

HUNGARIA - NATIONAL REPORT FOR 2005

(situation of the year 2004)

Introduction

Women were excluded from the military in the 18th century when the permanent conscripted armies were in generally established. Their application in the military has been accepted only in the second half of the 20th century. In Hungary, in principle the military career has been opened for women since 1945. and the majority of those chosen the military carrier were experiencing discrimination in the labour market. However, most of female personnel were serving in “traditional female positions like nurses, secretaries, etc. The mid 1990s has changed this situation by opening most of the “traditional male” carrier opportunities for females as well. Nowadays, women represent about 16 percent of the total strength of the Hungarian Defence Forces.

The Committee on Women of the Hungarian Defence Forces (HDF) was established in November of 2003 by the joint decree of the Administrative State Secretary and the Chief of General Staff of the Ministry of Defence of Hungary. The purpose of its establishment was to provide equal opportunities within the military by analyzing conditions of women in professional and contracted service, by studying specific topics related to female personnel and developing proposals for solution of problems to the leadership of the Ministry. Committee on Women represent all the female personnel serving in organizations and units of the HDF. Members of the Committee were assigned by the high leadership of the MoD and HDF.

Achievements in 2004

Steps have been taken to establish better contacts between the Committee and female soldiers. The committee regularly visits units to conduct dialogue with women in the military in order to provide a closer contact, as well as to get better informed about concerns and suggestions for improving women’s position and status in the service.

The so called “helpers’ network” was established. The main task of this network is to have contact points at unit level. The committee members keep close contact with these POCs .

Steps have been taken to improve the resting and hygienic conditions in the units. As a result the sanitary regulations of pregnant female soldiers became simpler.

The committee surveyed the clothing supply situation of the servicewomen, and revealed problems, especially of availability of uniform items and accurate sizes. Based on the regulation of the Chief of Defence Staff the committee was requested to confirm the items of the newly planned uniforms and the supplementary items. The recommendations made by the committee were considered in the selection of the new items.

Policy

The Constitution of the Republic of Hungary assures equal rights of men and women in any aspects of civilian, political, economical, social and cultural as well as human and civil rights. The prohibition of any discriminations guaranteed by the Constitution are reflected in the Military Service Law, as it states: “The armed organisation guarantees the promotion opportunities of the professional personnel without discrimination, and on the basis of professional skill, experience and performance, as well as service time, including payments related to ranks and positions.”

Ratio of women in the military has been raising significantly in the 1990s. Combat positions have been opened for women in 1996. Although women are allowed to serve in almost all career fields most of them are still performing their duties in administrative, human, financial and medical positions.

Organization

Personnel of the HDF are falling into two categories: professional and contracted soldiers. The conscript service was abandoned in November 2004. The current Hungarian military is an all volunteer professional organisation.

As on 1 April 2005 there are 4041 servicewomen in the HDF, that is about 16 % of the total personnel strength. Statistical data representing figures and percentages by services and rank categories and status of employment are shown below:

FEMALE SOLDIERS IN THE HUNGARIAN DEFENCE FORCES

| Branches, services | Enlisted | NCO | Officer | Total |
|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| Army | 473 | 530 | 110 | 1113 |
| Air Force | 209 | 578 | 89 | 879 |
| Joint Logistics Support Centre | 31 | 298 | 74 | 403 |
| MOD | 49 | 884 | 671 | 1355 |
| General Staff | | | | |
| Other institutions | 44 | 174 | 73 | 291 |
| Total | 806 | 2467 | 766 | 4041 |

PROFESSIONAL AND CONTRACTED FEMALE PERSONNEL IN THE HDF

| Branches, services | professional | contracted | total |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| Army | 501 | 612 | 1113 |
| Air Forces | 318 | 561 | 879 |
| Joint Logistics Support Centre | 233 | 170 | 403 |
| MOD | | | |
| Other institutions | 945 | 701 | 1646 |
| General Staff | | | |
| Total | 2492 | 1549 | 4041 |

WOMEN NCOs PER RANKS IN THE HDF

| Branches, services | Enlisted | sergeant | staff sergeant | master staff sergeant | WO | staff WO | Master Staff WO | Total |
|--------------------------------|------------|------------|----------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Army | 473 | 125 | 155 | 185 | 61 | 4 | 0 | 1003 |
| Air Forces | 209 | 103 | 113 | 235 | 116 | 14 | 0 | 790 |
| Joint Logistics Support Centre | 31 | 25 | 39 | 119 | 101 | 13 | 1 | 329 |
| MOD and Defence Staff | 0 | 17 | 69 | 92 | 84 | 46 | 4 | 312 |
| Other institutions | 93 | 42 | 193 | 284 | 176 | 51 | 0 | 839 |
| Total | 806 | 312 | 569 | 915 | 538 | 128 | 5 | 3273 |

WOMEN OFFICERS PER RANKS IN THE HDF

| Branches, services | 2Lt | 1Lt | Capt | Maