnerships, the Portuguese team has been working with partners at the Vasil Levski National Military University (Bulgaria); Università Degli Studi di Torino (Italy); and Academia Fortelor Terestre 'Nicolae Balcescu' (Romania).

Even though the COVID-19 pandemic has restricted our work, the MGS team has strived to find different approaches and creative ways to pursue our goals, which are proudly presented in this handbook.

## Target audience

This handbook was created and developed with the specific intent to be taught at the four MGS partner military institutions. However, we encourage other European military institutions to adopt our MGS Module, as we consider the topics it addresses to be valuable in all European military institutions.

## Structure and Methodology

Structure-wise, the Military Gender Studies (MGS) project was divided into four main sections. The first one focused the development and application of Questionnaires and Interviews to students of the four partner institutions. We have collected 1500 questionnaires, and interviewed over 50 cadets, who gave us their perspectives regarding gender issues in their own institutions.

The second part of the MGS project concerned the development of the MGS Army Handbook. The Handbook was a collaborative work of all four partners, and it is a product of the data collected in the

questionnaires and interviews, plus research on current gender theory in military contexts.

The third part of the project encompasses the Learning, Teaching and Training (LTT) activities. These activities allowed for the implementation of the MGS Handbook, in the form of Lesson Plans. The first two LTT activities consist of seminars, composed of students from the four partner institutions. In these seminars we discuss topics pertaining gender mainstreaming, and engage with the students to facilitate productive debates.

The following two LTT activities consist of volunteer trainers from the four partner institutions. In these last two seminars, we incorporate our experiences with the students, and use the feedback we have received from them. This enabled us to instruct the trainers on how to best approach certain subjects, what topics should they be more sensitive to, etc. These trainers are expected to later incorporate the MGS module in their respective institutions.

Lastly, the fourth part of the MGS project is the dissemination of the results. During the first semester of 2023 we will participate in relevant European conferences both in the military, and civilian spheres. That will allow us to share the results of our project with our peers in the Gender Studies field. We will also organize a Multiplier Event in Portugal, which will serve as a way to share what we have learned throughout this process. We expect the participation of both military and civilian institutions in this Multiplier Event, which will hopefully draw other institutions to engage with our MGS module.

## Introduction to the content

The first chapter, *Key Concepts – Gender*, consists of a detailed overview of important concepts related to gender, focusing on those identified by the MGS team as being commonly misused or misinterpreted. The second chapter, *Gender Dynamics in European Military Higher Education Institutions*, consists on an analysis of how the MGS partner

institutions have addressed the topic of gender integration (concerning regulations, etc.), and overall gender mainstreaming. This chapter furthermore expands on gender mainstreaming in other European Military Higher Education Institutions.

The third chapter, Gender Mainstreaming in a European Military Context provides a broad approach to armed forces initiatives regarding Gender Mainstreaming in a military context. It includes a description of the roles of Gender Advisor and Gender Focal Point, both instrumental to an adequate implementation of gender awareness in multiple facets of military operations. Closing the Handbook we have the MGS Lesson Plans, which provide a structure, designed and planned by the MGS team, for trainers teaching this material. The lesson plans include information from the aforementioned chapters; identify teaching methodologies; specify learning activities, and provide a plan on how to assess the participant's understanding / determine learning outcomes.

# Chapter I

## Key Concepts – Gender

*Romanian Team*

Whether we are talking about stereotypes, biases or discrimination, gender issues are part of all aspects of social, political, economic and military life. Currently there is a growing pressure in military institutions and operations to integrate a gender perspective (OECD, 2011; IEEE, 2012; Kuehnast, de Jonge Oodrat, & Hernes, 2011; Egnell, 2016; Verveer, 2019). The aim of the authors' effort to increase the awareness is to ensure that the rights and dignity of women and men, be they civilian or military, are respected in the performance of their duties (Egnell, Hojem & Berts, 2014).

In the interest of addressing this reality, initially, the United Nations' (UN) agenda on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) includes the call to incorporate gender issues in all discussions within the military communities. Thus, the UN has comprehensively regulated the topic of gender perspective, by adopting the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on October 31, 2000. UNSCR 1325, which will be discussed at length on a later chapter of this Handbook, supports the importance of the inclusion of women not only in conflict prevention and resolution, but also in peace-building processes. To expand on this, Ferbach & Reeves (2018) emphasize the role of this Resolution in accentuating women's voices in debates and initiatives that address post-conflict security and reconstruction issues.

Subsequently, and in a similar manner, NATO has implemented this resolution, adjusting it to its own needs. As a result, NATO partner

countries have adopted action plans at the national level on the implementation of strategies of the UNSCR 1325 recommendations.

In this context, the Military Gender Studies (MGS) Project finds the conceptual clarification of important terms in the field of gender studies[1] to be of great necessity, as they are used in the operationalization of gender integration in military environments. We furthermore acknowledge the significance of disseminating the core concepts in this chapter throughout military communities that will have to implement UNSCR 1325.

## Key concepts for gender analysis

### Androcentrism

Linguistically speaking, in ancient Greek "andros" means "men and male". The term androcentrism, as an analytical concept, was introduced in scientific debates by Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1911) to designate the practice of considering the masculine and masculine experiences as the norm for human behavior and achievements (Dragomir & Miroiu, 2002).

It is a set of masculinity-centered norms operating in social institutions that become the standard to which all persons adhere (Lindsey, 1997; Hegarty, Parslow, Ansara, & Quick, 2013; Bailey, La France & Dovidio, 2019). In fact, androcentrism could be perceived as the evaluation of individuals and cultures based on male perspectives, standards, and values. The term refers to a masculinity-centered worldview which may not necessarily present explicitly "negative" views of women, but inherently positions men as representative of the human condition or experience. It is a complex, subtle, and often unacknowledged form of sexism, existing on a continuum which often

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[1]    Using as the main frame of reference the gender-related categories established by European Union and NATO.

includes misogyny and behaviors associated with a patriarchal society. It is also informed by cultures in which men are historically granted more power and influence, and thus retain the right to evaluate and interpret individuals and cultures (Hibbs, 2014). Androcentrism exists in all fields of study and cultural expression, including art, science, medicine, law, military and media (Bailey, La France & Dovidio, 2020). As some of the cadets interviewed for the MGS Project highlighted, the Army does not appear to be embracing changes in reaction to the increasing presence of women: "[…] *the Military Academy will never change a winning formula so to speak. Meaning that, if they spent all of those years training officers and things effectively went well, and they trained highly able officers, they will not change the way in which they train officers*" (PT.1); "*The military profession is a male profession.*" (BG.18).

## Feminism

The first recorded use of the word "feminist" in English dates back to 1852. The term gained international currency in the 19th-century women's rights movements. According to The Oxford English Dictionary, a feminist is a supporter of the equality between women and men, advocating for women's rights.

According to a generally accepted definition, feminism is a social movement rooted in an ideology that pivots on granting women political, economic and social rights. Based on the belief that men and women are equal, feminists not only argue that women should have the same rights as men in society, but also that they should have the same obligations as well, in an equivalent manner.

Feminists are motivated by the social, political, and economic equality between women and men, and by finding solutions to reduce gender discrimination in society. Feminism is not an ideology reserved for women; men who subscribe to gender equality are also likely to identify themselves as feminists.

Currently there are several waves of feminism recorded in mainstream literature:

- The 1st wave of feminism happened in the late 19th and early 20th centuries across Europe and North America. The movement was a long struggle for political equality between men and women. The first wave of feminism is associated with the suffragettes' campaign for women's right to vote in Great Britain.
- The 2nd wave of feminism occurred between the 1960s and 1980s. As it happened in the first wave, there was a unifying goal: achieving not only political equality, but also social equality between men and women. What was previously considered a woman's problem (e.g. housework duties, with women's highest purposes being domestic, maternal, and aesthetical) was recognized as systemic, social and political problems, and thus the personal (private) became political (Hanisch, 1969). Western societies' attitudes towards women were fundamentally changed, and the movement for women's rights brought light to important issues like: the right to educational equality, to equal pay, to contraception and safe and legal abortion[2], to a life free from both physical and sexual violence, etc.
- The 3rd wave of feminism erupted in the 1990s. The third wave was represented by a more inclusive form of feminism, that drew attention to the intersectionality of different forms of women's oppression based on race, ethnicity, sexual identity, age, etc. (Crenshaw, 1991). The 3rd wave established the differentiation

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[2] Despite the fact that oral contraception came on the market in 1960, in the United States (and after a year in Europe), for more than two decades, restrictive laws barred it for unmarried women and for women under the age of twenty-one. After 1950, many countries began to liberalize abortion laws, but the approach of the Church and some political regimes included a ban on contraception and abortion. These laws form the basis of the restrictive legislation on abortion and contraception that still exists in some countries. "Twenty-five percent of the world's population lives in countries with highly restrictive abortion laws, mostly in Latin America, Africa and Asia. In Europe two countries have highly restrictive abortion laws" (Raday, Facio, Zelinska, Chandrakirana & Aouij, 2017, p.7).

between sex and gender and embraced the fight for trans rights as a part of intersectional feminism (Butler, 1999). The movement was diffuse, tending to involve fighting against workplace sexual harassment, and working to increase the number of women in positions of power.

- The 4th wave of feminism, starting around 2012/13, is centered towards intersectional approaches within feminism (which began in the 3rd wave) and heavily focused on digital media platforms and movements, like *#MeToo*, *Time's Up* or *#YesAllWomen*. These movements are propagated mainly online, and promote feminist causes with campaigns on rape culture, body shaming, among others. This wave continues to strive for social change, points the finger at the predatory behavior of some powerful people and contests the system that permits others to fall victim. Even though the main (and most public) targets have been men, the movements have also condemned the participation of some women in several rape culture cases (e.g. Ghislaine Maxwell in the Jeffrey Epstein sexual abuse case, or Allison Mack in the DOS / NXIVM sex trafficking case).
- there is an ongoing debate about the existence of a 5th wave of feminism. Proponents claim this wave was created around 2015, as a reaction to the recent establishment of fake news as a monolithic concept, and online trolling / online harassment increasing in momentum. All of these recent developments have propelled feminist groups to be better organized, more active and more focused, to bring about meaningful, and lasting, change.

Though some matters related to feminism may differ depending on societal and cultural contexts, they are broadly tied by the underlying philosophy of achieving equality of gender in every sphere of life.

US leading scholar on Critical Race Studies Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989, 1991) introduced the concept of "intersectionality" in 1989 to emphasize the way in which some factors and characteristics that generate discrimination against women may interact, increasing

their overwhelming impact. *Intersectional Feminism* refers to the understanding of gender discrimination in relation to other discriminatory social identities, such as race, socioeconomic status, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and others (Hide, Bigler, Joel, Tate & van Anders, 2019; Collins, 2019; Collins & Bilge, 2020).

As it is the case with all ideologies, different schools of thought and sub-divisions thereof are endorsing feminism under an array of different forms, such as cultural feminism, differential feminism, eco-feminism, liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, radical feminism, post-colonial feminism, post-modern feminism, etc.

## Gender

It is a misconception that the topic of gender only refers to women, and women's issues. Gender refers to both meanings and social / cultural norms attached or prescribed to the sexes in certain particular social systems, through which human beings are categorized as feminine, masculine, gender fluid (when both feminine and masculine presentations are embraced on different occasions, and /or in different ways), or non-binary/agender (when the person does not identify themselves within the gender binary spectrum). Gender therefore refers to a socio-cultural identity, because it may refer to qualities, tastes, aptitudes, expectations, roles, and responsibilities associated with women and men in a given society.

To understand the implications of gender equality, it is first important to clearly distinguish between the categories of gender and sex (Fausto-Sterling, 2012). These terms are often used interchangeably, even though they are conceptually distinct.

Due to the increased scientific popularity and mediatization of gender issues[3], the confusion between sex and gender has started to

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[3]  A general Google search for books whose title contains the word "gender" returns 32,600,000 items. After refining the results depending on the year of publication,

dwindle. However, there is still some confusion about the proper use of terms in this area of concern. The confusion between sex and gender is illustrated in the responses of students from the four military academies who were part of the research sample and were interviewed for the MGS Project: *"Girls and boys have certain gender-specific skills and characteristic […] maybe boys are better physically equipped"* (RO.1); *"Everyone in the army is ‹‹the same sex››"* (BG.4).

Gender refers to the social, cultural, and psychological traits linked to men and women through particular social contexts. The term "sex" is used to describe biological differences, and "gender" is a term used to define the socially constructed roles and attributes people learn through socialization processes and later perform in society as both women and men (Butler, 1999). In other words, gender is not inherited, but learned. While sex makes us biologically male or female, gender is a spectrum, and people may identify themselves in different places or levels within the gender spectrum.

Some authors claim that the terms sex and gender are interdependent: our conception of gender influences biological discourses on sex and vice versa (Goldstein, 2012, p.2), while others argue that sex and gender are not dependent on each other. According to the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations (NCGM), the term gender "[…] includes the social attributes associated with being male and female learned through socialization, which determine a person's position and value in a given context. These attributes are socially constructed and are not biological, hence are not constant and could be changed over time" (Hammar & Berg eds., 2015, p.10). It can be stated that gender is a symbolic system through which bodies enter sociality.

In a toolkit for gender research published by The European Commission (2013) it is stated that gender refers to "cultural values and social attitudes that together shape and sanction feminine and masculine behaviors, and also affect products, technologies, environments, and knowledge" (p.9).

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it can be seen that 29,500,000 have been published in the 21st century. More than that, 20,300,000 of these have been published in the last two years.

Gender differences are instilled based on the specific perceptions of a particular society regarding the physical differences and the assumed tastes, preferences and abilities of women and men. In historical and comparative social analysis, gender differences are universally recognized as social conventions that modify over time and across cultures, parallel with the changes and evolution that occur in societies.

**Gender analysis**

Gender analysis is "the systematic gathering and examination of information on gender differences and social relations in order to identify and understand inequalities based on gender" (NATO, 2017, p.5). It could also be described as the set of methods used to understand the relationship between men and women in the context of their society.

Gender analysis requires a critical investigative approach aimed to examine the way gender roles, activities, opportunities and rights impact both men and women. Focused on exploring the differences between men and women in terms of access and control of resources, gender analysis also comparatively discusses the constraints men and women experience. All evaluations and situational assessments should incorporate a gender analysis, in order to diminish or even eradicate the perpetuation of gender-based inequalities and injustices. Against this backdrop, gender analysis is the springboard for gender mainstreaming.

In the working guide for practitioners published by The Office of NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security (n.d.) stated:

"A main purpose of gender analysis is to reveal political, social and economic inequalities between men and women by highlighting the gender-based roots of these inequalities. Thus, gender analysis can:

- lead to an understanding of the underlying causes of power imbalances and inequalities between men and women (structural inequalities);
- explain how men and women are experiencing threats, vulnerabilities and conflict differently (conflict-related inequalities. Gender analysis can demonstrate how different roles for men and women during, and after, armed conflict will also impact their contribution to conflict-prevention and post-conflict reconstruction)" (p.12).

For example, gender analysis is a path to examine differences in laws and traditions for women and men regarding inheritance rights in different countries. One such example can be observed in Kosovo, where although there are no legal differences in inheritance between men and women, when it comes to local traditions, particularly in rural areas, women are expected to hand over property to their brothers. Likewise, in Afghanistan, while civil law grants women the right to inherit land, few women (especially daughters) actually receive inheritances (UN-Habitat, 2020).

Another example of applied gender analysis pertains to military planning activities, and how the different security concerns of women and men in the area of operation are assessed, or how power relations in the community are considered to ensure women and men have equal access to assistance where the military is engaged in supporting humanitarian assistance. Other examples would include "understanding how customary conflict-resolution mechanisms affect women and men differently and how their social status may change as a result of war" (NATO, 2017, p.6)

Gender analysis is a very important part of planning military operations. For example, from a military perspective, a gender analysis of a patrol route can detect potential security risks, as Hammarb & Berg (eds. 2015) explain: "a male soldier walking into the female bazaar could have created a security situation that would have been a potential risk to both their own troops as well as local national women in the bazaar.

Deploying women and providing gender balanced patrol units could, in this case, be a way to minimize risks in such situations" (p.15).

### Gender bias

Gender bias is the tendency to favor, support or prefer one gender over the other. Gender bias is defined as "the often unintentional and implicit differentiation between men and women by placing one gender in a hierarchical position relative to the other in a certain context, as a result of stereotypical images of masculinity and femininity" (European Commission, Toolkit Gender in EU-Funded Research, 2011, part 1.2).

Although sometimes unconscious and unintentional, it may often generate harmful discrimination if it is not duly recognized and properly addressed. As an example, gender bias can be translated as a type of preference in the recruitment process for certain jobs.

This phenomenon has also been noticed by the cadets interviewed for the MGS Project, who said that men are preferred when it is necessary to take command of a group, to be a leader, to be responsible for certain activities: *"In the training camps someone had to instantly take command, to be in charge, and a girl wanted to do that but the answer was no; it was suggested that a boy should do it. It often happens. It is preferred that in every situation to be a boy involved and in general it happens that the boys are encouraged to take command"* (RO.2). Also, a subject reported that some malicious statements are made against women before the task begins, and their possible mistakes are immediately associated with the fact that they are women: *"Because ‹‹oh, she's a woman››,* [the superiors] *presume that they don't have to demand the same things they demand to a man."* (PT.3); *"When women are a minority on a team, they often feel attacked and rejected."* (BG.14); *"Boys humiliate us a little, saying that it's better to go and solve the problem themselves"* (RO.4).

As a gender bias in the military university environment, the respondents also exemplified the expectation that girls should have

a higher academic performance, and boys should have a better performance in military training. There is also a bias that men are better than women in leadership positions: *"I don't think members of the opposite sex will take me seriously commanding them, and that worries me"* (BG.16). Despite this bias, among the cadets interviewed for the MGS research, women generally feel comfortable commanding a group of men, but not all men feel comfortable commanding a group made up mainly of women: *"I behave differently when I'm in a group with more girls. I would be reluctant to apply certain sanctions or give certain orders to those women"* (RO.8); *"There would be some conversations and impressions about the fact that I have certain standards and pretensions from that subunit. They* [female colleagues] *would feel discriminated against because I would approach a totally normal standard".* (RO.7)

### Gender blindness

**Gender** blindness is the practice of disregarding gender as a significant factor in interactions between people, resulting in the illusion of unbiased social dynamics.

Gender blindness is the opposite of gender **awareness, as it negates the existence of gender-based discrimination**. To be gender aware means to be in tune with the differences, expectations, and needs of people of different genders. Instead, gender blindness can further gender inequalities, ignoring historical differences between people of different genders.

The term gender blindness describes the incapacity to acknowledge the assignation of men/boys' and women/girls' roles and responsibilities based on particular social, cultural, economic and political settings and environments. Projects, programs, policies and attitudes which are gender blind "do not take into account these different roles and diverse needs. They maintain the status quo and will not help transform the unequal structure of gender relations" (EIGE, Glossary & Thesaurus,

n.d). This aspect of reality was mentioned by one of the cadets interviewed for the MGS Project: *"[…] the person that trained me for my military tryouts said to me that the Military Academy will never change a winning formula so to speak."* (PT.1).

According to the results of a study conducted by Martin & Philipps (2017), "[…] gender-blindness – the belief that gender differences should be downplayed – is a more adaptive strategy for increasing female workplace confidence than gender-awareness – the belief that gender differences should be celebrated". One of the cadets interviewed for the MGS Project said: *"I think that discrimination start when you begin to pay too much attention to the issue itself."* (PT.3).

### Gender discrimination

The concept refers to "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of a perceived gender identity, which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on the basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field." (UN, 1979, article 1). The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) recognizes and addresses both forms of discrimination, whether contained in laws, policies, procedures or practice:

- "*de jure* discrimination – in some countries, for example in Afghanistan, a woman is not allowed to leave the country or hold a job without the consent of her husband (European Parlament, 2022).
- *de facto* discrimination – for example, a man and woman may hold the same job position and perform the same duties, but their respective benefits may differ" (Concepts and Definitions. Women, Peace and Security in NATO, p.6).

For example, during the MGS interviews with the cadets a cadet reported a situation in which she could not finish an exhausting military march and was subsequently punished for several days and made to do extra physical training. She felt discriminated against because she was the only one to receive that punishment, even though there were some men who also had not completed the march, but the platoon commander decided she needed to be further motivated. As a peculiarity, even men cadets sometimes feel discriminated against: men are required to have higher scales at sports exams; men are assigned tasks that require physical force or improper working conditions, women are not involved in the transport of heavy weapons, snow removal, furniture moving, etc.: *"There is discrimination in the sense that women are generally exempt from the same physical activities that we* [man] *must perform, although, theoretically, we are considered to have the same rights and the same obligations."* (RO.7).

Authors such as Crenshaw (1991), Verloo (2006), Hancock (2007) studied gender discrimination from a feminist perspective, championing the distinction between "multiple discrimination" and "intersectional discrimination". The term *multiple discrimination* (used for reasons of simplification and applicability in EU equality policies) implies that "discrimination can occur on the basis of more than one ground; a person who is discriminated against on grounds of their race may also suffer discrimination on grounds of her gender, her sexual orientation, her religion or belief, her age or her disability" (European Commission, Fredman, 2016, p.27). In this case, a person may suffer the discrimination separately, on different occasions, or even simultaneously, but in different ways. If a deeper analysis is made, we discover the concept of intersectional discrimination, a particular form of multiple discrimination, which occurs when two or multiple grounds operate simultaneously and interact in an inseparable manner, producing distinct and specific forms of discrimination. The combination of these factors creates a negative synergy and makes every case individual, as explained by Sandra Fredman (European Commission, 2016):

"The disadvantage experienced by black women is not the same as that experienced by white women or black men. For example, in DeGraffrenreid, a US redundancy case, black women, being the most recent entries to the company, were made redundant first. Since both white women and black men were among those who escaped redundancy, the black women complainants could not claim that they had been less favorably treated on grounds of either gender alone or race alone. It was only because she was both black and female that she was discriminated against. Such discrimination is not fully described by simply adding two kinds of discrimination together. Black women share some experiences in common with both white women and black men, but they also differ in important respects." (p.28)

Studies conducted by Fredman have shown a shortage **of data and legal mechanisms capable of dealing with intersectional discrimination** at European level. The abovementioned author stated that an intersectional approach to gender issues could lead to a systemic reform of equal opportunity policies.

### Gender diversity

Assuming that human diversity implies empowering people by respecting and appreciating what makes them different, gender diversity refers to "the extent to which a person's gender identity, role, or expression differs from the cultural norms prescribed for people of a particular sex" (American Psychological Association [APA], p.20). Thus, the concept of gender diversity emphasizes the recognition and acceptance of different gender identities. Also, this term makes possible to describe people in an affirmative and potentially non-stigmatizing manner, without mentioning a particular cultural norm. "In the case of gender, individuals use a myriad of terms to self-identify – most commonly woman and man, but also transgender, genderqueer, bigender, gender fluid, and many others" (Magliozzi, 2016, p.2).

Gender identity may coincide with the sex assigned at birth (*cisgender*) or differ from it (*transgender*) (Schilt & Westbrook, 2009). Gender identity results from the internal experiences and sense of self, which can be conventional or unconventional gender identification, sometimes different from the designated sex of birth. Whilst gender identity supports the diversity of internal sense of gender, gender expression outwardly reveals the diversity of gender, playing out with different means, including speech, clothing, hairstyling, tattoos, and mannerisms. It also includes the pronouns individuals use to convey their gender identity (e.g. she/her, they/them, he/him, etc.).

The term gender diversity is often used to indicate a fair representation or proportion of all genders and gender identities (including non-binary) in a particular environment or organization. The data collected from the sample of cadets involved in the MGS Project showed the need of women real contribution to the group performance: "*We can always associate a bigger presence of female cadets to a larger sensitivity, to another point of view about situations. And we, as subordinates end up understanding a difference in terms of communication, in terms of problem solving*" (PT.4); "*I believe in the strength of women and that they can hold the same positions as men, but it is necessary that they have certain skills, not just because you have to cover a ‹‹pink quota ›› for façade.*" (IT.3). All the subjects reported an unbalanced representation of gender, in favor of men. Due to that situation, cadets (men and women) mentioned that certain qualities of one gender are missing from the group and cannot be compensated by those of the opposite gender. People belonging to the majority are aware of the benefits that the minority could bring to the group: "*If equality is perfunctory, just for show, it doesn't make sense. You need the necessary skills for this type of work* [in the Army]. *If there are skills, then the presence of both genders is advantageous because it creates more balance.*" (IT.3).

**Gender equality**

Gender equality is the term of choice in many important international agreements[4]. It is preferred when referring to equal rights and chances, life prospects, and the empowerment of men/boys and women/girls.

Gender equality is recognized today as a fundamental human right and a common value of the European Union. Gender equality is achieved if no discrimination based on a person's gender occurs. It is "the equal distribution of opportunities and the allocation of resources or benefits, or access to services regardless of gender" (European Commission, Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015, 2011). The term addresses "the situation where all individuals are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations imposed by strict gender roles. The different behaviors, aspirations, and needs of women and men are considered, valued, and favored equally" (European Commission, Gender in EU funded research. Toolkit, 2011, p.8).

Among the ideas regarding the equal opportunities in the officers' career, the participants to the MGS Project mentioned that women do not have access to high ranks and leadership positions because, for physical reasons, they do not perform in combat branches, do not go on international missions as much as men, and cannot advance in their careers in the same way as men. As an example, there are only two women with the rank of General in the Romanian Army. This shows that cadets tend to disregard reasons not directly regarding physical strength. A more optimistic opinion was expressed by subjects from other countries: "*Since women joined the Army 20 years ago, now and in the next few years the highest ranks (such as Colonel, General) will be held by women*" (IT.1); "*When there was the first female general in the Air Force, everyone made a big party. I asked myself: because she*

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4     The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN; UNSC resolution 1325 (2000); The EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025.

*is a woman? Or because you have all your previous career history that allowed you to reach the general rank? To choose based on gender, in my opinion is anti-meritocracy. Women can become generals, but the reason should not be because they are women.*" (PT.4).

In a toolkit of the European Commission (Gender in EU Funded Research. Toolkit, 2011) it is stated that equal opportunity indicates

> "the absence of barriers to economic, political and social participation on the grounds of gender identity. Such barriers are often indirect, difficult to discern and caused by structural phenomena and social representations that have proved particularly resistant to change. Equal opportunities are grounded on the rationale that a whole range of actions are necessary to redress deep-seated sex and gender-based inequities. This concept should be distinguished from equal treatment, which merely implies avoiding direct discrimination" (p.8).

For example, some subjects of the MGS Project stated that there is equal treatment for women and men at their military academy, and the arguments used referred to equal rights, equal tasks or emphasized the total lack of differences in the academic component of students' activities: "*All military students have the same right to education, health, professional development, we have the same scholarships, we can receive prizes, days off or sums of money, according to the regulations applicable at the academy level*" (RO.1). Among other ways in which gender equality is manifested, the following were mentioned: the staff of the institution is mixed, there are men and women in all positions, the student companies are mixed, the regulations do not have different provisions by gender: "*We have male teachers/female teachers, male commanders/female commanders. There are no differences at the admission exam, there are no separate places for boys and girls. So, there is equality.*" (RO.5)

Equality does not mean erasing the differences between genders, or ignoring the different interests, needs or priorities of women and men. The concept is clarified by NATO (2017), which states that

equality means rather that "women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female" (p.6).

According to the results of research conducted under the MGS Project, gender equality is often addressed in military academies, especially where different scales to cadets' physical tests are imposed. Despite the understanding and recognition of physical differences – *"girls are built a little weaker physically than boys"* (RO.4); *"it is a fact that men are physically stronger than women"* (IT.1); *"On the mental side, it cannot be said that there is a difference because you can find both psychologically strong and resilient boys as we manage to find resilient girls, so there is not that much difference. Physics is actually different; it is proven that we are different anatomically"* (PT.3) – this biological difference is not considered so great as to justify the imposition of different scales at the physical tests: *"As there are strong girls, there are also weak boys"* (RO.5); *"We have a colleague in the platoon* [a man] *who can't do 15 push-ups and we, almost all the girls in the platoon, can do 30"* (RO.3); *"From a physical point of view, men are more performing than women and stronger as character, less subject to stress and more able to manage situations than women. I don't see any differences in terms of learning and lexical skills."* (IT.4); *"Basic physical tests have to be different for men and for women, but military tests have to be the same"* (PT.5).

We noted that almost all of the cadets' explanations are related to the physical differences between men and women, although ensuring gender equality refers equally to skills and strength. Military leaders respect gender equality if they give each of their subordinates tasks that match their different abilities, not just their physical strength.

Under the umbrella of gender equality, the diversity of gender is acknowledged, allowing everybody equal opportunities of advancement in all walks of life and at all levels (social, political, economic, and cultural). Gender equality should not be perceived solely as a women's concern, because it concerns both men and women. NATO places equality among his concerns with the NATO/ EAPC Policy and Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security being based on this concept.

The equal rights principle represents "the right to influence and participate in society and to have access to power and influence" (UN Security Council, 2000). This is the core of democracy, which ensures the legitimacy of the states. In the planning, execution and evaluation of military operations, this principle involves guaranteeing human rights for all, regardless of gender.

### Gender inclusion

Gender inclusion expresses the idea that all services, opportunities, and establishments should be open to all people, regardless of their gender identity, and that man and woman stereotypes should not define societal roles and expectations.

During the MGS project research we have assessed that the cadets generally believe that gender equality and inclusion are two problems that have already been solved upon the admission of women to the academies. Many cadets (both men and women) are not aware of the need for further the efforts to integrate gender issues equitably into all aspects of (military) life. The problems that appear later in the military students' groups are treated superficially, and are perceived as whims of the women, which are considered favored: *"From the boys' point of view, it would be nonsense. I mean, after we get into the academy and we have equal seats, what else do we want? But girls go for the idea* [gender mainstreaming]*, they think it is needed."* (RO.2). Others tackle gender inclusion: *"Boys take them like this … a lot of jokes, always making jokes on this subject, well … some of them, and the girls think that they are somewhat affected by the issue of gender acceptance in the army."*[5] (RO.3).

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[5] Please note that we have translated exactly the terms used by the subjects into Romanian, in which the use of the words *boy* and *girl,* even when referring to adults, has no negative connotations and does not express lack of maturity of the persons concerned, as could be the case in other languages.

Gender inclusion can also be ensured at a communication level. Gender-inclusive language refers to communication strategies by which gender relations can be expressed correctly, for example by avoiding as much as possible the use of a language that explicitly or implicitly refers to a single gender. It also implies the use, through integrative alternatives, of gender-sensitive language, depending on the characteristics of each language. Using gender-inclusive language means "speaking and writing in a way that does not discriminate against a particular sex and does not perpetuate gender stereotypes. Given the key role of language in shaping cultural, political and social attitudes, using gender-inclusive language is a powerful way to promote gender equality and eradicate gender bias" (Concepts and Definitions. Women, Peace and Security in NATO, p.17). Efforts are currently being made to replace the use of the masculine (as a form of generic expression, to indicate all genders) with more gender-inclusive language. The NATO Gender-Inclusive Language Manual presents a series of techniques by which language becomes more inclusive: the use of the plural, the omission of pronouns, the use of both pronouns (masculine and feminine), the use of gender-neutral words like "person", "human", "spouse", etc.

In the military environment there is some reluctance to change language towards gender inclusiveness. One of the cadets interviewed for the MGS project considered that it is not necessary to adopt a neutral language because *"introducing a gender-neutral language would take away from people's identities. It would also reduce and limit the set of words to be used in setting tasks"* (BG.14); *"Language is irrelevant. Having terms declined in the masculine is a linguistic tradition, not a lack of respect for the feminine gender."* (IT.4). *"I would say that it is not essential and most of the time I did not feel discriminated by the way of treatment"* (PT.7). Another argument against gender inclusive language is that *"things have been this way since forever; this type of language has been used since forever in our country"* (RO.2). On the other hand, there are cadets who believe that professional activities in the military should be gender-neutral, because they belong to all those who carry them out: *"When we use*

*certain words that have a certain gender, it implies somehow that only the person of that gender is capable to do that"* (RO.5), *"language should therefore be disconnected from gender but linked to the role played within the organization"* (IT.8).

### Gender perspectives

Gender perspective is the ability to notice when and if men/boys and women/girls might be differently impacted by a situation because of their gender. The application of a gender perspective allows for a better perception of the society and consequently improves the individuals' situational awareness.

This creates a better understanding of culture, customs, and values. "Gender perspective looks at the impact of gender on people's opportunities, social roles, and interactions" (FAO, 1999).

In the NATO report on the review of the implications of UNSCR 1325 on missions (Lackenbauereds, 2013), the integration of a gender perspective is explained as "a way of assessing gender-based differences between women and men as reflected in their social roles and interactions, in the distribution of power and the access to resources" (p.25). From the NATO's directive (2017) point of view, "the aim of this is to take into consideration the particular situation and needs for men and women, as well as how different activities have different effects on them. More fundamentally, implementing a gender perspective is done by adapting action following a gender analysis" (p.5).

Gender perspective is an efficient approach aimed at fostering a better comprehension of the power dynamics between men and women. Such a strategy could easily identify the actors who access and manage resources and those who are totally involved in the society's decision-making process. NATO (2017) states that "by looking at the entire population, recognizing their specific needs and contributions and providing the appropriate comprehensive response, the understanding of the operational environment is enhanced" (p.4).

A full integration of a gender perspective should be ensured in the planning, execution and evaluation phase of military operations by conducting gender analyses throughout the process and highlighting the differing security concerns, risks and experiences of persons belonging to different gender. Gender perspectives should be observed by everyone, and are mainly overseen by Gender Advisors (GENAD), and Gender Focal Points (GFP)[6]. Groothedde (2013) draws attention to the need for everyone's involvement, as gender perspectives should be a responsibility of all military personnel up to the commander. In fact, he role of commanders at all levels is particularly crucial in achieving gender efforts.

## Gender roles
## (masculinity, femininity and non-binary)

Within communities, as within the society in general, humans have a set of ideas and expectations about how people should act, speak, dress, groom, present and conduct themselves, make career choices etc. based upon their assigned sex at birth. A very important specification must be done: describing gender roles outlined by society does not involve approving or supporting them, but the opposite, drawing attention to the perpetual inequalities regarding gender and to raise awareness on this matter.

Gender roles are patterns of behavior men and women are expected to perform in the private and public realm. In the second edition of Encyclopedia of Applied Ethics, Tong (2012) presents gender roles as "the sociocultural expectations that apply to individuals on the basis of their assignment to a sex category (male or female)" (p.399). Furthermore, the glossary of European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2016) presents gender roles as:

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[6]    These positions will be further explained in a subsequent chapter.

"social and behavioral norms which, within a specific culture, are widely considered to be socially appropriate for individuals of a specific sex. For example, girls and women are generally expected to dress in typically feminine ways and be polite, accommodating, and nurturing. Men are generally expected to be strong, aggressive, and bold. Every society, ethnic group, and culture has gender role expectations, but they can be very different from group to group. They can also change in the same society over time."

Alters and Schiff (2009) highlight that "gender roles are usually centered on conceptions of masculinity and femininity, although there are exceptions and variations. Various groups, most notably feminist movements, have led efforts to change aspects of prevailing gender roles that are oppressive and inaccurate" (p.143). A woman cadet from the MGS Project said. "*I try to behave more professionally because in most cases men don't take women seriously*" (BG.13).

Biology still plays an essential role in the conditioning of gendered behavior, such as the woman's biological role in giving birth and nursing infants, but the extent of its effects on gender roles is debatable. Gender roles are closely related to gender stereotypes, in the sense that they often lead to unequal and unfair treatment.

## Gender stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are a set of social or cultural prescriptions of gender roles which have the effect of assigning characteristics to a person according to their perceived gender. Stereotypical beliefs associated with gender are not only descriptive, but also prescriptive, telling us how a certain gender is like and also how they should act. In their 2011 study, Kauchak & Eggen (as cited in Igbo, 2015) state that gender stereotypes simplify people's features and have a negative impact on individuals by limiting, for example, the development of their academic and professional potential. Other authors (Inzlicht &

Ben-Zeev, 2000; Hirnstein, Freund & Hausmann, 2012; Hirnstein, Coloma Andrews & Hausmann, 2014) also agree that stereotypical gender behaviors limit the development of people's cognitive, motor, emotional, and behavioral skills.

The content of stereotypes varies over cultures and over time. Although stereotypes suggest many differences between men and women, they often have no basis in actual behavior.

Analyzing gender stereotypes, Rosenthal & Overstreet (2016) come to the conclusion that

"they are learned, and can be both explicitly and implicitly taught or reinforced to people through many different social influences, including but not limited to friends and family, neighbors, teachers, peer groups, as well as larger societal influences. As one important example, the media have often been studied and discussed in terms of the role that they play in creating, promoting, and sustaining stereotypes of many different groups" (p.225).

Masculine traits are stereotypically considered to be instrumental, and feminine traits are stereotypically considered to be relational. These two orientations have implications for all aspects of the functioning of the psyche, including emotional development, friendships, intimate relationships, moral reasoning, attitudes toward work, and family. The traits associated with men tend to be better seen than the traits associated with women, because men are perceived more positively than women in culture and society. Thus, stereotypes maintain gender inequity, as it was revealed to the MGS Project interviews: "*Women are not suitable for all structures of the Bulgarian Armed Forces, and are not suitable for all command positions.*" (BG.17). The cadets underlined the presence of gender stereotypes in administrative tasks' distribution by direct commanders: for women it usually office work or cleaning the rooms, and for men, outdoors physical work. A cadet mentions her experiences of gender stereotypes related to nutrition: *"I was scolded in the canteen because I ate an abundant amount of food; although my*

*body is not thin and therefore needs the right nutrients, the focus was that I ate more than one person would expect from a ‹‹young lady››"* (IT.5).

Research shows that, despite the fact that the elimination of gender stereotypes is quite difficult, education that promotes gender equality contributes to the flexibility and modification of gender stereotypes. For example, Blackhurst & Auger (2008) find that women's careers are becoming less and less affected by gender stereotypes, while men's career choices are still strongly influenced by gender stereotypes.

### Genderwashing

Genderwashing is explained by Fox-Kirk (2020) as "an organizational tool that presents the myth of gender equality in organizations through discourse and text" (p.586). The term is used to describe "the positive impact of the presence of gender experts within an institution on its reputation and policies" (Kunz & Prügl, 2019, p.6). When an organization strives to look more gender-friendly than it really is, this maneuver is named genderwashing. This term, much like greenwashing and pinkwashing, is derived from the term whitewashing – which is used primarily to describe the effort of an organization, group, or individual to present a positive and desirable image, in order to hide from the public certain facts that would reflected poorly on them.

Genderwashing means the superficial inclusion of gender perspectives in an organization, for example including terms like gender equality, gender perspectives etc., in public addresses or documents, but lacking any meaningful engagement or practical commitment to its principles in the policies or regulations.

Some of the cadets interviewed for the MGS Project draw attention to the presence of this phenomena in the military academies: *"It seems to me that some activities are a bit forced, for example the choice of the female presence constantly in the foreground during media reports only for show"* (IT.4). Cadets also express their disapproval related to the

securing a quota for the representation of women in the army: *"That quota, on the level of representation, for me it's like it doesn't have to exist, because at the moment I have women that are going because they want to, for me everything is ok. We should give them the same option, same opportunity to both of them, which is currently given, It's a problem that does not exist at the Academy, on an entry level."* (PT.5).

## Sex

The term *sex* conveys the physical differentiation between the biological male and the biological female. These characteristics are congenital, and their differences are limited to physiological reproductive functions. Kenedy (2016) notes that "sex refers to the permanent and immutable biological characteristics common to individuals in all societies and cultures" (p.1061).

The biological characteristics that distinguish male and female are genetic, and the differences are limited to chromosomes, anatomy, hormones, reproductive systems, and other physiological components.

Sex is simply a scientific classification, based on the biological differences between male, female and intersex organisms.

## Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment involves unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other physical or verbal sexual behaviors performed in situations where there are power relations between the victim and the abuser that put the former in a vulnerable position at work, at school, home, on the street or in any other space. It was also defined as "deliberate or repeated unsolicited verbal comments, gestures, or physical contact of a sexual nature which are unwelcome" (as cited in Harris, McDonald & Sparks, 2018, p.3). It is considered a form of sexual violence, which can range from acts of unsolicited physical contact

to actual assaults. The abovementioned authors believe that many different behaviors, including requests for dates, pressure for sexual activities, comments, jokes, gestures, and touching, can constitute sexual harassment.

Since the definition of sexual harassment inevitable involves a note of subjectivity (e.g. unwanted, uninvited etc.) and the inclusion of a particular behavior in this category could be challenged by the perpetrators, the authors have tried over time to explain and describe this topic as clearly as possible (Harris, 2007; Cortina & Berdhal, 2008; Harris, McDonald & Sparks, 2018; Ormerod & Steel, 2018). The definitions of sexual harassment are rooted in psychology, sociology or law field, and refers to a range of behaviors, which goes from legally defined harassment to sexist behaviors, and sexual assault.

Sexual harassment is described by Berdahl (2007) as "a behavior that derogates, demeans or humiliates an individual, based on that individual's sex" (p.644). Buchanan et al. (2014) state that harassment experiences could be seen at individual level, as a consequence of unequal power relations, and also at organizational level, where "factors like climate, job gender context, and tolerance may influence the probability that individuals experience sexual harassment" (as cited in Harris, McDonald & Sparks, 2018, p.2).

The NATO working guide (Office of NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, 2019) explains that:

"sexual harassment is often divided into two types: quid pro quo harassment and hostile environment harassment. The difference between these two types of harassment is that in quid pro quo harassment, sex is provided in exchange for things such as employment or educational benefit, job promotion or good grades. Hostile environment harassment refers to sexual harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment generally for a whole group of people (p.29)."

At the request of U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), Morral and his research team (2014) conducted and published a report of evaluation

of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination across the U.S. military, concluding that sexual harassment risk and sexual assault are highly correlated.

Given the effects of these destructive behaviors on both the individual and at organizational levels, NATO has openly addressed the issue, tried to prevent it, and also to combat the phenomenon among its and in military operations (NATO, 2015).

## Transgender

Transgender is a broad, umbrella term that refers to individuals whose gender identity is not the same as the one they were assigned at birth, irrespective of whether they have transitioned or plan to physically transition to a different sex. It literally means "across gender" and conveys the idea of transcending the boundaries of the gender binary system.

The accurate term is "transgender", not "transgendered", given the fact that, in order to identify as trans, an individual does not need to chemically or surgically change their body. Any reference to a transgender person's "biological sex" is considered undermining and improper. Furthermore, after a transgender person adopts a name that corresponds to their gender identity, addressing them by their birth name is considered "dead naming".

The "trans" concept indicates the list of identities it refers to and includes "and many others" or "gender fluid, moving through either gender as desired" (reference).

Studying the situation of transgenders in the military service, Elders (2015) found that these individuals are unhinderedly allowed to serve in the armed forces of many NATO countries (Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Portugal and the United Kingdom) and Partnership for Peace members (Austria, Finland and Sweden).

# Key concepts from a military point of view

## Gender mainstreaming

Gender Mainstreaming is the policy adopted by the European Union to promote equality between men and women in all activities and policies, at all levels (Communication on Incorporating Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in all Community Policies and Activities. Brussels: European Commission, 1996). Therefore, gender mainstreaming is a general strategy for achieving gender equality, which aims to reorganize and restructure social policies and programs through specialized institutions considering the needs of both women and men.

Gender mainstreaming was first introduced when the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) underwent a restructuring process. Thus, at the 1985 UN World Conference on Women in Nairobi, it was decided that, in terms of access to resources, information and leadership positions, gender mainstreaming should be adopted in the development policies of the participating countries. Ten years later, at the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women, it was formally adopted in the construction of social policies. The 1997 Amsterdam Treaty of the European Union declares gender mainstreaming as a central pillar of the EU, and therefore calls on Member States (and countries wishing to join the EU) to integrate gender into the policies developed in their countries.

Booth & Bennett (2002) reiterated that gender mainstreaming is a vague concept, with insufficient scientific literature, which has led to different ways and concrete forms of implementation of gender equality policies in Europe. The authors also analyze the European Commission's experience in developing gender equality policies and demonstrate that the conceptualization of the gender mainstreaming strategy lies in the interdependence between three perspectives on approaching equality: "equal treatment perspective, a women's perspective and, most recently, a gender perspective" (p.432). More recently, including in NATO materials we can observe the appreciation

that "the term 'gender mainstreaming' is often used interchangeably with the term 'gender integration" (Office of NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, 2019, p.17).

These perspectives: equal treatment perspective, a women's perspective and a gender perspective, are present in the waves of feminist movements, namely (1) the equal treatment perspective that starts from the idea that women should be guaranteed equal rights in the public sphere alongside men, (2) the perspective of women who support actions that identify them (women) as a vulnerable group of society, and as a result seek special treatment and specialized assistance to manage the experience of discrimination, and (3) the gender perspective, which promotes actions aimed at reorganizing society through a correct distribution of responsibilities from a gender perspective. In fact, it recognizes the differences between women and men. In essence, gender mainstreaming strategies recommended by the EU values diversity. The Council of Europe (1998) agreed on the following definition: "gender mainstreaming is the (re)organization, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making" (p.15).

From NATO's point of view, gender mainstreaming is a "strategy used to achieve gender equality by assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, in all areas and at all levels, in order to assure that the concerns and experiences of both sexes are taken into account" (Office of NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, p.18).

There are three principles of gender mainstreaming and implementation in military organizations. The first one is the equal rights principle, recruitment and retention and operational capability, which considers that in the actions of planning, execution and evaluation of military operations, the rights of women and men alike must be guaranteed. The second principle, recruitment and retention, refers to the ability of the military organizations to expand their recruitment

base and to create optimal conditions for anyone, whether male or female, to be able to develop professionally and to be able to access all positions in the organizational hierarchy. Adherence to this principle will show responsibility – at national and international level – and will strengthen the armed forces internally and externally. With regard to the third principle, the operational capacity of the armed forces will certainly increase if the recruitment base is expanded and those with the necessary skills will be selected, regardless of their gender. The ultimate goal of integrating the three principles into the armed forces is to increase capability, including by promoting gender equality.

The eighteenth question of the MGS interview concerned gender mainstreaming: "In your opinion, how do cadets in [this institution] perceive the topic of gender mainstreaming, which consists in the integration of a gender equality perspective at all stages and levels of policies, programs, and projects?", revealed that some students are not familiar with this concept. Their answers gravitated around the idea of peer discrimination. Many students do not possess a broad, overall perception of gender equality issues; some of them do not see beyond what had displeased them at some point in their platoon. Most of them remain anchored in particular situations they have encounter, which results in generalizations: *"My colleagues do not take us seriously when we say that we have a problem or that we are discriminated against and they always try to see only the moments when we are favored, they do not want to see the other aspects"* (RO.9); *"[…] many cadets criticize the presence of women […]"* (IT 4) or *"[...] don't think there are prejudices"* (IT 2). On the other hand, there are also students who have understood the meaning of the concept correctly: *"I think some cadets perceive this from a more conservative point of view, that is, they are seeing this as the government wants to be politically correct and put more women in the Armed Forces, other more progressive ones think it is good and I may be inserted in that aspect with the reservations that we've been seeing."* (PT 2); *"I know that, at least at the UN level, intense work is being done on this issue of women, and at the level of NATO and respectively at the level of the Romanian Army"* (RO.5)

# Gender perspective

Gender perspective is the latest form of conceptualizing gender mainstreaming on the EU's agenda. This perspective takes into account gender differences when analyzing any social and/or political phenomenon/process. The gender perspective is a reconceptualization of the idea of gender equality, because it focuses on gender, not women, and recognizes the relevance of men in the debate on gender equality (Booth and Bennett, 2002).

According to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (1997) gender perspective is "a strategy for understanding the power relations between men/boys and women/girls, but especially to highlight who has access to and controls resources and who fully participates in decision-making in a society" (Office of NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, 2019, p.18). In the same line, The Committee on Women in the NATO Forces (CWINF) (2007) agrees that gender perspective refers to "examining each issue from the perspective of women and men and boys and girls to identify the differences in their needs and priorities, as well as their abilities or potential to promote peace and reconstruction" (p.37).

# Female Engagement Teams (FETs)

In all counterinsurgency campaigns in Afghanistan, U.S. troops have encountered problems in dealing with Afghan women, as men are prohibited from watching or talking to them because of pre-existing religious or cultural norms (Cook, 2015, p.1). In response to this problem, Female Engagement Teams (FETs) have been set up, and the awareness on the more inclusive policies of the involvement/ engagement of women in military action, regardless of their nature, has once again been raised. FETs are made up of US women volunteers, "of appropriate rank, experience, and maturity, whose primary mission is to engage the Afghan female population by developing trusting and

lasting relationships with the Afghan women they meet on patrols" (Cook, p.1). The goal is to gain the trust of the Afghan people and government.

## Gender advisor (GENAD)

According to the document Office of NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security (2019) a gender advisor "is the person who provides advice and guidance on how to integrate gender into any position. While the responsibility for implementing gender mainstreaming lies with senior management, a specially trained gender advisor supports an organization in implementing gender mainstreaming. It is therefore responsible for promoting gender equality. In NATO, gender advisors are military and/or civilian personnel deployed in NATO commands, operations and missions. Gender advisors operate at the strategic and operational level and are a valuable resource for the Commander, who is responsible for the global integration of gender perspectives in planning, implementation and evaluation" (p.11).

We have adopted the above definition from the official documents of NATO, to underline that there is no overlap of meaning with the concept of Gender Focal Point, because the differentiation is important for those to whom the handbook is addressed.

## Gender Focal Point (GFP)

Gender Focal Points (GFPs) are the individuals in an organization who deal with its strategy of gender mainstreaming and building capacity among colleagues to take into account the gender perspective in their work, in terms of content and processes. GFPs are staff members assigned to support, help/stand for/encourage and facilitate an organization's gender equality policy. Usually, they have dual

organizational roles, because on the one hand, they fulfill the role derived from their regular tasks and responsibilities, and on the other hand, they support the gender advisor. They can also be appointed to support gender advisors in ACOs (Allied Command Operations) as well as in all NATO missions and operations (Office of NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, 2019, p. 19).

## NATO/EAPC
## (EURO – ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL)

The NATO/EAPC policy for implementing UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security refers to three principles that represent NATO's position to the topic of gender mainstreaming, which consists in the integration of a gender equality perspective at all stages and levels of policies: inclusion, integration and integrity.

Inclusiveness, the first of the three principles, promotes greater representation of women in all military organizations. Through this principle, NATO recognizes that their missions involve strategies that imply a different gender perspective, based on the recognition of the importance of both genders. In order to achieve this goal, it is important that the number of women in the military environment increase, including their representation in management positions. Furthermore, in terms of implementation, it is mandatory to develop educational and training programs for better gender mainstreaming.

The second principle is integration. This principle refers to gender mainstreaming at every stage of the policy-making process – design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (Office of NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, 2019). Integration, often used with mainstreaming-like significance, is the principle that ensures that the gender perspective is taken into account in all activities.

Last but not least, the third principle of the NATO/EAPC on WPS policy on gender integrity refers to increasing accountability, i.e. raising

awareness and implementing the WPS agenda in line with international frameworks.

## United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) on Women Peace and Security Agenda

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), on Women Peace and Security, was adopted by the UN Security Council on 31 October 2000. The Security Council has adopted ten resolutions that comprise the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106, (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019), and 2493 (2019). According to the Department of Peace Operations (2020) "the term WPS is used to highlight the linkage between women's roles and experiences in conflict and peace and security. Obligations in these resolutions extend from the international to the local level, and include intergovernmental organizations, such as the United Nations, to national governments. The WPS mandates are the blueprint for all work conducted on gender in peace operations" (p.11).

UNSCR 1325 states the important role of women in conflict prevention and resolution, peace negotiations, peace building and peacekeeping, humanitarian response and post-conflict reconstruction. It emphasizes the importance of the full participation and involvement of women in all efforts to ensure and promote peace and security (United Nations Development Programme, 2019). To achieve the proposed objectives, the resolution is based on four pillars: participation, prevention, protection, assistance and recovery (Hurley, 2014).

The first pillar – participation – is to increase women's participation in decision-making at all levels, in national, regional and international institutions, in conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms, in peace negotiations, and in UN peacekeeping operations. (Romania National Strategy and National Action Plan regarding the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 Women, Peace

and Security 2020-2023, 2020). Prevention involves taking special measures to avert conflicts and all forms of physical, emotional and/or sexual violence and to prevent discriminatory practices, abuse and exploitation. Protection refers to special attention paid to the protection of women from gender-based violence. Finally, the fourth pillar includes the adoption of measures to help and recover to address crises from a gender perspective.

In the current context, the most important aspect within the gender perspective, promoted by this resolution, is gender training. Its purpose is to educate a wide audience on the concepts presented above, among others.

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# Chapter II
## Gender Dynamics in European Military Higher Education Institutions

## Introduction

*Italian Team*

This chapter discusses the main data stemming from the comparative and multi-method research conducted by the MGS Teams in their respective Military Higher Education Institutions, in Bulgaria, Italy, Portugal and Romania. In order to widen the scope of this gender-focused analysis, some insights are given on gender dynamics in other European institutions of military higher education.

The research conducted by the MGS Team partially intends to explore how gender integration is perceived in the younger generations of female and male cadets who are preparing for their military careers. The context considered is an academic school (the term *Military University* could also be used here), where a specific professional education must be developed and attained utilizing compulsory study, training and many other daily life routines and activities in a strongly organized milieu. This means, moreover, that daily life is oriented to improve group cohesion, inner self-awareness of being "one of the group" rightly because of a given common identity, and an all-embracing sense of belonging to a sort of "common home". This common home also houses traditional notions of *masculinity*, giving rise to military institutions generally being described in academia as all-male societies, where symbols, traits, behaviors, rules and values are inevitably based

and kept together, and even reinforced by a shared masculine culture. In this original tradition, the presence of women sharing the same duties, the same tasks, and the same goals is something considered unnatural, if not even counter-nature. Gender diversity within the armed forces is still considered, for many, something nearly *unthinkable*. When it occurs, if rationally accepted and/or even desired, it crashes over the fact that "culture matters" much more than is usually admitted.

We are aware that this reality has now evolved to a point where women are now a part of the armed forces in the majority of countries, even though with some differences and/or limitations, following (and sometimes even preceding) similar advancements in the corresponding civil societies. However, this does not mean that a gender perspective is now fully implemented everywhere. In this research and this handbook, gender perspective is taken as a goal accepted in principle but deserving of special attention to be taught, to be reinforced, to be monitored.

Drawing knowledge from real facts, and sociological research on gender perspective within the military academies, where current young generations of military personnel are educated, can help to measure at what level, and to what extent, the goal of gender mainstreaming in a military context is being achieved. With the creation of an MGS module, we intend to contribute to the teaching of gender perspectives in the armed forces through a lens of gender equality.

In this chapter, the programs already at work in various Military Academies, treating gender perspective and integration as a true discipline or at least as a topic included in other curricular disciplines, are presented in Part 2.

Part 3 is devoted to the presentation of the comparative research done by the Military Gender Studies' partners. The research, utilizing a survey followed by several semi-directive interviews, concerns gender relationships and dynamics observed within the four European Military Academies of the four partner countries.

# Topics and comparison among gender integration programs of the selected Military Academies.

## Gender perspective in MGS partner programs

Academies and Military Schools participating in the project are characterized by an increasing commitment to improving gender education to strengthen the formative offer in each institution, and ultimately train soldiers towards gender equality. Their programs are succinctly presented below.

At the **Portuguese Military Academy** topics related to Gender are taught under the subject of Military Sociology. The goals pursued are:

- to distinguish the concepts of biological sex, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation;
- to educate on the values of pluralism and the promotion of equality between men and women;
- to understand the social construction of sexuality and eliminate discrimination based on sexuality and gender;
- to combat intimate relationships marked by inequality and violence;
- to approach the effects of cyberspace on the experiences of sexuality and gender and in the translation of possibilities of inclusion and exclusion (class, generational belonging and ethnicity);
- to inquire how cyberspace is appropriated, (re)created and (re)configured by social actors to better translate their sexual and/or gender identities;
- to study the arguments that are used to advance/limit the emancipation of certain social categories linked to gender and sexuality.

Likewise, at the **"Nicolae Balcescu" Land Forces Academy (Romania)** the curricular programs do not include a specific discipline dedicated to Gender Perspectives but there are several subjects that

address this subject. The disciplines are Military Organizational Behaviour, Fundamentals of Leadership, Basic Military Terminology, Cultural Awareness and Interoperability. They all deal thoroughly with the following topics:

– stereotypes;
– gender socialization;
– women in leadership positions;
– women in the military;
– gender roles;
– positive discrimination;
– cultural attitudes versus gender issues and gender challenges.

Also, at the **Università degli Studi di Torino** (Italy) the curricular program adopted by the **IT-Army Education and Training Command and School of Applied Studies** does not include a discipline on gender (Vinciguerra, 2021). In the past, this topic was part of the Military Sociology syllabus and after a few years' hiatus; the ongoing course is expanding the advantages of gender integration in international operations.

Since 2017, the IT-Army Education and Training Command and School of Applied Studies has been developing a project to teach "Woman, Peace and Security" contents. One of the activities carried out is a seminar on gender perspectives, with young Officers as the target audience. It addressed topics such as:

– differences between gender and sex,
– stereotypes,
– the role of gender advisor and gender focal point,
– UN, NATO and National gender-related Action Plan

Celebrating the 20th anniversary of the inclusion of women in the Armed Forces, the focus on gender issues has increased in 2021. On this occasion, Officers attended seminars and workshops devoted to gender topics.

The education on gender at the **"Vasil Levski" National Military University (Bulgaria)** started in 2015 (Atanasova-Krasteva, 2019). The aim was to increase awareness among future Officers on the impact of gender perspectives in military operations and to assist NATO Allies and Partners to build on their skills. The National Military University offers military students a gender education which is included as a separate topic in the Leadership training modules. The topics are:

- the essence of Gender Equality Policies. International framework and documents.
- National framework and policies of the implementation of gender equality;
- Integration of Gender Equality Policies in the planning, implementation and evaluation of military operations and missions.

During the last year, this program has been expanded with new subjects:

- working with international documents on issues of gender equality;
- discussion about the implementation of equality policies in NATO armies;
- discussion about practices related to the implementation of gender equality in the Bulgarian Army;
- analysis of practices and data, related to gender relations in the Bulgarian Army participation in missions and operations.

Subjects are developed from a theoretical and practical point of view through lectures, seminars and exercises.

## Similarity among topics and teaching

All MGS partners highlight the importance of including a Gender perspective approach in their curricular programs and military operations. We all focus on gender mainstreaming pillars to teach the fundamental concepts and create a military educational culture based on gender equality. As we can notice from the programs described in the previous part, military Academies do not have a specific discipline dedicated to gender, but the topic is included in other subjects, such as Leadership and Military Sociology.

Lectures are given in all partner institutions participating in the project but not all of them are currently conducting a practical section on this theme. Furthermore, it is possible to put in evidence that part of Italian and Bulgarian Army Syllabuses draw heavily from international policy and NATO documents, considering also operations and missions' framework. On the other side, Portuguese and Romanian programmes deal more with the analysis of gender dynamics and socialization processes. For example, they develop topics such as:

- – the understanding of the social construction of sexuality,
- – the elimination of discrimination based on sexuality and gender;
- – the study of arguments used to advance/limit the emancipation of certain social categories linked to gender and sexuality;
- – gender socialization;
- – cultural attitudes versus gender issues and gender challenges.

Even though each MGS partner adopts a different approach, they are implementing similar topics. Considering the need to take into account the different discipline training objectives, and the different number of hours allocated for the same topic in these four different countries, developing a common syllabus represents an exciting challenge.

# Further European
## gender-related military programs

In Austria, the Theresan Military Academy provides gender equality education to students as a part of their career courses at the Academy (Atanasova-Krasteva, 2019). The cadets at this Academy are taught gender-related content during the following lectures/classes/modules:

- – module Physical Education (theoretical and practical sports);
- – module Leadership Training CMO/PSO;
- – common Module Cultural Awareness.

The contents of gender education are different according to each module. In the module "Physical Education" the main focus is on the differences in metabolism and physical thresholds of females and males. The module "Leadership Training" deals with the integration of female soldiers in international operations, and finally, the Common Module Cultural Awareness deepens gender awareness.

In Spain, the Military Academy in Zaragoza includes Gender Education in its curricular program, but the subject is developed in several seminars and lectures as well. In the first academic year gender education is incorporated in Basic Military Training; in the third academic year gender is part of "Logistic focused on Defense", and in the fourth year it is connected to "Law". Gender education is completed with seminars, courses, and conferences. Furthermore, each year the Military Academy organizes a series of conferences called "Cervantes Chair", which in the last years cadets include a seminar on gender perspectives.

The Military University of Technology in Warsaw, Poland does not provide gender education; Officers are not exposed to gender-related lectures, either by academic experts or gender advisers/gender focal points.

Even French Air Force Academy does not offer gender equality education to the students. Nevertheless, for the implementation of a

gender equality policy, the French Ministry of Defence has recently (2019) launched a program on gender diversity in the armies to facilitate the recruitment and evolution of the military women in the ministry ("Le plan mixité du Ministère des Armées").

## Gender dynamics in European Academies

## Introduction.

The main source of empirical knowledge concerning gender dynamics observed within European Academies used in this Chapter stems mainly from the comparative survey conducted at the four Military Academies by the MGS Project research groups. In this section, the main behavioral aspects, as well as orientations and values regarding gender and the military profession, will be described regarding cadets and young officers enrolled in the four military academic institutions. Other insights were furthermore taken from other research sources available in the international literature about gender dynamics, and gender perspectives in a broader way, with regards to other military formal education institutions in Europe.

The general framework is that of a professional environment where both genders are active in institutional roles, and it addresses the well-known topic of gender dynamics within work environments. As often observed, "*Occupations are generally linked to gender stereotypes defining feminine as well as masculine jobs, as research on women and men in non traditional or unconventional occupations has largely demonstrated*" (Nuciari, 2018).

This remains especially true for military jobs, and this is why the armed forces are considered a typical example of a gendered organization. Considering recruitment of women soldiers and their careers within armed forces under a comparative perspective since the year 2000, the process requested adaptations and changes in the military organization and some traits of military culture, and it was

affected also by differences among countries as far as institutional structures and cultural values in every society are concerned[1].

An example of this long journey of women soldiers within the military institution, with special reference to NATO members and partner countries, can be the recurrent observation that percentages of servicewomen, whilst increasing, remain everywhere minoritarian in comparison with persisting large majorities of male soldiers, even though with noticeable differences among the European Union Member States (EU MS) and the 12 partner members observed in the last available NATO Summary of the National Reports to the NCGP in 2019 (NATO, 2019).

This is true also for the four Military Academies inquired by the MGS Team, where women's presence ranges from 14,6% of Portugal Academy cadets to 33,9% of Romanian Academy cadets. In the MGS Group research, the unbalance between the two gender groups has been inquired about with specific questions to know the consequences of such a condition over gender dynamics active in the present time within the young generations of military cadets.

This topic is not a matter of concern only in the military, since the unbalanced presence of the two genders, also in its opposite form (large majorities of women in certain occupations) results from the same stereotypes, declining but yet surviving in many societies, about a gendered division of labor, with the consequent perpetuation of differences in educational and occupational choices according to gender.

Wanting to limit the scope to sociological literature, discussions about gender in the military forces have reached an enormous amount of research data in many different countries all around the world[2].

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[1]  A comparative information on differences in military organisations' adjustment to women recruitment is portrayed, to remain within NATO countries, in the NATO National Reports on Gender Perspectives, since 1999 to 2008 prepared by the CWINF, then from the 2009 to 2013 issued by the NCGP and since 2014 issued under the responsibility of the IMS Office of the Gender Advisor.

[2]  In a highly valuable and useful bibliography on "Gender and Military Issues. A categorized research bibliography", issued by the Norwegian School of Sport Sciences of the Norwegian Defence University College in 2010 authored by Kari

In the majority of essays and pieces of research on women in the armed forces since the 1970s, the term *gender* has been used when considering the presence of women as a part of the *military* (Fasting & Svela Sand, 2010). Since then, the adjective *gendered* began to be attached to the substantive term *military organization*, to underline the fact that the armed forces are mainly androcentric and where the combat soldier represented the best and most appreciated model, the ideal model of a man. Thus, a lot of research has been done to understand how, why and to what extent women are part of such an *all-male organization*, built on an idealized masculine model (Nuciari, 2018).

This research is a contribution to understanding the real and prolonged gender dynamics at the military academy, where young men and women share their vocational high-level education to attain the same professional roles and careers: to become officers in the military organization of their country. If a change is occurring as far as gender dynamics in the military are concerned, it is in the young generations that it can be directly observed, together with differences according to cultural diversities among countries.

## The MGS Project: Data from Military Academies in Bulgaria, Italy, Portugal and Romania

The various topics covered by the MGS Project's research are based on a two-fold methodology:

a) a quantitative survey based on a common questionnaire (see **Questionnaire in Annex**) submitted in English to large samples of cadets from the four partner institutions, practically reaching the total numbers of cadets present in their respective Academies along their 4 or 5-year academic courses;

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Fasting and Trond Svela Sand, a total of 2576 scientific publications are counted in the domain of gender issues in a military context.

b) several semi-structured interviews (**see Interview Guide in Annex**), obtained from those cadets who agreed to a follow-up interview to deepen the information given in their questionnaire.

The following pages are not a description of primary data but are oriented, on the contrary, to present the level and accuracy of information about gender topics, the prevailing opinions, intentions and preferences about gender equality within the military, seen from the perspective of both male and female cadets.

Topics were presented in the following form:

- Sample's size and composition
- Selection of items:
  – Gender perspective;
  – Gender dynamics among cadets;
  – Equality/Discrimination perception according to gender;
  – Problematic situations;
  – Possible differences among the cadets at the four MGS partner institutions.

## Comparison of descriptions and perceptions of gender dynamics among cadets according to research data from the four MGS Project Partners

Building on solid research of gender studies in military contexts, this Handbook includes an original approach to the data collected from the four partner institutions.

Firstly, a survey was conducted by each research team (as explained in the Introduction of this Chapter), following similar rules and procedures, to obtain consistent and comparable findings, as indicated here below:

- Types and sizes of the samples:
  Samples are rather similar in numbers for each Academy, with some differences as far as singular male/female ratios are concerned. The fact that nearly all cadets in the 2020/2021 courses answered the questionnaire allows us to infer that the overall opinions expressed by the participating cadets in each partner country may correspond to each country's present generation of military students.

The distribution of interviewees is the following:

- "Vasil Levski" National Military University (Bulgaria),
  218 questionnaires, 45 women (20.6%) and 173 men (79%);
- University of Turin & IT-Army Education and Training Command and School of Applied Studies (Italy),
  380 questionnaires, 73 women (19.2%) and 307 men (80,7%);
- Portuguese Academia Militar (Portugal),
  478 questionnaires, 71 women (14,8%) and 408 men (85,2%);
- "Nicolae Balcescu" Land Forces Academy (Romania),
  319 questionnaires, 105 women (32.9%) and 214 men (67%),

In a total of 1396 questionnaires, there were 294 women (21%) and 1102 men (79%), which means that in the overall sample there is 1 female cadet for every 4 male cadets (see Graph 2.1). The most gender-balanced ratio belongs to the Romanian Academy, where the ratio is 1 female cadet for every 2 male cadets, and the least gender-balanced ratio is in the Portuguese Academy, where the ratio is 1 woman for every 6 male cadets (see Graph 2.2).
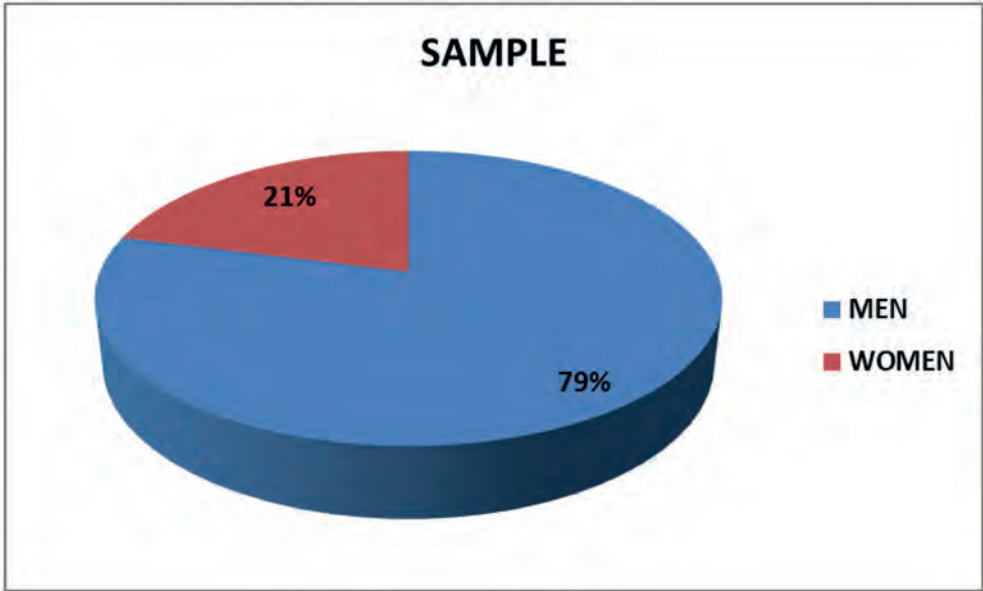
Graph 2.1: Sample distribution
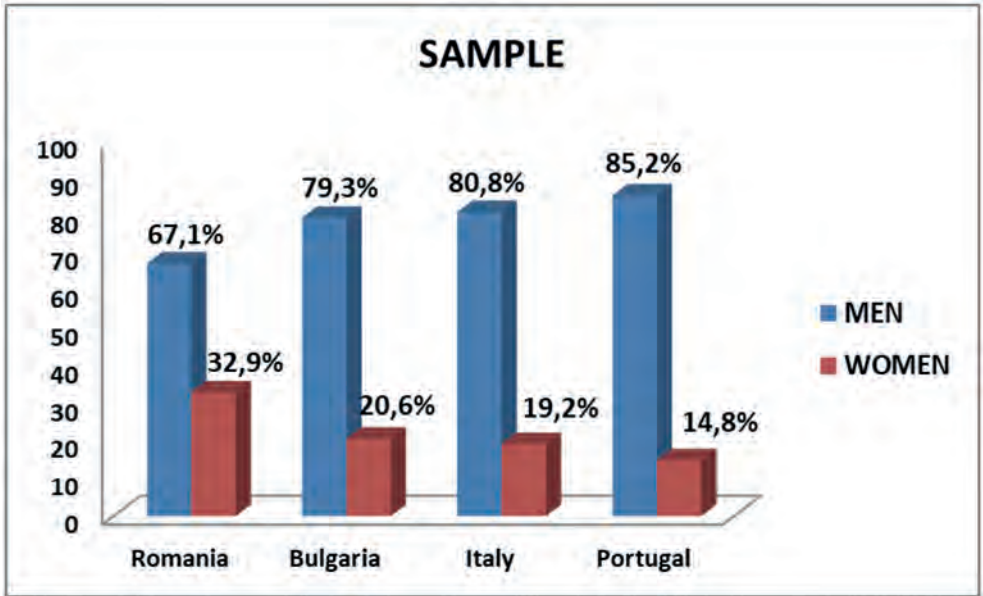


Graph 2.2: Sample distribution among MGS partners

In the four MGS partner institutes women were admitted to attend for the first time the officers courses as follow:

- "Vasil Levski" National Military University (Bulgaria) in 1988;
- IT-Army Education and Training Command and School of Applied Studies (Italy) in 2000;
- Portuguese Academia Militar (Portugal) in 1992;
- "Nicolae Balcescu" Land Forces Academy (Romania) in 2001.

Mixed groups can be a source of problematic relationships, and different ratios in mixed groups can generate various consequences, as Kanter demonstrated (Kanter, 1977). Here we have a generalized situation of types with the characteristics of unbalanced groups (up to a ratio of 85:15) where a dominant male group is present, but also in some cases belonging to balanced groups (up to ratios of 65:35 and 60:40).

It is evident then, that women are everywhere a minority, but with some differences: according to Kanter group types, in Portugal, Italy and Bulgaria we can speak of *skewed groups*, with a ratio of about 85:15 for the male dominant group, a little less for Bulgaria (79:21); the only place similar to a *tilted group* (ratio 65:35) is the Romanian Academy where the male group is dominant but at a lower ratio than in the other three (67:33).

### Gender perspective as a question of language

Gender perspective does not seem to be considered by cadets even as far as vocabulary is concerned. The MGS Project's IO1 Final Report identifies a "persistent confusion regarding gender terminology […] the majority of students appear not being able to distinguish between 'sex' and 'gender'"(PT Team, 2021:5). This assessment was derived from the majority of the cadets' answers in all four Academies.

The perception of gender as a behavioral condition owing to cultural patterns does not seem to be acknowledged by cadets, as is

demonstrated by answers given to questions on the possibility of a non-discriminatory language: the general tendency for the total sample is to reject the necessity for a change in language to avoid gender discrimination, as Graph 2.3 shows.
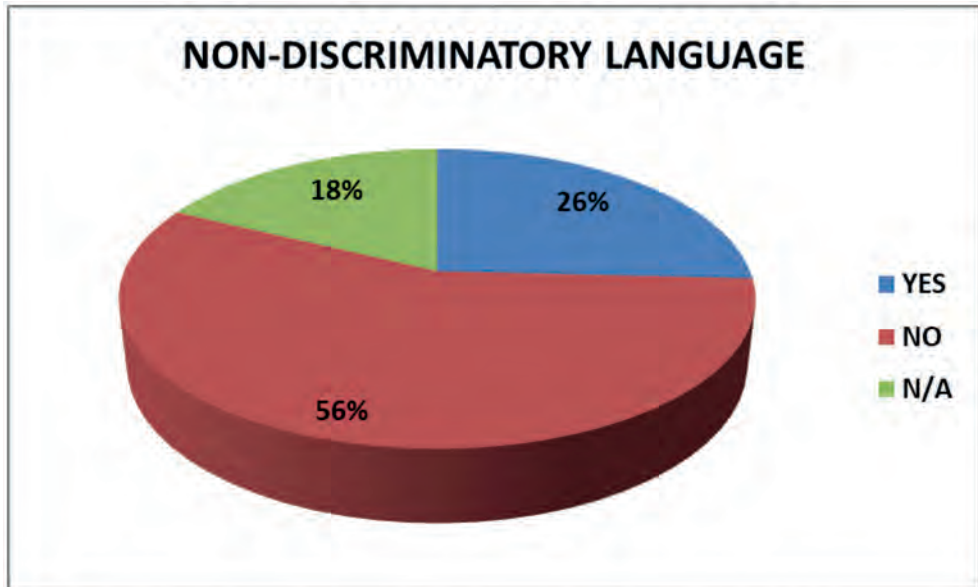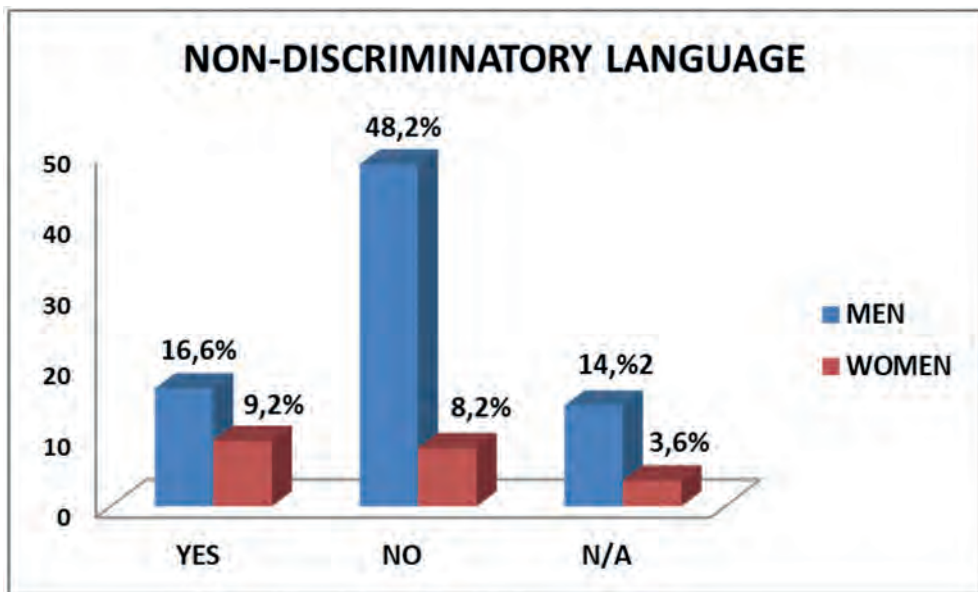


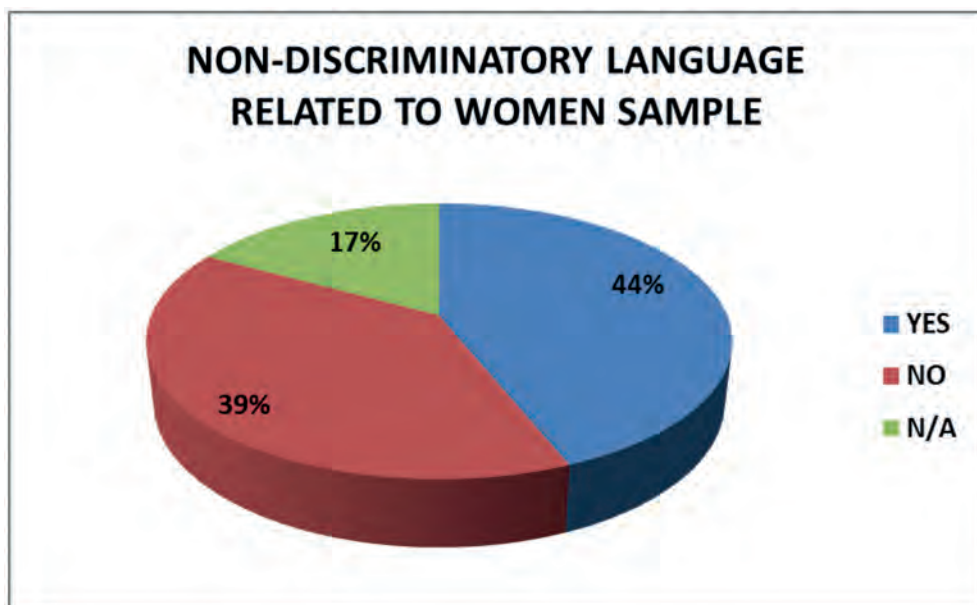Graph 2.3: Adoption of a non-discriminatory language

This general *datum* must be anyway considered in the light of the differences between answers given by women and men in the four Academies (see Graph 2.4). At the Italian Officers School, for instance, where the use of a non-discriminatory language (Question 8) does not hold great interest, 49% of women and 21,5% of men agree with a shift to non-discriminatory language (Italian MGS Team, 2021). Similar reactions are expressed by Portuguese cadets, where a large majority "[…] considered that there is no need to adopt a non-discriminatory language with regards to gender" (Portuguese MGS Team, 2021:8). Relatively speaking, more positive answers are given by Romanian cadets, since one-third out of all respondents at the Romanian academy agree on the need for a non-discriminatory language. There is still a

higher number of women advocating for gender-sensitive language, with a rather high rate of N/A replies being mainly from male cadets (Romanian MGS Team, 2021:8).

Considering the total sample of women in the four Academies (Graph 2.5), there is then a relative majority (44%) favorable to the use of a non-discriminatory language, slightly higher than those who think it unnecessary (39%). A reversed situation is given by male cadets: in the four Academies only 21% reacts positively to the idea of a non-discriminatory language, and 61% are against (see Graph 2.6).



Graph 2.4: Gender differences about adoption of a non-discriminatory language

Graph 2.6: Adoption of non-discriminatory language among men sample

If the minority thinking affirmatively is mainly composed of women, another datum deserves attention, and it is considered by the MGS Research Group as a further confirmation of a general sounding lack of information or misinformation in the field of non-discriminatory gender language: the fact that in both subsamples there is a relevant number of missing answers (18% and 17% for men and women respectively). The MGS Group considers these data to be an important sign of how gender equality can also be propagated through the use of gender-neutral language, and its importance should be better explained in an educational context, as a tool to reduce gender stereotypes.

The persistency of gender stereotypes is frequently related to job positions and tasks – designed to be performed "naturally" by men or by women – therefore perpetuating gendered perceptions of job orientation, assignment and evaluation, as it has been recently accentuated by an online UN document (United Nations Gender-inclusive language, 2017) underlining the need to improve efforts to promote a gender-inclusive language, not discriminatory and oriented to avoid the perpetuation

of gender stereotypes. The same document stresses "the key role of language in shaping cultural and social attitudes", and it is recognized that "[…] gender-inclusive language is a powerful way to promote gender equality and eradicate gender bias". In the above mentioned document detailed Guidelines are proposed and special Tools to support gender equality utilizing non-discriminatory language, within the United Nations System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity, whose final goal is "a working environment that embraces equality, eradicates bias and is inclusive for all staff" (The UN wide-System on Gender Parity, 2017).

Gender-neutral language application is a proactive process performed and supported by many national and international organizations, to improve gender balance and eliminate discriminatory behavior in working environments, or within their organization at least. The European Parliament (EP), for instance, in 2008 delivered a document on "Gender-neutral language in the European Parliament", to be used in internal and external communication in order "[…] to avoid word choices which may be interpreted as biased, discriminatory or demeaning by implying that one sex is superior to the other […] (EP, 2008). The problem is evident in the multilingual environment of the European Parliament composed of 27 state-member representatives," […] where the principle of gender neutrality cannot be applied in the same way in all languages." (EP, 2008).

An important effort done by the EP has been the evident intention to respect language differences while trying to innovate them anyway. This means caring about differences and/or similarities among the many and different European languages, accepting the task to have a gender-neutral language tailored according to the specific language where the "innovation" is inserted. Just to make an example, the diffuse use of English could fit differently with the many and nonetheless *diverse* European mother tongues, but it permits a simplification of the task because of its more gender-neutral grammatical structure.

Chapter 1 of this Handbook provides important gender-related concepts. It is anyway necessary to consider the *cultural differences*

inevitably arising when switching from English to other European languages.

**Gender group composition and perceived gender relationships.**

The current representation of both genders at the four institutions is considered unbalanced, but with some differences among the partners. At the University of Turin, 229 cadets considered gender representation within their institution to be balanced, despite the large majority of cadets being men. Accordingly, those who considered the gender representation to be unbalanced are anyway near to half of the total number (151 out of the 380 cadets), and 112 are male cadets. The group of female cadets (73) is split into two halves: 39 think the gender representation is unbalanced, while 34 believe it to be balanced. This situation is repeated at the other Academies, and there is a common trait: the gender representation is considered unbalanced where the percentage is evidently lower where women are concerned and less unbalanced where this percentage is less prominent.

Unbalanced group composition is affected by numbers, and disproportions could affect individual behavior, as proposed in Kanter's theory of tokenism. This seems to be the case when considering military education institutions as a microcosm of a larger European society. When asked about their behavior in groups composed mainly of cadets of a different gender, in all partner institutions the majority of female cadets affirm behaving equally in both groups, and only a relatively small portion affirms behaving differently. The same happens to male cadets, who affirm to behave equally notwithstanding the gender composition of the group they are in, and only a very small number admit to behaving differently when they are in a group composed of colleagues of the opposite gender.

The data we have collected in the four institutions show that women are relatively more inclined to admit to behaving differently when in groups largely formed by cadets of the opposite gender (see Graph 2.7)
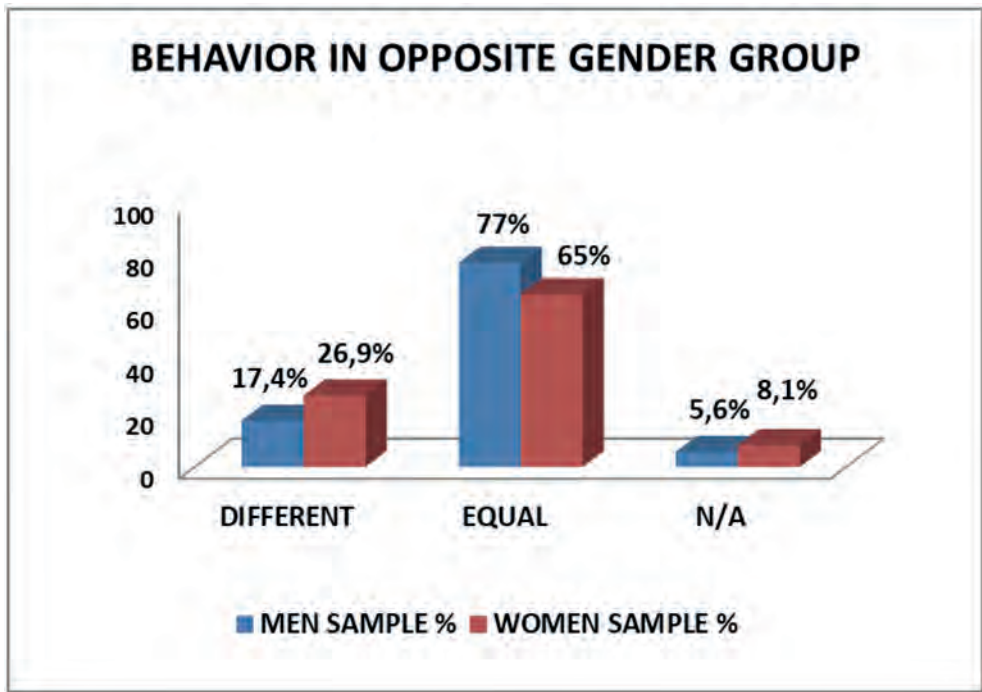
Graph 2.7: Comparison between male and female samples

We surmount that:

- More women than men declare changing their behavior when they are in a group composed of cadets of the opposite gender (26,9% of women and 17,4% of men, whereas 65% of women and 77% of men claim not to adjust their behavior).
- A behavior change is admitted also at the Portuguese Military Academy, but oppositely: men are about three times more likely to admit to changing their behavior when they are in a gender-mixed group.
- These behavioral differences could be considered a consequence of the persistent gender unbalance at military institutions, with a consistently higher percentage of men. This is another form of the same symptom that Kanter writes about: the fact that there is a difference between being "…a token in skewed groups or one

of the many in a balanced group" (Kanter, 1977:211); where the small minority is taken as a token, in this case, few female officers in large male majority groups, the token can behave differently, adopting, for instance, the expected stereotypes of the dominant group. However, when this minority is considered too diverse by the dominant group, then a diverse behavior is performed by the dominant group just to underline such an unbridgeable difference.

**Gender perceptions of diverse and/or discriminative treatment.**

The cadets' perception of discrimination (caused by different criteria) along any process of evaluation is a risk, especially in organizations where competition and individual adequacy to expected standards are part of the educational process. Although we acknowledge that 'discrimination' is a blanket term, and cannot be pinpointed to a single experience, or a single prejudice, for the sake of the MGS Project we are solely focusing on 'gender discrimination', and its different iterations. Scholars know that changes in laws can either follow or precede real social and cultural changes and that precise accordance between legal and cultural norms is not an automatic process.

Generally speaking, changes to belief systems are challenging, even when practices suffer legal changes. Gender-based discrimination is an example of this. Thus, a set of questions in Project MGS's Questionnaires and Interviews refers to perceived/suffered gender discrimination, or generic diversity in treatment according to one's gender. Comparing answers from male and female cadets, differences in treatment are a minor affair in all four educational institutions. They refer in fact in all cases to minor issues, but they are present and persisting anyway. Just to recall here the famous Thomas theorem, according to whom "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Thomas & Thomas, 1928), gender discriminatory behaviors are important to register and analyze even if in rather small occurrences.
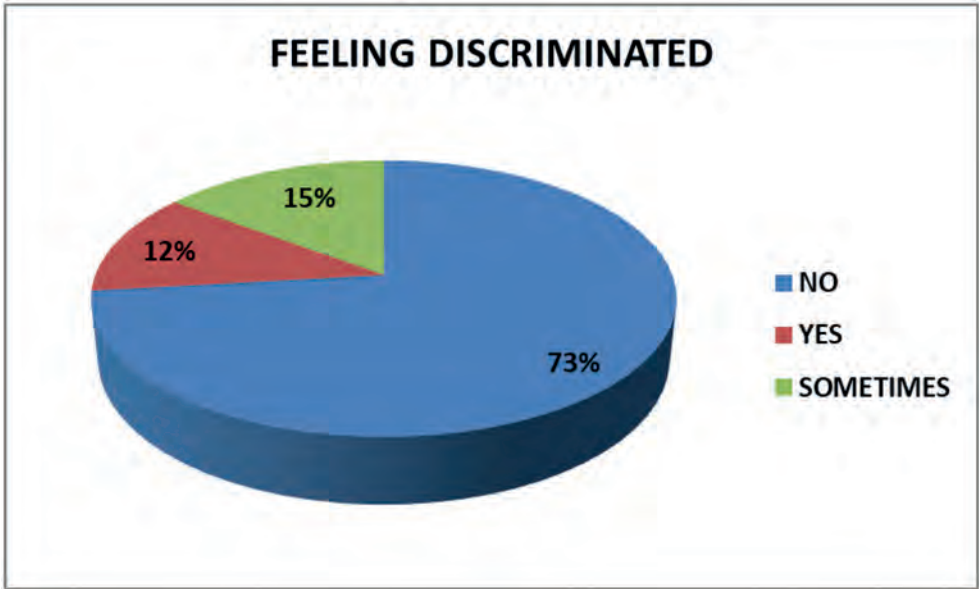
Graphic 2.8: Discrimination perception
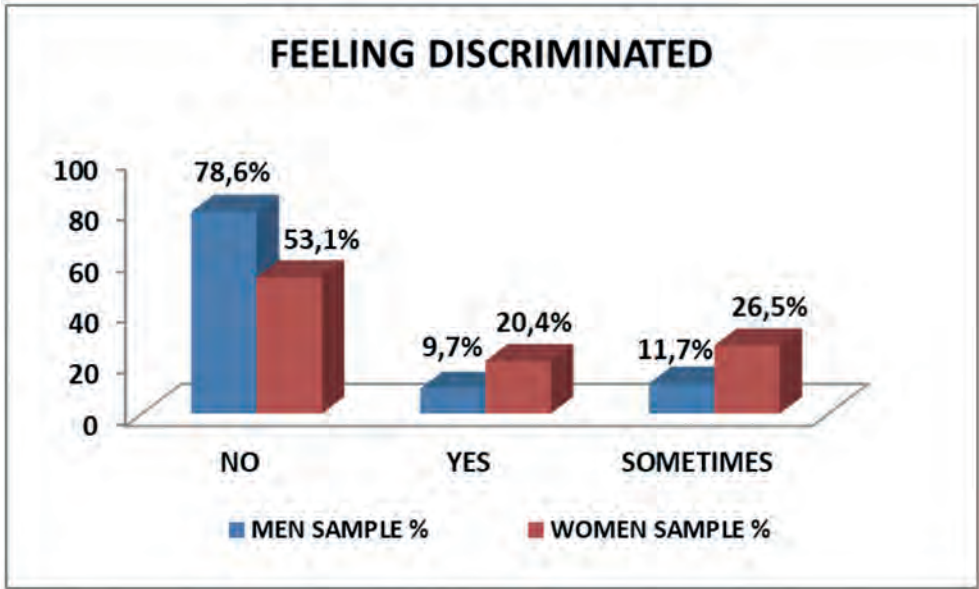


Graphic 2.9: Comparison between men and women sample about discrimination perception

It is also important to take into consideration that the topic of gender-based discrimination is still largely considered taboo in a military context, so we recognize that many cadets might have felt contrived to admit being either a victim of gender discrimination or enacting it themselves. However, for a thorough quantitative/qualitative study, we mainly focus on the data we did gather.

Answers to specific questions present the following situation: 73% out of all the cadets in the four Academies didn't perceive any discrimination because of their gender, and the 27% answered positively to the perception of some kind of gender discrimination (see Graph 2.8). But considering the men and women samples separately (see Graph 2.9), the absence of gender discrimination is higher among men (78,6%) than women (53%); conversely, those declaring to have suffered of discriminatory treatment are mainly women.

These data deserve some more comments. We recognize that the perception of worse treatment when compared to the opposite gender was somewhat expected information from women, it was less expected that a meaningful proportion of male cadets gave the same answer, the 21,4% of them claiming some worse treatment when compared with female cadets (Graph 2.9). On the other hand, when gender-based discrimination was reported by men, it mainly refers to frustration with what some consider to be the 'preferential treatment' of women.

Such situations are not rare, and we acknowledge that different reasons are at the root of these findings. Furthermore, it must be added that the cadets mainly reference occasional discriminatory treatments; what is noticeable is that these differences are perceived by both genders and that it seems to be related to gender as a cause of discriminative behavior, either when differences in treatment are judged better than for the opposite gender, or even when they are worse. From the semi-structured interviews, we have attained insights that have permitted us to sustain the aforementioned datum, which is rather similar and applicable to the four institutions and we hypothesize that it could be applied to similar military institutions: those who engage in different treatment (better or worse) based on the gender of the other person

are either colleagues of the opposite gender or part of the institutions' staff. In Graph 2.10 the difference is very sharp between the two gender samples (total sample): cadets of the opposite gender are indicated as responsible for discriminatory behavior by the 70,3% of women, and the 73,3% of men indicate the Institution's staff as responsible such behaviors.
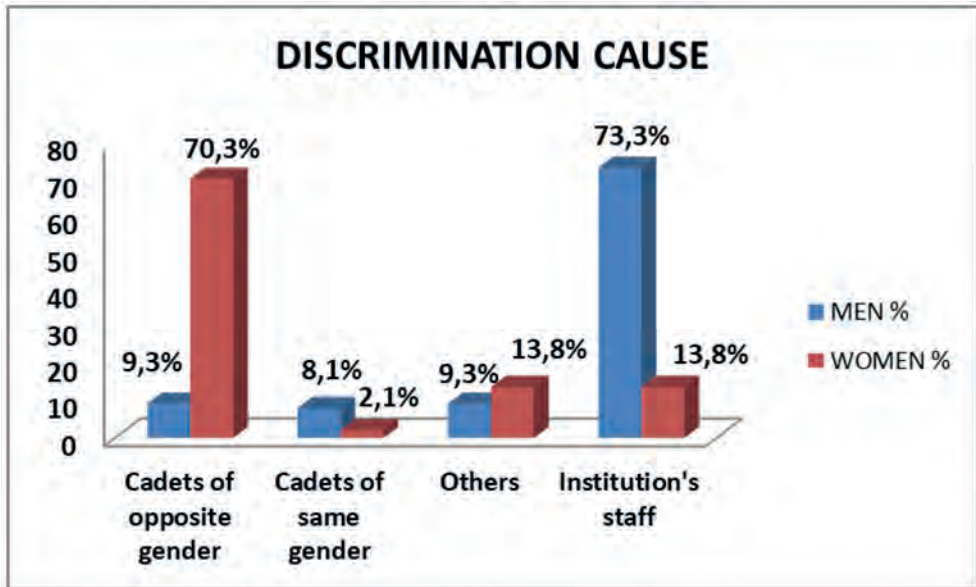


Graphic 2.10: Discrimination causes related to men and women sample

These claims are similar in all the four Academies, whilst with some differences deserving to be considered.

At the University of Turin, according to 60% of female cadets, the discriminatory behavior they feel is enacted equally by cadets from the opposite gender and by the Institution's staff. On the other hand, male cadets consider the Institutions' staff as the main ones responsible for discriminatory behavior against them (72%) (Italian MGS Team, 2021). These data reveal a favorable attitude shown by the Institutions towards female cadets when compared to male cadets. A very similar situation is portrayed also at "Nicolae Balcescu" Land Forces Academy, where:

"[…] *most female students consider that discriminatory actions come mainly from male cadets, colleagues, and not hierarchically, from the academy staff. On the other hand, male respondents believe that discrimination comes largely from officers. It is certainly about the same positive discrimination that favors female students and has negative implications for gender perceptions among male students*" (Romanian MGS Team, 2021:11)

At the Portuguese Military Academy, the findings reveal a similar scenario, where *"Students who feel discriminated (…) indicated that the discrimination usually comes from the institution's staff".* (Portuguese MGS Team, 2121:8).

In our questionnaire/interview possible responses to gender-discriminatory behaviors have considered, one of them being formal complaints to superior(s). The research has revealed that formal complaints are rare occurrences, and most cadets who have confessed to making a complaint (or thinking about making one) based on gender-related discrimination were not comfortable with sharing the details with the MGS team, even anonymously. The few cadets who commented on the subject reinstated the perceived beneficial treatment of women by the institutions' Staff. For the interviewed women, the nature of their objections stems from discriminatory behavior performed mainly by the institution's staff, cadets and/or officers of the opposite gender. From the interviews with female cadets, we have gathered that women are equally resentful of what could be considered preferential treatment based on their gender, and not on their merit.

The study of these gender dynamics, observed in the four different military higher education institutions, and their substantial similarities, are the drive behind the MGS, which is committed to contributing to the practice of *gender education as a discipline.* The MGS Questionnaire and Interviews considered how, and to what extent, such a topic could be incorporated into the already existing syllabus.

Taking into account the repeated recommendations stemming from international institutions such as United Nations and many others,

to overcome bias and misunderstanding when addressing gender values in societies, and their change, transformation and evolution all over the world, the project envisages an educational strategy whose principal character is to be addressed to young people, and to young military people taken at the time of their higher education but at an age where values, beliefs, preferences, behaviors and practices, whilst already interiorized, can anyway be adjusted, changed, abandoned and innovated.

## Reactions and behaviors against discrimination.

Forty-five years ago, in 1977, "The Silent Revolution", published by Ronald Inglehart, presenting the findings of a comparative social survey on "Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics" in nine countries, opened the season of the research on modern and postmodern values (Inglehart, 1977).

The World Value Survey Research Group and its various "waves" of comparative surveys on ever-growing numbers of countries all around the world and not limited to the Western world, became a point of reference for the large majority of sociological studies on modernity and postmodernity, together with the definitions of *post-industrial society* and *materialistic* and *post-materialistic values*, since then acquired into the sociological lexicon.

In all the so-called periodical "waves" of comparative research on value change realized by the WVS Research Group also the topic of gender equality (or substantial inequality) was considered under a comparative perspective and demonstrated to be strongly affected by cultural differences, and because of that, it was considered not only as a consequence of modernization and post-modernization processes but also as one of the ***marks*** of the different ongoing changes in the various countries. As Norris & Inglehart stated at the beginning of the third millennium,

*"A mainstream tradition in sociology, anthropology, history, and social psychology has long theorized that there are great cross-cultural differences in beliefs about gender roles among societies around the globe, **even among societies at similar levels of socioeconomic development**."*(Norris & Inglehart, 2003:9)

Culture matters not only for many social questions related to the development and change of human societies but also for gender dynamic*s*. Yet, changes in culture happen along very complex and long-lasting processes. One of the main results observed in recurrent cross-cultural research is that shifts in gender-related processes are connected to societal modernization and generational replacement as well (Norris & Inglehart, 2003). It is of particularly great importance, then, that educational efforts, bound to change traditional gender perceptions and related behaviors, take place in structured and stable ways within the educational curricula offered to young generations in every educational institution. Gender perspectives should already be considered a discipline, and not as a mere point of view, a discipline taught to young generations in the many and diverse places where education, and higher education, in particular, are provided.

A point of reflection is the fact that the inclusion of the topic of a gender perspective in the institution's curricular offer, in the data of MGS Research garner the 57% of the total sample, leaving a 43% giving a negative answer (Graph. 2.11). Furthermore, the data we have collected at the four Academies demonstrate that the importance given to gender education is mainly pinpointed by women, where 75,2% of female respondents are in favour of the inclusion of gender topics in the curricular offer, against the 52% of male cadets (Graph.2.12).
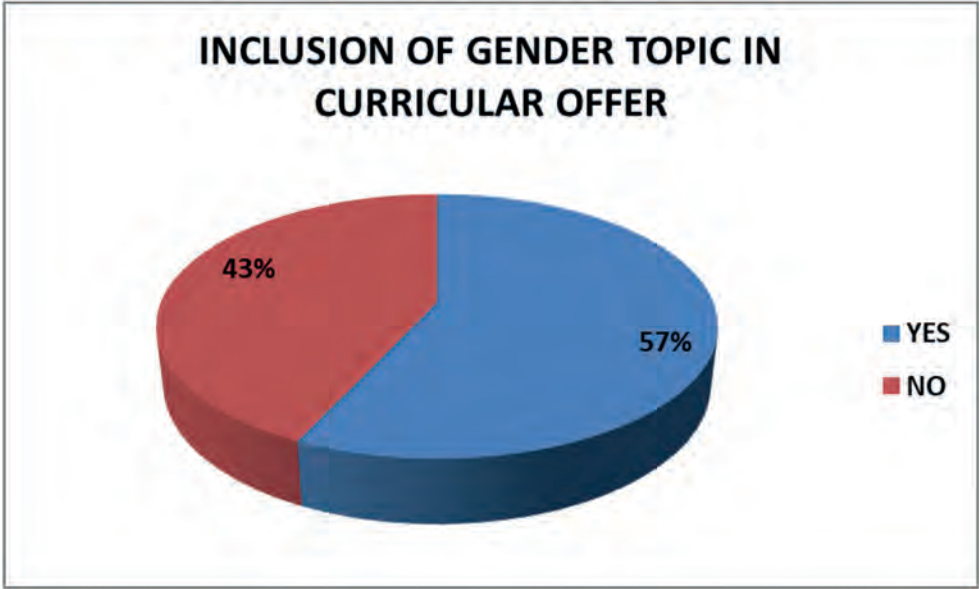
Graphic 2.11: Agreement about inclusion of gender topic in curricular offer
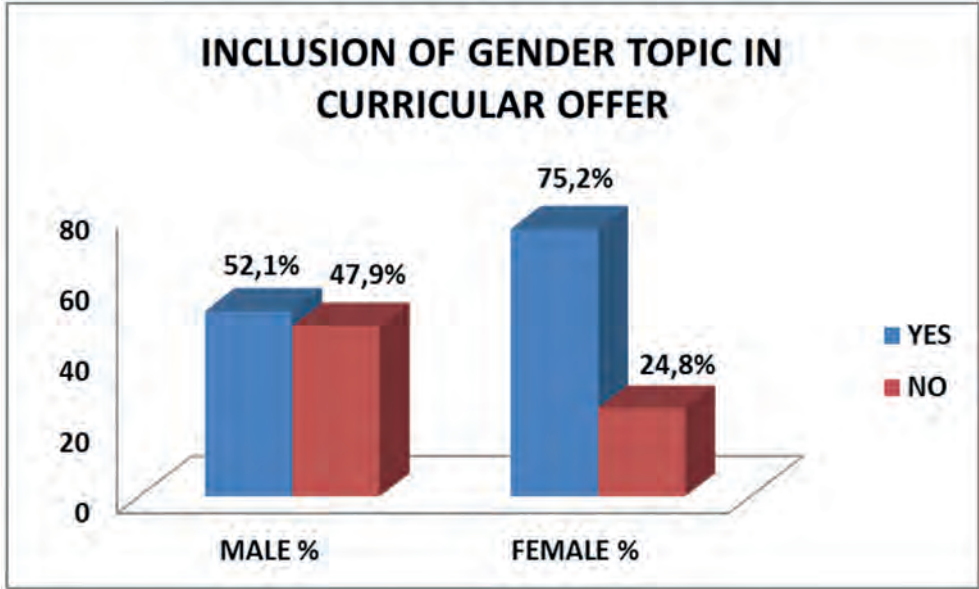


Graphic 2.12: Comparison between men and women samples about inclusion of gender topic in curricular offer

Even from qualitative data, it was not easy to grasp why appropriate educational programs receives such a different favor between women and men, as a means to improve gender equality at least. Here some hypotheses could be formed, towards an explanation of the reasons why there was not an all-around positive response: on the one side, a first explanation could be a supposed stronger sensitivity to gender inequalities felt by women in comparison with men, a second and plausible reason for that 43 % of male and female cadets who do not want a curricular offer on gender topics could be the experience, or the lack of experience, with gender education as a discipline, and the pervasive taboo surrounding gender equality in military contexts.

An open discussion with respondents would be rather difficult, so using contingency tables on the Italian sample a trial was done in order to test if and to what extent some kind of relation was present among positive answers to the question "Do you think the topic of gender perspective should be included in this institution's curricular offer?" with some other answers in a way or another related to pressures to adapt personal behaviors to a masculine environment or reactions to some, real or perceived, unequal treatment.

The trial over the Italian sample showed that those declaring to change their behavior when they are in a group composed of officers of the opposite gender are a minority (19 % of female and 9 % of male officers). However, in this group, the majority is favorable to gender educational programs in their courses, and women much more so than men. It seems, on the other side, that gender discrimination suffered by male cadets and caused mainly by the institution staff is not considered to be related to a lack of gender education. Large majorities of those who made, or thought about making, a complaint to a superior because of gender discrimination are in favor of gender education programs, and in this case, both genders agree, but in absolute numbers, these cases count for 38 individuals out of the 380 Italian cadets who filled out the questionnaire.

The perception of equal treatment of both genders at the institutions is stated by both men and women, but when asked about the possibility

of a gender education program, women are much more in favor than males, even though they declare a substantial equalitarian treatment within the institution. This difference between the two groups, in the Italian sample at least, induces us to think of the diverse importance given to gender perspective: the fact that those supporting the introduction of curricular programs on gender education are mainly those considering an equal presence of both genders in the military institution as most beneficial for the institution itself, which, in turn, leads us to suppose that they believe in gender perspectives as a necessary and unavoidable component of organizations and societies, so important to merit a specific curricular education, to improve its positive effects on a not yet satisfying reality.

## Closing remarks.

The idea of creating a specific discipline within the education and training for EU MS Army Officers, during their initial and basic courses, is as important for officers, as individuals, as it is for future leaders. It is also in line with the common efforts of the EU Member States, that recently approved the Discipline of Gender as one of the several military training disciplines adopted by European External Action Service (EEAS), as a consequence of the Training Requirements Analysis programme conducted and endorsed by European Union Military Committee (EEAS, 2021).

All military personnel can benefit from gender education, since they will transfer this knowledge and competencies at the unit level, for instance when they receive assignments.

The Military Gender Studies program can offer different topics related to gender such as Gender in Operations, Conflict-related Sexual Violence, Protection of Civilians, and Gender in local mediation. It could also include a general overview about Gender Policies issued by United Nations and regional organizations like NATO and EU. Usually, this training is offered to Senior Officers upon necessary, and they are

mainly conducted before a specific task at International Headquarters or as a pre-deployment course before they go to missions and operations. However, the opportunity to learn about these topics from the very beginning of military training could have a great impact on future generations of officers.

Nowadays, all main International Organizations that deal with security and defense, like the UN, NATO and EU, implemented a holistic approach to missions and operations where the implementation of a comprehensive approach to gender plays an important part. This approach increases operational effectiveness. To include gender in the operational awareness framework new specialized professional figures were created, such as Gender Advisor and Gender Focal Point, which will be characterized in a later chapter of this Handbook, so it is significant that a multidisciplinary course on gender is included in the EU officers' program and can be taught within the group of Basic Officers Education Institutes that are more active in the "European Initiative for the exchange of young officers, inspired by ERASMUS".

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# Chapter III
# Gender Mainstreaming
# in a European Military Context

*Bulgarian team*

*"A gender-equal society would be one where the word 'gender' does not exist: where everyone can be themselves."*

Gloria Steinem

## A brief overview of European Union (EU) initiatives on gender mainstreaming

The principle of equality is central to international human rights (Fredman and Goldblatt, 2015). Thus, equality is key to achieving social justice and cohesion, and sustainable and inclusive economic growth. It affects all areas of life, so the integration of the principle of gender equality in all policies is a necessary condition and a guarantee for good governance and progress in any given society.

Gender equality is recognized by the EU as a fundamental right and a necessary condition for achieving the EU's goals of growth, employment and social cohesion. Since 1996, the European Commission (EC) has been committed to a "dual approach" to gender equality. This approach involves integrating gender equality into all policies while implementing specific measures to eliminate or prevent gender inequalities. Both approaches go hand in hand, and one cannot replace the other.

One of the main bodies of the EU working on gender mainstreaming is the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). A Gender Mainstreaming online Platform has been set up within this body to support the EU institutions and government bodies by integrating a gender perspective into their work. This platform provides information on the importance of gender in various policy areas. It also suggests what the EU, and civil servants in the EU member states, can do to take gender into account in their daily tasks and responsibilities. This online platform also helps to improve individual competencies for gender mainstreaming during the various stages of the process of developing and implementing a specific program or project. Understanding how to design, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate gender policies will ultimately improve EU policies, and increase their public relevance and responsiveness. It is no coincidence that the focus of this platform is on gender as a social category since as a social concept, gender has always been linked and intertwined with other social categories such as ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation, or health status (as advocated by intersectional feminism).

Since 2012, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) has found that the effectiveness of EU Member States in gender mainstreaming is declining. For the period 2012-2018, only nine of them improved their results in this area.

That is why gender mainstreaming remains a priority for the EU Commission. Their 2020-2025 Gender Equality Strategy is based on a dual approach – on the one hand, the implementation of specific initiatives to tackle gender inequality, and on the other – gender mainstreaming in all EU policies.

Analyzing gender equality in all spheres of socio-economic life, it is impossible not to make a connection with the most significant phenomenon in the past 2 years, namely the COVID-19 pandemic. Gender equality is vital to alleviating and overcoming the social and economic consequences of the pandemic. This challenge was recognized during an event organized by EIGE and the German Presidency of the Council of the EU – providing a strong basis for ensuring gender equality in socio-economic policies.

Following the pandemic outbreak in Europe, the EU Commission has supported several research and innovation projects to tackle the spread of COVID-19. One of them is the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Work Program on the COVID-19 pandemic. Efforts are focused on differentiating the data collected by gender and examining the impact of the crisis on the work and productivity of women researchers. In addition, a website has been set up under this program, dedicated to all research and innovation initiatives.

Following the example of the World Health Organization, the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) divides the data into COVID-19 cases by gender. Thus, EU Member States have the opportunity to monitor the impact of the virus based on gender. The ECDC also provided guidance to civil society and non-governmental organizations, as well as national and regional authorities in the European Union, the European Economic Area, and the United Kingdom, to identify medically and socially vulnerable groups, including people experiencing domestic violence (mainly women and children) and evaluate mitigation measures.

The European Commission, the European Parliament, and the European Council have developed a plan to rebuild a greener, more digital, and more sustainable Europe. This plan aims to mitigate the effects of the pandemic and promote gender equality and integration.

A Commission for Gender Equality working group of "equality coordinators" has been set up in all Commission services and the European External Action Service. Its main objective is to integrate gender, age, disability, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, and sexual orientation in all policies, from design to implementation.

EIGE has also developed a platform for gender mainstreaming, an online toolkit for politicians and practitioners. In addition, EIGE analyzes gender equality issues in different policy areas with a view to knowledge-based development.

The European Commission also includes gender equality in its health policy. Together with the OECD and the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, it takes into account gender differences

in health outcomes and healthy lifestyles. The Joint Action for Health Justice in Europe (JAHEE) identifies gender as a factor in inequalities in health and related social services. The Commission is also committed to ensuring gender balance among its ambassadors for the European Climate Pact. In this regard, the Renovation Wave strategy was created as part of the European Green Treaty, which requires an increase in the number and role of women in the construction sector, as well as an increase in the diversity of skills and skilled professionals.

In addition, the Commission has identified gender equality as a new priority of the new European Research Area (ERA), adopted in September 2020. Based on the strengthened provisions in Horizon Europe, the Commission has proposed developing inclusive gender equality plans as part of the ERA in three levels: interconnectedness with other social factors such as ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation; geographical inclusion; and better involvement of the private sector. These measures complement those of other EU programs, such as ERASMUS +, with strong synergies with the Higher Education Transformation Program and the Digital Education Action Plan. (EC, 2021)

The European Commission continues to look for intersections between gender discrimination and other discrimination based on personal characteristics or identities, to avoid the rejection or abandonment of anyone and to ensure progress for all. In 2020, the Commission adopted several equality strategies – the EU Strategic Framework on Roma Equality and the Strategy in Support of Migrant Women. In pursuance of activities under these strategies, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, and Youth of Cyprus provides Greek language lessons and career guidance to women of different ethnic backgrounds. The initiative also raises awareness of multicultural issues, promotes respect for many kinds of disparities in schools, and promotes computer literacy among women and in rural areas.

The Finnish Institute of Health and Welfare is conducting a study on the short-term and long-term impact of COVID-19 on gender equality in collaboration with Statistics Finland, the University of Tampere, and the National Social Security Institute. The project monitors the health,

economic and social impact of COVID-19 on women and men and brings together experts from areas such as social sciences, demography, economics, and gender studies to analyze the various phases of the pandemic. The results of the project will be integrated into public policy on gender equality and will inform the general public about the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis on gender equality. (EC, 2021)

The German HEROES project brings together boys and young men to discuss topics such as equal rights, honor, human rights, homophobia, sexism, and racism (Heroes, 2019). Participants are trained to raise awareness among their peers and to make a lasting commitment to equal rights. A national coordination center is established to support and expand the project. The center can be used by NGOs at the national level for networking and other activities.

A special framework for monitoring the activities for achieving the goals of the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 has been developed. This framework has been established in close cooperation with the European Commission and the European Institute for Gender Equality and brings together indicators that reflect the main dimensions and key policy objectives of the Strategy. The portal provides an immediate overview of progress across the EU. The transparency and visibility created by the online availability of data allow Member States, civil society organizations, academia, social partners, businesses, and other interested parties to focus their work on gender equality in line with political priorities. The online monitoring platform also facilitates ongoing policy debate and policy development and supports the implementation of the strategy's objectives.

Practices and policies on gender equality implementation in the Armed Forces of the EU member states.

Only through continuous training at all levels is it possible to develop the necessary knowledge and adequate awareness of gender equality issues at all levels in the armed forces. Therefore, the implementation of the content of the resolutions on the "Women, Peace and Security" agenda and subsequent international regulations is based on the integration of the relevant specific modules in teaching and education.

Therefore, good practices and gender equality policies applied in the armed forces of some EU member states will be presented.

Concerning the implementation of gender equality in the armed forces, most European countries have imposed specific policies. For example, in 2020 the Republic of Bulgaria prepared the first draft of the country's national strategic action plan (2020-2025) for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The situation is similar in Portugal, where in 2018 the Portuguese Armed Forces implemented specific policies related to the implementation of gender equality. These policies were aimed at increasing the motivating factors of staff by optimizing their work and at the same time promoting gender equality.

A good example is Italy, which in 2018 implemented the country's third National Action Plan following UN Security Council 1325 Resolution. The main objectives of this plan were:

1. Further increase the presence of women in the national armed forces;
2. Increase the number of gender advisors (GENADs) and gender focal points (GFPs);
3. Strengthen the professionalism of the security forces, law enforcement, and judicial institutions, through special human rights training on the prohibition of incitement to hatred, countering violent extremism and terrorism, and, more broadly, non-discrimination;
4. Continue the organization of GENAD courses (for officers);
5. Continue organizing the course for a focal point on gender issues (for non-officers);
6. Continue staff training in accredited training institutes (i.e. NCGM, ESDC);
7. Promote the active and meaningful participation of women in decision-making and their appointment to peacekeeping operations, by identifying and fully overcoming all obstacles;
8. Increasing the number of women serving in the military and

9. Continue to send Italian female military and civilian personnel to international organizations. (NATO, 2021)

Regarding army enlistment requirements, in most European countries there is no quota principle for men and women, i.e. the conditions are the same for both sexes. There is minimal difference in the physical fitness tests used to enlist in the military. For example, in the Portuguese Army, during the entrance exam, women do fewer sit-ups, have more minutes to run, and can choose push-ups instead of pull-ups.

The entry requirement differences for the Armed Forces of Bulgaria are described in the Unified Army Test, set by the Ministry of Defense in 2010. The standards differ depending on the age and sex of the candidate. The situation is similar in Romania and Italy, where there is again a difference in the requirements for men and women in physical tests. The rationale for gender differences in physical fitness standards in most European countries is the different physiological characteristics of men and women. For this reason, there are different requirements for height and weight for both sexes wishing to join the army. In this regard, Italy has introduced a body mass index, which is different for both sexes.

There are no specific policies in European countries in focus, to encourage women to join the army. But at the same time, there are general laws of public administration and armed forces that are equally valid for men and women In general, these policies are aimed at supporting paternity, maternity, and parental leave. However, there are differences in the duration of leave among the countries. For example, in the Portuguese Armed Forces, maternity leave is 21 weeks, and paternity leave – is 3.5 weeks. In Bulgaria, maternity leave is 52 weeks and paternity leave is 32. In the Italian Armed Forces, it is noteworthy that the duration of maternity and paternity leave is the same at 20 weeks. It is an interesting fact that Romanian maternity leave lasts only 6 weeks and paternity leave lasts 3. Exceptions are only allowed if the child has a medical condition, in which case the leave is 3 years. Apart from Italy, in the three European countries referred, the leave can be transferred between the two parents.

It is important to mention the specific programs and policies adopted by the different EU Member States, in support of the work-life balance of military personnel. In most countries, flexible working hours are allowed in cases of care for children, the elderly, or the sick, or during training related to the training of the respective service member. Furthermore, when both parents are service members in most countries, it is customary not to be assigned to duty at the same time, and not to be sent together on long business trips or international missions. Single or divorced parents are exempt from night shifts, missions, or other tasks that require prolonged absence. In addition, the children of such parents in Bulgaria are provided with one-time financial assistance to meet seasonal or unexpected needs.

Some large military garrisons also provide controlled daycare centers for service personnel's children. In the Romanian Armed Forces, in the event of deaths during service, specific support is provided to their families, such as free medical and psychological assistance and access to jobs in the army. Italy has adopted a special army directive, called P001, which focuses on families in which both parents serve in the army or on families of single parents and children under 3 years of age. Under this directive, military personnel may apply for additional leave or leave in the event of training, marriage, pregnancy, political tenure, or the need to care for elderly or sick family members.

When it comes to the issues of gender equality in the military, sexual harassment and assault cannot be overlooked. In most of the countries in focus, specific strategies and policies have been adopted to deal with such situations. Only the Portuguese Armed Forces have not adopted similar policies, but there are programs and training related to the prevention of sexual harassment and abuse. There is also specially appointed staff in place to deal with allegations and complaints on these issues. In the army, all personnel undergo a mandatory lecture on the prevention of sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse. Unlike Portugal, no such staff has been recruited in Bulgaria and Italy, but formal procedures have been developed to report such incidents.

Gender equality in the military is a relatively new topic that has been ardently debated over the last decade, and its understanding and implementation is still at its very early stage for many EU Member States. It is important to note that the fastest results and higher efficiency is achieved through training. That is why specific training programs on gender equality have been developed in most countries. For example, in Portugal, several training programs have included this topic:

1. 'Integration of Gender Perspective in Military Operations', which is part of the pre-deployment training. It targets OR 1-4, OR 5-9, OF 1-2, OF 3-5, and OF 6-higher.
2. 'Commander's Course' which is part of the standard national training. It targets OF 3-5.
3. 'Staff Officer's Course' which is part of the standard national training. It targets OF1-2.
4. 'Captain's Course' which is part of the standard national training. It targets OF 1– 2.
5. 'Master Sergeant's Course' which is part of the standard national training. It targets OR 5-9.
6. Air Force Military Academy which offers standard national training targeting OF 1– 2.
7. Navy's 'Master Sergeant's Course' which is part of the standard national training. It targets OR 5-9. (NATO, 2021)

The Bulgarian Armed Forces have developed 5 training programs:

1. A specialized training course for newly recruited service members shall be held at the Military Police Logistics and Training Center. Topics include gender equality and UN Security Council Resolution 1325 which are part of standard national training.
2. At G.S. Rakovski National Defence College, gender perspectives and UN Security Council Resolution 1325 have been included in some academic disciplines. Some issues on UN resolutions and gender issues are being addressed in the compulsory Human

Resources Management Course and the Postgraduate Human Resources Management Qualification Course. They are aimed at OF 1-2, OF 3-5, and OF 6 and higher. This is part of pre-employment training as well as standard national training.

3. At Vasil Levski National Military University and the Professional NCO College, gender equality and the WPS agenda are part of the training modules in Leadership Training for NCOs, Cadets, and Civilian Students. The modules cover the essence of WPS policies; work with international documents on gender equality and their implementation by NATO; the national framework and implementation policies in BGRAF, and the integration of WPS policies in the planning, conducting, and evaluation of military operations and missions. They are aimed at OF 1-2 and OR 5-9 at the Military University, as well as at OR 1-4 at the NCO College. They are part of the national training.

4. The WPS program is also part of the leadership training modules for cadets, NCOs, and civilian students at Nikola Y. Vaptsarov Naval Academy, where it is aimed at OF 1-2 and OR 5-9, as well as OR 1-4 at the NCO College. They are also part of the standard national training.

5. The NATO-accredited Gender Focal Point (GFP) Course is held at the Crisis Management for Disaster Response Centre of Excellence (CMDR CoE) The course emphasizes enabling the GFP to support their Chain of Command in mainstreaming gender perspectives within their area of responsibility Trainees within the GENAD Advisory Structure are provided with the knowledge of how their role as a GFP contributes to larger organizational efforts to institutionalize the application of gender perspectives in all activities The target audience is GFPs within the strategic and operational organizations, which include OF 1-2, OF 3-5 and OF 6 and higher The GFP course is part of the standard national training, pre-deployment, and in-theatre training. (NATO, 2021)

Like Portugal, Italy has developed 7 national education and training programs related to gender perspectives:

1. International law, International humanitarian law, and the law of armed conflict Gender awareness, and implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and related resolutions.
2. A Gender Advisor Course which aims to train Italian officers to become advisors on gender equality in the armed forces, and on the implementation of gender equality in missions and operations.
3. Gender Matter Focal Point Course.
4. Female Engagement Team (FET) Course (for female personnel). The course aims to train teams of women working at the tactical level, in missions abroad or at home, to assist the commanders in planning and conducting national and NATO-led training and exercises, and to inform and train civilians with similar interests. The course has a special focus on the overall strategy for engaging the local population, mainly women and children.
5. NATO Engagement in Gender Perspective Course (for female personnel). The course is aimed at developing the ability to understand the social situation and women's role (with a specific reference to the Islamic world) and offers an effective approach to specific audiences, using communication techniques.
6. Lectures and seminars on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and related resolutions, and the implementation of gender perspectives in military operations.
7. Awareness of the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and related resolutions, and the implementation of NATO Directive BI-SC 40-01. (NATO, 2021)

It is noteworthy that there are no such gender-specific training programs in Romania, but all NATO training and educational modules are implemented in their national training.

In conclusion in most EU Member States, and in particular, in the ones discussed above, specific practices and policies related to gender

equality have been developed, and are successfully applied in the training of military personnel, in the implementation of current daily tasks, as well as when performing specific tasks and during a mission. We find encouraging that there is a growing understanding of these issues in the various structures and bodies of the armed forces, as well as among military personnel themselves.

Gender equality plays a major role in each country's economic growth and sustainable development, contributing to just societies and policy fulfillment. The integration of gender equality in the various spheres of socio-economic life is a key tool for progress, mitigating unexpected biases inherent in societies.

## Gender advisor and gender focal point

The need for Gender Advisors (GENADs) and Gender Focal Points (GFPs) for effective gender mainstreaming

The meaning of gender in every sovereign state should be the same. NATO (n.d.) defines gender as "the social attributes associated with being male and female learned through socialization and determines a person's position and value in a given context". According to NATO (n.d.), defining and negotiating social values and positions is always a shared endeavor among men, women, boys and girls.

The influence of gender, along with other factors such as ethnicity, religion, age, and economic circumstance, on social relations, behavior norms, and gender roles in a community can expose people to different threats on a varying scale, depending on a variety of factors (NATO, n.d.). Awareness of how the security demands of different groups emerge and alter, as well as how military operations and armed conflict affect them, requires an understanding of such intersecting elements and social dynamics within a population or society (NATO, n.d.).

This mutual understanding among the actors is decisive for the effective planning, conduct, analysis, and evaluation of military operations. As a result of armed conflict and crisis, people experience

a variety of different gender experiences, their security needs will differ, and decision-makers and union-led military operations will have an impact on them differently. (NATO, n.d.). A gender perspective is integrated into NATO's operations to examine gender-based differences between men and women relevant to their social parts and reactions, as well as the usage of means to achieve ends.

In this regard, the GENAD's primary role is to provide guidance and advice on how to integrate gender perspectives into operations daily, impacting the staff that works within the organization. It is also the GENAD's responsibility to assist the commander in executing a gender perspective in daily work. The advisor should be able to act on the mission's mandate implementation by incorporating gender perspectives into ordered tasks. Gender mainstreaming is a well-known tool for executing it into the planning, execution, and evaluation of different kinds of military tasks and operations. Recent actions by higher command indicate that decision-makers at the strategic level must shape and plan following the principles of protection, prevention, and participation by implementing a gender perspective and utilizing the gender component (PfPC SSRWG and EDWG, 2016, 67).

GENADs also represent the Office of Primary Responsibility to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and other relevant Resolutions on Women, Peace, and Security. GFP are the 'eyes and ears on the ground' for GENADs, assisting them in their work. (NATO, n.d.).

Using foreign military force to improve population security in conflict zones requires timely, accurate, and culturally nuanced intelligence. Intervening forces are increasingly being relied on to create the conditions for long-term security, which includes involving the entire population. A comprehensive understanding of culture and gender, derived from intelligence and operations functions that recognize the gendered implications of peace and security activities, is critical to this process. The mainstreaming of WPS in the culture of security forces is at the heart of this approach. Gender advisors are frequently in charge of this work.

Recent research shows that GENADs are most effective in military operations when involved in internal organizational activities, such as

operational planning. Nowadays, it is clear how active gender thinking in the intelligence cycle "is crucial for developing a complete operational picture. " (Bradney and Hutchinson, 2019)

The GFP should perform successfully by establishing a common understanding of the role and responsibilities of a GFP as regards their contribution to the integration of gender perspectives within respective functional areas. Their responsibilities include integrating gender perspectives throughout their respective teams, identifying knowledge gaps, and sharing lessons learned with Gender Advisors and senior leaders (Watson, 2019,23).

Each command is assigned a GENAD who works with a network of trained GFP. Gender structures within human resources and personnel structures also promote gender equality and diversity in recruitment, as well as equal opportunities for men and women (Watson, 2019). The leadership and personnel have successful relationships with the staff associations that represent both men and women.

In most countries, multinational forces and headquarters, and gender advisors have been appointed during peacekeeping missions to promote command in the implementation of provisions of WPS at the strategic, operational, and sometimes tactical levels. In most cases, the GENAD is a full-time position held by someone with gender expertise who has received additional education and training for this purpose (Watson, 2019). GENADs usually guide a network of GFPs working in the military. GFPs perform dual duties allocating part of their working time to supporting the inclusion of a gender perspective in the daily activities of their branch while performing other military duties with their respective unit (Watson, 2019).

GENAD and GFP are necessary both in peacetime and during a crisis, at different levels. A gender perspective at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels is always needed. It is necessary to include gender dimensions in all phases of military operations to implement gender perspectives. However, this requires training and education of the different actors about what gender is and how it is perceived, justifying the need for this handbook.

At the strategic level, it is important to ensure gender perspectives are a part of the operation's legal foundation, at the same time with clearly determined end-state aims to achieve.

At the operational level, strategic political goals are transmitted into military tasks which serve as the foundation for the military profession – operational planning. In the planning process, gender perspectives are used to determine how gender conditions affect or are affected by the conflict. This is done by analyzing specific gender characteristics, the various factors in the area of operations, and friendly forces within the conflict area.

At the tactical level, it is appropriate to consider gender perspectives daily. While there may be a benefit to adapting tactics to local gender stereotypes in some activities, such as intelligence gathering and patrolling, in others the stereotypes need to be taken into account when protecting forces. Several factors will have to be considered depending on the situation. The effectiveness of certain psychological operations will also depend on the important role gender plays in the operation. To achieve the mission's goal, tactical-level personnel will always have to understand how gender perspectives will affect their actions, as well as how gender perspectives may be used against them.

Commanders must understand the purpose and role of the GENAD, which is the entity responsible for integrating the gender perspective into all aspects of operational planning and missions, from a strategic to a tactical level.

Unfortunately, there are many factual examples from operations in Afghanistan, fully described, when Taliban fighters dressed as women in burqas managed to escape or detonate IEDs due to a lack of tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs), as well as the ability of coalition and local forces to search Afghan women accordingly. It is therefore imperative that the capability to apply gender perspectives at all levels in military operations increases, with more knowledge of gender mainstreaming, as well as more female staff in international operations. National efforts in recruitment, retention, education, and training are thus critical. To meet international demands, national military

forces must ensure that their structures, functions, and organizational cultures foster a thriving environment for both men and women. Although a gender perspective is not the answer to the questions or challenges in military operations, it is a perspective that will create enhanced situational awareness and contribute to reaching the goals of international obligations of working towards a more equal society, and making use of the military forces more effectively (Grimes, 2016).

Gender structures differ between countries and organizations. In response to their international and national obligations regarding WPS, many military institutions have designated staff to advise on and facilitate the implementation of a gender perspective. GENADs and GFPs need specialized training for their roles, and the necessary time and resources should be set aside for this purpose. However, all military personnel must be aware of the roles and responsibilities of GENADs and GFPs who work with their units.

The Gender Focal Point is another component of the gender structure which is a dual-hat position responsible for implementing both the WPS agenda and gender perspectives on the GFP's specific staff. GFPs are normally provided with guidance from the GENAD regarding how to apply a gender perspective to their duties. Ideally, there would be GFPs in every branch, but intelligence, short and long-term planning and civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) stand out as priorities.

As an armed force, gender integration also improves the application of gender perspectives in operational contexts. The promotion of diversity and equality overseas, through military operations, requires diversity within multinational forces (fig.1) (PfPC SSRWG and EDWG, 2016).

Governments will need to adapt, as gender awareness is implemented on a larger scale. This entails fine-tuning interdepartmental collaboration, increased funding, and the development of monitoring and implementation structures. Cooperation between governments is also critical. Gender integration norms are harmonized by international organizations such as NATO, the EU, the OSCE, and the UN, which is especially relevant when working in a multinational context.

To improve gender awareness and gender balance in the Armed Forces, a shift in perceptions and behaviors is required. Women's treatment and inclusion in the military are heavily influenced by command leadership. Attitudes are a major impediment to both recruitment and retention. The key to successful recruitment is to make the Armed Forces a welcoming environment for women, breaking down prejudices about women in military professions.
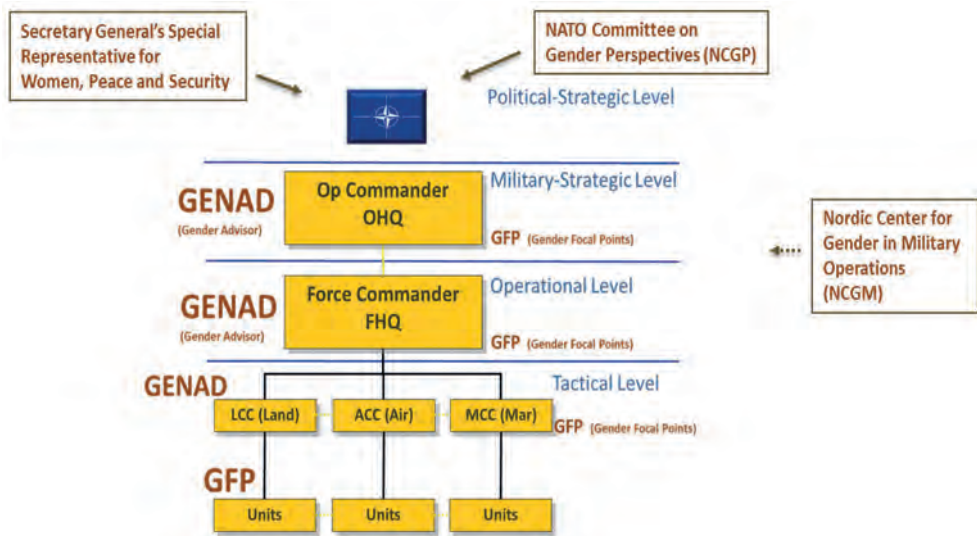


Figure 1. Gender structure.

Gender mainstreaming requires that all tasks in a mission or operation be considered and carried out in such a way that the results are not discriminatory and that the execution benefits both men and women. (Carey, 2001; Hafner-Burton and Pollak, 2002; Chinkin and Charlesworth, 2006).

An annex to the EU Gender Policy defines the job description for the GENAD and GFP. This study also identified the need to split the GENAD function which is based at mission headquarters and provides strategic support, from the Gender Specialists / Experts function

which is responsible for operational/tactical execution. Both of these responsibilities are critical to the mission's success.

Implementing a gender perspective into operational planning and activities benefits military missions and operations because it improves the overall operational picture and situational awareness, which guides the selection and design of interventions, which, in turn, is critical for establishing a safe and secure environment.

Gender analysis will benefit from including a gender perspective in operational planning and activities. Information on potential security threats to women, men, and children is provided, allowing for more effective protection operations and contributing to overall security (OSCE, 2018, 10). Gender analysis also provides information about key routes, sites, and areas for women, men, and children, allowing for a more thorough prioritization of infrastructure support, such as demining interventions. Gender analysis shows diverse patterns of men, women, and children's movements, which aids in the evaluation of Freedom of Movement (FoM) priorities and actions (OSCE, 2018,10).

Military Gender Advisors can effectively change mindsets, at both an institutional and individual level. Those advisors convince individuals of gender's relevance and, therefore, incorporate feminist considerations into the organization's operational functions. Some hope to inspire just one woman to join the security forces or to enjoy a bigger role in society, but they have been unable to provide any evidence of such empowerment (Bastick and Duncanson, 2018). As a result, advisors have reported success in meeting the goals outlined in their job descriptions, which corresponds with changes in NATO's WPS action plan. The action plan is revised every time more resources and support are allocated to Military Gender Advisors.

Researchers also found that advisors face the following common challenges: initial resistance to accepting the WPS agenda, inability to access resources, and a lack of knowledge of the cultural norms and history of the country they were assigned to (Bastick and Duncanson, 2018). There have been several problems, with the main ones being inadequate cultural and intelligence briefings, and a lack of training for

Military Gender Advisors. The lack of support by NATO for its Military Gender Advisors illustrates the chasm between its political commitment and reality. Military Gender Advisors have been able to influence NATO's operational structure to be more inclusive of gender equality despite their measured success. It is, therefore instrumental that change takes place, and that researchers believe Military Gender Advisors are agents of positive change in militaries (Carey, 2001; Hafner-Burton and Pollak 2002; Chinkin and Charlesworth 2006; Bastick and Duncanson, 2018).

Violence against women and girls is often disproportionate during armed conflicts, as in most cases the military is essentially an instrument of collective violence. There is an argument among some feminists that militaries can reinforce misogynistic behaviors that can permeate into the civilian realm when military societies are well-established. In addition, scholars further mention that most resources are typically allocated to serving the military, so an economy based on military goods and services is developed, thus removing funding that could be used to promote the safety of women and girls.

Nevertheless, Bastick and Duncanson (2018) note that more research is needed. There is also a generalized consensus that integrating a WPS agenda within military affairs entails both opportunities and risks. Most Military Gender Advisors cite institutional change as their greatest accomplishment in their interviews. It was directly related to the advisors' contact with women in the field that the Military Gender Advisors reported their minimal success in empowering women. During the NATO initiative to appoint women to higher ranks within the Armed forces, these women were subjected to harassment by male colleagues. Advisors tell us this was a consistent challenge that they would have been able to avoid if they had received adequate briefings on cultural and contextual understandings.

## Contemporary Relevance

Despite NATO's commitments to achieving gender equality and promoting the WPS agenda, military gender advisors found that the organization fell short in providing support for the implementation of these initiatives. During deployment, the advisors stated that translation services, armed guards, and vehicles were not available to advisors, and there was no adequate briefing on cultural and intelligence matters, so they were unable to achieve their goals. In developing the WPS agenda, we should focus on enabling institutions to achieve more than mere incremental change by stipulating a level of institutional support.

## UNSC resolution 1325 on women, peace and security

What is UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and why is it important?

Operational and security imperatives require reinforced political will. So that a sustainable system is created that allows increasing opportunities for women in the field of security and defense.

A very important step in this direction was Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, "Women, Peace and Security" adopted by the United Nations Security Council in 2000. This Resolution "urges member states to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution conflict". (The Norwegian Government's Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, 2006) Additionally, the resolution ensures a legislative basis for the assimilation of gender concerns, the integration into military activities, and provides specific recommendations for involving women in the promotion and maintenance of peace.

This Resolution is the first international document to draw attention to the different facets of war where women and girls suffer gender-based abuse, and traditionally continue not to take part in negotiations

or peace processes. In this regard, the Resolution emphasizes the impact that military conflict, hostilities, and violence have on the civilian population, and in particular on women, who must have the right to be equal partners in peace-building and peace-building processes.

The preamble to Resolution 1325 mentions the different effects of armed conflict on women and girls, which should be illustrated with the existence of institutional arrangements to ensure the protection and full participation of women in decision-making or negotiations. In this way, the Resolution advises international actors to expand their experience toward protecting the rights and freedoms of women and girls in conflicts and wars.

Resolution 1325 recognizes three principal obligations of states and other relevant entities (Appiagyei-Atua, n.d.).

Firstly, the Resolution seeks to ensure greater representation, participation, and involvement of women in peace-making processes, and to include a gender perspective in peacekeeping operations.

Secondly, the Resolution calls for respect for humanitarian law with a special emphasis on ensuring the protection of women and girls, such as excluding impunity clauses, to better promote justice for female victims of conflict. The state must also take affirmative action to prevent third parties from abusing the rights of women and girls during an armed conflict.

Thirdly, it calls for the promotion of the rights of women and girls and their special needs during the process of repatriation, resettlement, reintegration, and reconstruction.

Furthermore, States have the duty not to interfere or act in any way that would compromise women and girls benefiting from fundamental human rights.

## The four pillars of Resolution 1325.

To better understand the content of Resolution 1325, a brief description of its 4 pillars is provided in the next lines. The 4 pillars

are Participation, Prevention, Protection, and Relief and Recovery. (Reda, 2018)

The first pillar is called Participation, as Resolution 1325 formally reveals the contribution that women have to peacemaking, peacekeeping, and conflict-solving processes. In this regard, Member States are called upon to increase the participation of women in decision-making processes at all levels – national, regional, and international.

Prevention is the second pillar of the document, implying an urge to the various organizations and member states to include gender issues in the development of policies and mechanisms to prevent discrimination, violence, or other attacks against women and girls.

Protection, the third pillar, is important in Resolution 1325 for its specific focus and purpose in providing protection of women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence during conflict, and in other particular situations (for example, in refugee camps).

The last pillar of the document is Relief and Recovery. In that regard, Resolution 1325 calls for the advancement of relief and recovery measures to address international crises from a gendered perspective. Special attention is paid to respecting the particular needs of women and girls in the design of refugee camps and settlements, and generally the civilian and humanitarian nature of refugee camps. The resolution calls on local governmental and non – governmental organizations, Member States, and the various UN agencies to apply a gender perspective in the planning and conduct of peacekeeping operations, negotiations, and agreements.

As Lolwa Reda points out in her in-depth analysis of the significance of the Resolution: "UNSCR 1325 is vital for the fight for women's human rights for three main reasons ."(Reda, 2018). First of all, it is stated that with this Resolution, the UN Security Council proposed gender issues of mass society and described the framework within which the international community can develop new peace policies and update existing practices.

Next, Resolution 1325 defines women and girls as active agents, not passive recipients. This is perhaps the most important and influential part of the resolution, as it reveals women's participation in various

processes as their right. Resolution 1325 describes the need for a balanced presence in the various processes of women in need of protection and equality, just like men. At the same time, emphasis is placed on the good qualities, competencies, and contributions with which women can be involved in the activities needed to achieve peace or conflict resolution. This logically leads to the conclusion that women and girls should no longer be perceived as weak creatures or victims. On the contrary, femininity and masculinity are two parts of a whole, of our human nature, which means that both women and men must be heard and represented in all processes and at all levels.

Thirdly, it is a fact that, although not legally binding on UN member states, Resolution 1325, which was adopted unanimously, places some responsibilities on states and organizations. The choice to comply with the recommendations of the Resolution by the UN states remains a voluntary act. In addition, the specific language used in the resolution, which can be interpreted ambiguously, must be taken into account. These ambiguities are perceived as shortcomings of the document, along with many recommendations to countries, without specific priorities for actual implementation and rapid changes.

The above shortcomings do not diminish in any way the importance of the historic document UN Security Council Resolution 1325. The resolution is followed by similar resolutions and specific implementation plans and policies that ensure the integration of women at all levels. Last but not least, many countries that strive to implement the recommendations of the United Nations have created and developed gender-based programs that have led to some progress in social development.

To summarize the relevance of UN Resolution 1325 it should be noted that Resolution has changed the direction that the international community crucially thinks about peace and security. At The Women and War Conference, held 10 years after the adoption of this Resolution, the importance of Resolution 1325 was marked with a focus on its impact on different areas such as international law, women's empowerment, the military, and global security.

I. International Law – In this area, the Resolution points out the importance of women at the peace table, and that it is obvious they have to be involved in international decision-making.

II. Women's Empowerment – For a long time women's roles haven't been connected with the subjects such as leadership or management. It is necessary to talk about women as leaders, not victims and to accept their participation as essential to peace and security making.

III. Military – Many military leaders recognize that the real power in the military field is not only in the tanks and guns. The success in the military area depends on the teamwork of the people for achieving a common goal.

IV. Global Security – to describe the meaning of women's presence in security area, we will quote Admiral Michael Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,

"… well over 200,000 women have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, demonstrating tremendous resilience, adaptability, and capacity for innovation. Indeed, they have given us a competitive advantage. Time and time again, women show us that courage and leadership recognize no gender." (NATO, 2014)

## Implementation of Resolution 1325.

An important aspect of the discussion on gender equality and approved international instruments is precisely how they are implemented and reflected in relevant policies, strategies, and changes. It should be noted here that this multifaceted process is also the commitment of international organizations and unions, government structures, and the various actors in the civic sphere. Examples in this regard will be the documents and the efforts made by organizations such as NATO and the EU, as well as the achievements of some of the UN member states.

In 2005 the Security Council advised the members of the UN to

continue with the implementation of Resolution 1325 through the development of National Action Plans or other national-level strategies (United States Institute of Peace, n.d.). The NAP development process involved Member States setting specific priorities and resources, allocating responsibilities, and engaging in activities at the government level. Two decades after the adoption of Resolution 1325, as of October 2020, national plans for the implementation of the Resolution had already been developed and are in force in 86 countries (United States Institute of Peace, n.d.).

The success of the national plans is related to both the selection of the right government instruments and the active participation of the civil sector. Practice shows that civil society participates in the development of equality policies and at the same time controls and monitors the implementation of adopted national documents. Another fact that must be taken into account is related to the different possibilities for providing the budget by the states in terms of funding and capacity to implement the approved national policies. (PeaceWomen, 2013).

## The EU Action plan

Several EU documents state that gender equality is one of the European Union's core values. All people, in all their diversity of biological sex and character, have the right to be free, to live according to their line of choice, to be socially and economically engaged, and to play a role as equals.

The first Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development (2010-2015) was adopted by the EU in 2010. The organization's efforts were aimed at promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in development, which is a key goal in the plan. The EU seeks to ensure its leading role in effective gender equality policies by setting up specific mechanisms to ensure adequate human and financial resources.

The updated version of the EU Plan called Gender Action Plan II – Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020 (GAP II) was adopted in 2015. The document emphasizes the need for additional activities to make gender equality more visible to women and girls around the world. Various topical areas are included, such as: ensuring the physical and psychological integrity of girls and women; promoting social and economic rights and empowering women and girls; strengthening the audibility of girls and women.

The EU has been developing a Strategy for Gender Equality for 2020-2025, as well as an Action Plan for Gender Equality III, 2021-2025. In addition to these documents, a political and operational EU roadmap to a world of gender equality has been proposed. (EU gender equality strategy 2020-2025)

The latest version of the Action Plan for Gender Equality III includes various guidelines for work, such as: (EC, n.d.)

- gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls must be a priority of the EU's external action, emphasizing that, by the end of the period, 85 % of new EU action must contribute to this main goal;
- deeper collaboration with EU Member States as a team at an international, regional and national level, which will help strengthen partnerships with stakeholders, women's organizations, and other actors;
- visibility of the progress of equality policies through engagement in key areas – for example: tackling gender-based violence; sexual and reproductive health and rights care; economic and social rights; equal participation and leadership positions, etc.;
- good examples and practices for effective policies related to balanced leadership and responsibility for gender-oriented situations, capacity building, and expertise;
- focus on results, accountability, and visibility through qualitative, quantitative, and continuous monitoring.

It can be summarized that all developed EU plans and strategies for gender equality are aimed at achieving Goal 5 for sustainable and prosperous development in all areas of domestic and foreign policy. It is no coincidence that the subtitle of EU Gender Action Plan III is "An ambitious agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment in EU external action". (EU Gender Action Plan III, 2020)

## NATO Action plan

In NATO Secretary General's second annual public report on implementing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, it is pointed out that "The adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, in 2000, marked a historic recognition on the part of the international community of the disproportionate effect that armed conflict has on women and children in particular, as civilians, refugees or internally displaced persons who are increasingly targeted by combatants. At the same time, our experience in NATO has shown that women bring a valuable contribution to our armed forces and operations and play an important role in conflict prevention and resolution. Whilst nations have the primary responsibility for ensuring the implementation of Security Council Resolutions, NATO is playing its part in ensuring the full implementation of the Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security." (NATO, 2013)

What are the highlights of the NATO – UNSCR 1325 relation (NATO, 2014)?

- NATO and its partners are committed to remove the barriers for women's participation in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building process;
- An engagement to reduce the risk of conflict-related and gender-based violence;
- To achieve these goals, NATO and its partners work with other international organizations –mainly with the United Nations

and on the next level – generally with the civil society achieve these goals, NATO and its partners work with other international organizations –mainly with the United Nations and on the next level – generally with civil society.

NATO worked with its partners in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) to respond to UNSCR 1325 and the first policy was ready in 2007. Later, in April 2014 an updated overarching policy was adopted. The revised Policy emphasizes the influence of the participation of women in conflict prevention, management, and resolution as well as in post-conflict efforts and cooperation. It also addresses the question of women's protection needs in times of conflict and how to prevent, recognize and respond to conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence.

The UNSC Resolution 1325 is also applied in crisis management and NATO-led operations and missions. The Alliance has recommended gender advisors to be appointed at both Strategic Commands – ACO and Allied Command Transformation which have to advise military commanders on how best to conduct operations, to limit their impact on women and girls. (NATO, 2014)

The significant step in the direction of an integrated gender perspective in NATO activities, strategies, and vision is NATO Action Plan.

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 during the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, the first NATO Action Plan to apply UNSCR 1325 and related Resolutions into NATO-led operations and missions was adopted. After the changes in NATO's revised policy in April 2014, a new Action plan for supporting UNSCR 1325 was accepted in June 2014, and again the plan was developed with the Allies' EAPC partners. The structure of the Action plan comprises 14 outcomes and several actions. NATO International Staff, NATO Military Authorities, and relevant national authorities are responsible for their enforcement.

NATO / EAPC Policy on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) was endorsed by NATO leaders at the Brussels Summit in 2018. It reaffirms

NATO's intention to work on the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on WPS and their policy to be present in all activities in the civil and military sectors. In support of these intentions, in 2018 NATO adopts an Action Plan with an initial period of two years, subsequently extended by one year to complete the actions and changes. (NATO, 2021)

The NATO / EAPC Action Plan for the Implementation of NATO / EAPC Policy on Women, Peace and Security 2018 is an example of the permanent and stable direction in the Alliance's vision of full implementation of the recommendations of the UN Resolutions. NATO aims to eliminate gender inequalities and integrate a gender perspective into the Alliance's three main tasks: collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security.

The policies pursued by NATO and its Partners rely on the application of the guiding principles of integration, inclusiveness, and integrity. The plan outlines specific steps, desired outcomes, and relevant actions that will lead to sustainable gender mainstreaming decisions in both the Armed forces and the civilian sphere. (NATO, 2018)

## National Action Plans

After 2000, many countries and governments accepted the main requirements in UNSC Resolution 1325 and changed a lot of national documents and legislation, created own National plans for implementation of the Resolution. Many governmental and non-governmental organizations offered doctrines, strategies, and roadmaps for achieving the goals set in the Resolution.

For example, Portugal has three adopted NAPs. The first one was in force in the period 2009-2013, the second edition was for the period 2014-2018, and in 2019 a NAP was adopted for the next 4 years until 2022. The different editions of the NAP have different content, as in the foreground a basic international framework for women, peace and security is in place. As stated on page 5 of the First NAP, the aim of

the document is 'to promote gender mainstreaming at all stages of the peace-building and security process' (Portugal National Action Plan (2014-2018). As the first document of this kind for Portugal, the NAP has had a significant impact on the increased participation of women in peacekeeping missions and operations.

During the preparation of the second NAP in Portugal, the approach was changed by holding a public consultation and appointing an independent external evaluation of the plan. Through the implemented "participatory approach", the second edition of the Plan proposed a more detailed implementation scheme, which defines specific Strategic areas with specific objectives, measures, and responsible structures, although in general the objectives of the first plan are preserved. ( Portugal National Action Plan (2014-2018).

As indicated by the comment of analysts who monitor these processes in all countries:

"Portugal's NAP is heavily focused on increasing participation and raising gender awareness via training. Although it lacks specifics about budgeting and resource allocation, the plan includes specific measurable goals for each of its five objectives. The plan has what appears to be institutional support within the Portuguese government for its realization, and has a strong internationalist focus on participating in the UN and other international organizations' efforts to promote peace and security". (Securitywomen, n.d.)

Italy has four NAPs in force for the following periods: the first plan for 2010-2013; the second plan for 2014-2016, the third plan for 2016-2019, and the last adopted fourth NAP for 2020-2024. In the first three plans, the Italian government defined the main objectives related to the implementation of the recommendations of Resolution 1325. Some of these areas of work are related to increasing the number of women servicemen in the Armed Forces; gender mainstreaming in planning and conducting peacekeeping operations; ensuring the protection of women and children in areas of conflict and hostilities; strengthening

the presence of the civil sector in the processes of implementation of Resolution 1325, etc. (Italy's IV plan of action on Women, peace and security 2020 – 2024).

In preparation for the fourth NAP, an open working group of the Interdepartmental Committee on Human Rights (CIDU) was set up in Italy, involving stakeholders to participate in the discussion on women, peace and security. As stated in the foreword to the plan by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Italy has set the goal for qualitative change in the activities of various institutions and civic actors to implement the requirements of the Program for Peace, Women and Security.

With the Fourth National Action Plan, Italy aims to further a qualitative leap in the efforts made by the institutions and civic actors to implement the recommendations of the Women's, Peace and Security Program, as well as to change the existing mechanisms. It is planned to strengthen cooperation with various actors in the future, coordinate joint initiatives to prevent violence, manage critical situations based on gender; increase activities related to women's empowerment and gender equality, etc. (Italy's IV plan of action on Women, peace and security 2020 – 2024).

It is interesting to note that the fourth NAP also includes the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has severely affected Italian citizens and has a serious and disproportionate impact on women and girls in particular. It can be summarized that the aim of the NAP adopted in 2020 in Italy is to apply the integrated approach, which will contribute to the expansion of initiatives and activities related to the latest resolutions on the agenda of Women, Peace and Security.

The situation is slightly different in another country – a NATO and EU member – the Republic of Romania. It adopted its first National Action Plan in 2014, which was scheduled to operate for a period of 10 years – until 2024. It is impressive that the development of the Plan has been implemented only by the Ministry of Defense, so it is aimed primarily at the implementation of the WPS agenda in the field of defense policy. Therefore, it is not surprising that the main focus of the Plan is on the

constant increase in the percentage of women servicemen in the Armed Forces. In addition, goals are set to increase women's participation in hostilities outside the national territory and increase opportunities for women's participation in decision-making processes. Although the civil sector has not been involved in the preparation of the NAP, another general goal of the Plan is to expand inter-agency cooperation with non-governmental organizations and civil society. (NAP, 2014-2024)

The NAP also sets a matrix for the implementation of five specific objectives, although the Plan does not have an allocated budget. (Securitywomen, n.d.). In 2020, the Romanian government adopts a more holistic National Action Plan for the implementation of Resolution 1325 for the period 2020-2023.

The history of the implementation of the recommendations in Resolution 1325 through the establishment of National action plans reveals different approaches. In the Republic of Bulgaria, the first document dedicated to the Resolution was created in the Ministry of Defense in 2011 – An action plan for implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution1325 at the Ministry of Defence. The purpose of the plan was to send a serious political signal to the international community and to Bulgarian society, too, about the priorities of the management of the Ministry of Defense and Bulgarian Armed Forces in unison with Euro-Atlantic policies in gender mainstreaming. (Ministry of Defence, Bulgaria, 2011)

After the development of various strategies and the adoption of laws related to equality between men and women, the first NAP was adopted in Bulgaria in 2020. The plan is the result of the joint work and efforts of experts from state institutions, non-governmental organizations, and representatives of the academic community. All participants in the Advisory Working Group under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs created the NAP for the period of action 2020-2025.

Bulgaria's NAP is extremely detailed and offers up-to-date and diverse information on the EU policy framework on the issues relating to the WPS agenda; NATO commitments on the issues relating to the WPS agenda; the content of Women, Peace and Security Agenda and the

2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Bulgarian NAP's structure is arranged around four interdependent and interconnected pillars: prevention, participation, protection, and prioritization (Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan, 2020). For each of the above-mentioned pillars, the Plan envisages Measure, Action(s), Responsible institution(s), Output indicator, Timeframe, and Budget.

The plan sets out the mechanism of coordination and cooperation between the competent institutions in the implementation of all activities in it. Periodical monitoring of the progress in the implementation of the included activities has been planned, and this will be done by a specially designated working group, again with the participation of various experts. The NAP considers recommendations for the implementation of the WPS both domestically and internationally, with civil society and structures playing an important role in all equality policies and practices.

In this regard, it can be summarized that the essence of the Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan in Bulgaria is "…. a clear political sign of our commitment to the attainment of the national priorities in the field of gender equality. The NAP is in line with Bulgaria's active policy in the human rights field, in particular the rights of women and girls, and it contributes to the efforts at a national level to empower women and to ensure their active and leading role in peace and security matters." (Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan, 2020).

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# Annexes

## MGS Questionnaire

1. Institution
2. Age
3. Gender
4. Academic year
5. What made you join this institution?
   Individual goals / Job or career opportunities /
   Family and friends / Other(s)
6. Is your class composed of – Mainly men / Equal number of men and women / Mainly women
7. How do you behave when you are in a group composed of cadets of your gender vs. in a group composed of cadets of the opposite gender?
   Differently / Equally
8. Do you think this institution should adopt a language that does not discriminate against gender? (e.g. instead of "Businessman"/ "Businesswoman", use "Businessperson")
   Yes / No
9. Do you feel that you are treated differently because of your gender in this institution?
   Yes / No

9.1 You think you are treated: Better than the cadets of the opposite sex / Worse than the cadets of the opposite sex

10. Have you ever felt discriminated against because of your gender?
Yes / No

   10.1 This discrimination usually comes from:
   Cadets of the same gender / Cadets of the opposite gender / Institution's Staff / Other(s)

11. Have you ever made, or thought about making, a complaint to a superior because of gender discrimination?
Yes / No

   11.1 If you made, or thought about making a complaint, was the nature of the complaint regarding:
   Cadets of the same gender / Cadets of the opposite gender / Institution's Staff / Other(s)

   11.2 Do you consider the complaint to be resolved?
   Yes / No

12. How would you assess your capability of performing operations which require physical strength when compared to cadets of the opposite gender?
Less capable / Equally capable / More capable

13. How would you assess your capability of performing operations which require mental strength when compared to cadets of the opposite gender?
Less capable / Equally capable / More capable

14. Do you think men and women are treated equally in this institution?
Yes / No

15. Do you think you have the same opportunities for a military career comparing to cadets of the opposite gender?

    Yes / No

16. Do you think there should be equal access to all military ranks and operations regardless of gender?

    Yes / No

17. Do you think the current representation of both genders in this institution is balanced

    Yes / No

18. Do you consider the equal presence of both genders in military institutions to be:

    Beneficial / Prejudicial / Neither

19. Would you feel comfortable being commanded by a man?

    Yes / No

20. Would you feel comfortable being commanded by a woman?

    Yes / No

21. Would you feel comfortable commanding a group mainly composed of people from the opposite gender?

    Yes / No

22. Do you think the topic of gender perspectives should be included in this institution's curricular offer?

    22.1 Which format do you think is more suitable for this topic:

    Included in regular classes / Seminars, short-duration modules; Workshops, part of field training exercises / Other(s)

23. Would you agree to be contacted for an interview about this topic? (in which your anonymity would be assured).

    Yes / No

    Please leave us an e-mail for contact:

# MGS Interview Guide

Follow-up Questions
*Confirm info for the record:*

1. So, you are a ?-year old [woman/man] in the ? year at the [military institution]. Is this correct?

   ***If they've stated that their class does not have a balanced representation of genders (question 6):***
2. In the questionnaire, you've stated that your class is composed of [men only/ mainly men/ women only / mainly women]. What kind of impact, if any, do you think an unbalanced representation of gender might have on cadets and their group dynamics? (why?)

   ***If they've stated that they behave differently when in a group mainly composed of cadets of the opposite gender (question 7):***
3. You have indicated that you behave differently when in a group mainly composed of [male/ female] cadets. In what way do you behave in these situations? Why do you feel the need to adjust your behavior?

   ***If they've stated that [the military institution] should [not] adopt a non-discriminatory language regarding gender (question 8):***
4. Why do you think that [this military institution] should [not] adopt a language that does not discriminate someone for being a man or a woman?

   ***If they've stated that they feel gender-based discrimination (question 9, 9.1, 10):***
5. Can you please describe some situations when you felt discriminated, or treated differently (either better or worse) because of your gender?

*If they've stated in the questionnaire that they've make a gender-related complaint (or thought about making one) (questions 11, 11.1, 11.2):*

6. You have indicated that you have made a complaint [thought about making a complaint] regarding an episode of discrimination involving a [cadet– same of dif. gender / staff /other]. Would you please describe the situation? (assure the person that their reply will not be reported, or explicitly included in any of our outputs)

*If they only thought about making a complaint:*

7. Why didn't you make a formal complaint?

*If they've stated that they believe cadets to have different capabilities (physical or intellectual) depending on their gender (questions 12 + 13):*

8. You have stated that you believe cadets have different [physical or mental] capabilities depending on their gender. In your opinion, what would you consider an appropriate approach to these different capabilities? What should [the military institution] do to address this divergence, if anything.

*If they've stated that men and women are treated equally, or not, in this institution (question 14):*

9. You have indicated that men and women are [not] treated differently in [this institution]. What led you to this conclusion? Could you give us a couple of examples that sustain this belief?

*If they've said that they don't think they have the same opportunities for a military career + equal access to all military ranks and operations compared to a person of the opposite gender (questions 15 + 16):*

10. Why do you think that you do not have the same opportunities for a military career, and equal access to all military ranks and

operations, compared to [male/ female] cadets? Are there any practical examples you can give us that illustrate your opinion?

*If they've stated that they think that the current gender representation in the institution is [or isn't] balanced (question 17):*

11. Why do you consider the current gender representation in [this institution] to be [balanced/ unbalanced]? Do you think this situation should/can change?

*If they've stated that the presence of both genders in military institutions is [prejudicial/beneficial] to the institution (question 18):*

12. Could you please explain why do you consider the equal presence of both genders to be [prejudicial/beneficial] to [this institution]?

*If they've stated that they would not feel comfortable being commanded by a person of the opposite gender (questions 19 + 20):*

13. Why would you not feel comfortable being commanded by a [man or woman]?

*If they've stated that they would not feel comfortable commanding a group mainly composed of people from the opposite gender (question 21):*

14. Why would you not feel comfortable commanding a group mainly composed of [men or women]?

*If they've stated that the topic of gender perspectives should [not] be included in the institution's curricular offer (question 22, 22.1):*

15. Why do you think that the topic of gender perspectives should [not] be included in [this institution's] curricular offer?

**Mandatory Questions:**

16. What made you want to be interviewed?

17. In general terms, do you think there is gender equality in [this institution]?
    [If so] how does it manifest?
    [If not] do you think there should be? What could be done to
      achieve it?

18. In your opinion, how do cadets in [this institution] perceive the topic of gender mainstreaming, which consists in the integration of a gender equality perspective at all stages and levels of policies, programs, and projects?

19. How do you see the future of [this institution] when it comes to gender mainstreaming?

20. What do you hope to achieve in your military career?

21. Is there anything you would like to add? Something we might not have asked, but you think it is important that we know for our research.

# Learning, Teaching and Training activities for Students – Lesson Plans + schedule

**Lesson Plans**

Learning, Teaching, and Training (LTTs) for Students

A five-day plan (Monday to Friday) designed to implement the contents of this Handbook.

**Monday**

**Reception** – At the beginning of the seminar there should be a reception of the students. Considering that most likely they don't know each other, this is a good time for introductions, explanations, and orientation.

**Introduction to the course** – The contact with the seminar is a brief and overall description of the MGS project, the seminar's objectives should be described, and the expected outcomes should be laid out.

**Addressing Chapter I Gender Concepts** – The first chapter of the handbook should then be introduced, incorporating the students as much as possible, incorporating activities and debates.

**Tuesday**

**Addressing Chapter II – Gender Dynamics in European Military Higher Education Institutions** – Firstly provide an overview of the main issues as presented in the chapter. After this broad approach, some games should be introduced to facilitate engagement and help clarify some possibly complex topics.

A **representative** of each MGS partner institution should discuss their academy's data regarding gender dynamics, as included in the chapter. This discussion should include the experiences of the MGS interviewers during the interviews with young cadets in their institutions.

In the interest of expose the cadets to the intricacies of gender mainstreaming processes, we suggest a **group activity** where heterogeneous groups of four cadets must provide solutions to some of the restrictions or problems presented by the trainers regarding gender inclusion.

**Wednesday**

**Chapter III – Gender Mainstreaming in a European Military Context** – Provide a brief overview of European Union (EU) initiatives on gender mainstreaming. This session should begin with an overview of the key points of Chapter III, for instance clear descriptions on the roles of GENAD, GFP, and what the UNSCR 1325 entails.

A **guest speaker** should be invited to discuss the state of gender studies in the field of military higher education. After the speech, allow for a lengthy Q&A portion, as to engage with the cadets.

**Thursday**

This session should be centered around a **Case Study activity** that may challenge the cadets to incorporate the knowledge they have acquired during the seminar.

The session should close with Debate – What can the future hold for Military Gender Studies? – This debate should provide a platform for the cadets to express their beliefs for the future of the Military Gender Studies field.

**Friday**

The last day of seminar is dedicated to the **cadets' evaluation**, in the form of a brief test that encompasses all of the major topics discussed during the seminar.

The cadets must be asked to fill out a **Feedback Form**, that will provide much needed information on their experience with the MGS seminar.

At the end of the seminar the trainers deliver the **certificates** to the participating cadets.

## Learning, Teaching and Training activities for Students

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 09h00 12h00 (3WH) | Introduction to LTT activities Syndicate work on gender Key concepts - Gender | Syndicate briefings on key concepts Gender Dynamics in European Military Higher Education Institutions | Gender Mainstreaming in an European Military Context | Syndicate briefings Practical exercise on integration of gender perspectives | Final assessment LTT activities feedback questionnaire Delivery of certificates and closing session |
| 12:30 | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch |
| 13h30 15h30 (2WH) | Free | Syndicate work on morning topic | Lecture by invited experts on gender topics | Free | Free |

Erasmus+

# Learning, Teaching and
# Training Activities for Students

## 14-18 Nov. 2022 – LFA, Sibiu (Romania)

| DAY 1 – Monday 14.11.2022 | | |
|---|---|---|
| 09:30-10:00 | Introduction to LTT activities | – Opening remarks<br>– Presentation of the MGS Project – objectives, participating countries, timeline, activities, outcomes<br>– Participants' presentation – LTT coordinators and students introduce themselves briefly |
| 10:00-11:00 | Syndicate work on gender | – Application of gender questionnaire: Ss are given a questionnaire and asked to answer the questions individually<br>– Forming of groups: Ss are asked to split into 4 groups x 5 cadets, each of a different nationality. Each group then has to choose a name and a logo by which they are going to identify themselves and prepare to present them on Day 2<br>– Discussion: What does gender mean to you? (Q1 in the questionnaire). In their groups, Ss discuss the meaning of gender and then choose a spokesperson to present the conclusions of each group in plenary |
| 11:00-12:30 | Key concepts – Gender | – Lead-in: Presentation on UNSCR 1325 – ppt<br>– Presentation: In groups, Ss receive concepts related to gender (Ch 1 of the MGS Handbook) and their definitions<br>– Practice: Ss match the concept with the definition<br>– Production: In plenary, each concept and its definition is discussed and exemplified with real-life situations (LTT coordinators and Ss)<br>– Assignment: In their groups, Ss will have to prepare a 5' presentation on one of the concepts presented in Ch1 of the MGS Handbook, with specific focus on the manner in which the concept is reflected in their institutions |
| 14:00-16:00 | Syndicate work on the morning topic | – Ss prepare their assignment for the next day<br>– LTT coordinators assist and facilitate access to resources and information |

# Lesson Plan

| DAY 2 – Tuesday 15.11.2022 | | |
|---|---|---|
| 09:30-11:00 | Syndicate briefings on key concepts | – Warm-up: Ss present the logo of their group and explain the reason(s) for their choice<br>– Presentation: Representatives from each group present the concept their group has chosen, focusing on their institutional experience<br>– Discussion: Ss are encouraged to interact and explain their choices, while offering concrete examples of how the specific concepts are illustrated in practice from their experience |
| 11:00-12:30 | Gender Dynamics in European Military Higher Education Institutions | – Presentation: Each partner institution presents their Questionnaire and Interview results<br>– Assignment: Ss take notes and are encouraged to think about solutions to some of the identified problems they heard during the presentations. They will present their solutions on Day 3 |
| 14:00-16:00 | Syndicate work on the morning topic | – Ss work on the solutions they will present the following day<br>– LTT coordinators assist and facilitate access to resources and information |

| DAY 3 – Wednesday 16.11.2022 | | |
|---|---|---|
| 09:30-10:30 | Syndicate briefings on identified solutions | – Presentation: Ss present the solutions they propose in order to solve the issues identified and discussed during the previous day<br>– Discussion: Ss are encouraged to interact and express their opinions about the solutions proposed by their colleagues and also contribute their own alternative solutions, based on their experience |
| 10:30-11:00 | Presentation by invited experts | |
| 11:00-12:30 | Practical exercise on integration of gender perspectives | Practical exercises – role-plays (example of role-plays in the attached Word document) |

# Role Play

**– Step 1:**

*You are each a team of 5 soldiers/military who have just returned from a successful mission. Sit down as a group and imagine what your mission was about and consisted of, and how you accomplished it, what the leader and the 4 members had to do. It can be a wartime or peacetime mission, you can be a hero in a dangerous situation or just a soldier responsibly carrying out a mission of some kind … The idea is that you have been fully successful, you have been congratulated at the end by your superiors.*

*When describing the mission you make no reference to the gender of the participants, you do not use the words "he" or "she", you speak only in terms of "leader" and "team members".*

Duration: 5-7 minutes

**– Step 2:**

When time runs out, a representative from each group is invited to briefly present to the plenary what mission they have imagined.

Duration: 5 minutes

**– Step 3:**

*One of you has been the team leader in your imagined mission, now you will find out who that was by a random drawing. The one who has been designated leader does not have to reveal this to the others in the group.*

Each team gets 5 cards, folded, and members draw one card each. One will have the "leader" card, the others "team member", no one knows what the others have drawn.

*Now, you each know whether you were the team leader or one of the team members on the mission, but you don't know what role the others played. Put your card in your pocket and we continue the game.*

*In a few minutes you will draw a ticket that will assign you a gender: you will be a "female" or a "male". You will take the card without looking*

*at what it says and keep it on your forehead so that the others in the team can see it. You will ask your colleagues questions, and at the end you will each have to say two things:*

*– about yourself: whether you were a woman or a man, and*

*– who the team leader on the mission you have just completed was.*

*You each have the right to ask your colleagues **5 questions**, to which you will be given a **yes/no** answer.*

*The questions will not be direct ("am I a female?" or "are you the leader?"), but will refer to what you did during the mission, your behavior, etc. If you pay attention to the questions and answers of other colleagues, you will get information from there, too.*

Duration: 5 minutes

– **Step 4:**

*Now, before you draw your gender-assigned card, you have 5 minutes to think about the questions you will ask your colleagues to find out if you are a female or a male. You can write them down to make sure you ask the most relevant questions, which will tell you exactly what gender you were and who the team leader was.*

Students think individually and eventually write down their questions on a piece of paper.

Duration: 5 minutes

– **Step 5:**

Students draw out everyone's gender-assigned cards and hold them up on their foreheads. When we tell you to, start asking the questions, one question each, and the colleagues answer. Continue the game until the 5 questions and answers they were allowed to have are finished.

*Now place the cards on your foreheads face down, without looking at them, and write on the paper if you were female/male and the name of the team leader.*

Then face everyone's answers to the cards that were on their foreheads and the leader reveals their identity.

*Congratulations to those who managed to guess their gender and leader!*

Duration: 15 minutes


**Step 6 – plenary discussion:**

*Which questions did you find most relevant to find out participants' gender? What attitudes and behaviors did you ask about?*

*Were there situations when you did not know how to answer according to a specific gender?*

*Did you formulate questions/answers about behaviors that turned out to be irrelevant, that did not help you to identify the gender?*

*At what point were you sure you had identified your own gender?*

*Which questions do you consider to have been inappropriate, offensive from a gender perspective? What bothered you?*

*What stereotypes came to light?*

*To what extent might professional behavior on mission have indicated the gender of the military?*

*How did you identify the leader? What behaviors did you consider relevant to a leader?*

*Was the gender of the leader important?*

*What did you learn about yourself through this exercise?*

*What did you learn in general, as individuals and as future military leaders?*

Duration: 20 minutes


**Conclusions to be drawn:**

– Some professional behaviors do not belong to the gender of people and can be performed equally well by men and women.

– Female and male leaders cannot always be differentiated from the perspective of the way of accomplishing the mission

– etc.

# Learning, Teaching and Training Activities for Trainers

23-27 Jan. 2023 – IT-Army Education and Training and School of Applied Military Studies (Turin, Italy), University of Turin (Italy)

### Objective

The LTT for Trainers it is a five days (from Monday to Friday) activity that aims at introducing the handbook to trainers/teachers who include gender topics in their courses.

The first objective is to deepen handbook contents.

The second one is to present some exercises linked to each chapter that can be used in the classes in order to teach Gender topics in an interactive way.

The third objective is to create and share new exercises associated to each chapter to increase the number of tools a trainer may adopt during the lessons according to the audience.

| Day | Objectives |
|---|---|
| 1st day | Presentation of the participants<br>Overview on Gender studies<br>Handbook distribution (chapter 1) and study |
| 2nd day | Distribution of previous exercises on chapter 1<br>Elaboration of new exercises on chapter 1<br>Presentation of handbook chapter 2 (MGS research outcomes)<br>Deepening of chapter 2 |
| 3rd day | Deepening of Women, Peace and Security Agenda.<br>Elaboration of new exercises on chapter 2, starting from the MGS research outcomes<br>Distribution and deepening of chapter 3 |
| 4th day | Deepening of Gender mainstreaming applications (case studies)<br>Distribution of previous exercises on chapter 3<br>Elaboration of new exercises and scenario |
| 5th day | Feedback collection |

**Target**

Trainers/teachers who treat Gender topics in the Military Academy courses.

**Teaching Material**

Handbook, exercises used in the LTT for students, videos.

# Weekly Program

|  | **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9:00 13:00 | Introduction to LTT activities Initial Questionnaire Lecture on "Women in the armed forces" Question time | Syndicate work on Chapter 1 of Handbook Presentation of Chapter 2 Results Discussion | Lecture on Women, Peace and Security Agenda Focus on "How to stimulate reflections on gender by Cadets/ Officers?" | Lectures by experts on gender topics (Gender Advisor) Syndicate work on Chapter 3 Analysis of case studies and role-play | Final Questionnaire LTT activities feedback Delivery of certificates and closing session |
| 13:30 14:30 | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch |
| 14:30 16:30 | Individual preparation on Chapter 1 | Individual preparation on Chapter 2 | Individual preparation on Chapter 3 | Working group activities on Chapter 3 Sharing of working group results | |

# Learning, Teaching and
# Training Activities for Trainers

20-24 Fev. 2023 – Vasil Levski National Military University, Veliko Tarnovo, (Bulgaria)

## Lesson Plans

| Day/Time | Event |
| --- | --- |
| **Monday** | |
| 9:00 – 12:00 | · Opening Ceremony ( welcome address and remarks)<br>· Event schedule and a brief presentation of the participants<br>· MGS Project presentation – Grounds for a Military Gender Studies Module. How the Military Gender Studies (MGS) Project was created? – presentation by the project/lead coordinator<br>· National Gender Policies. WPS National Action Plan (NAP) – presentation by a representative of the host country on gender equality policies<br>· Group Photo |
| 12:00 – 13:30 | · Lunch |
| 13:30 – 15:00 | · Visit to the historical sights |
| 15:00 – 18:00 | · Free time |
| 18:00 | · Welcome Cocktail (time for introductions, sharing and discussions) |
| **Tuesday** | |
| 09:00 – 12:00 | · Feedbacks by the cadets connected to the LTT for students – presentations by cadets, participants in training activities for studies at the partner's academies<br>· Presentation by guest speaker (gender expert, gender advisor, GFP). Topic : The role of Gender advisors in the military units and military academies<br>· Discussion |
| 12:00 – 13:30 | · Lunch |

| | |
|---|---|
| 13:30 – 16:00 | · A brief overview of Chapter I Key Concepts – Gender – presentation by representative from MGS team<br>· Syndicate work and focus on the appropriate exercises and teaching methods |
| 16:00 | · Free time |
| **Wednesday** | |
| 09:00 – 12:00 | · Presentation by guest speaker (gender expert, gender advisor, academic expert) Topic: The challenge: how to teach gender? Shared experience and lessons learned of teaching gender concepts<br>· Presentation by guest speaker (gender advisor, gender focal point). Topic: The role of gender training courses and seminars for experts in support of gender mainstreaming in military contexts (NATO approved and EU courses).<br>· Discussion |
| 12:00 – 13:30 | · Lunch |
| 13:30 – 16:00 | · A brief overview of Chapter II Gender Dynamics in European Military Higher Education Institutions – presentation by representative from MGS team<br>· Syndicate work and focus on appropriate exercises and teaching methods |
| 16:00 | · Free time |
| **Thursday** | |
| 09:00 – 12:00 | · Presentation by guest speaker (academic expert, military commander). Topic: An example of gender education/ Good practices of gender education in .........Military Academy/ General Staff/ military unit<br>· Sharing experience and discussion<br>· A brief overview of Chapter III – Gender Mainstreaming in European Military Context – presentation by representative from MGS team<br>· Syndicate work and focus on the appropriate exercises and teaching methods |
| 12:00 – 13:30 | · Lunch |
| 13:30 – 15:00 | · Role-playing or situational play with the seminar's participants. Example: Take a step forward – role-play game aiming to increase the sensitivity to different social groups in the society<br>· Analysis of role-play |
| 15:00 | · Free time |

| Friday | |
|---|---|
| 9:00 – 13:00 | · LTT activities feedbacks<br>· Analysis of the Syndicate work and focus on the lesson plans in MGS Army Handbook<br>· Recommendations and conclusions<br>· Certificates Ceremony |
| 13:00 | · Lunch and free time |

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**Programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Pratices**

**Strategic Partnerships for Higer Education**

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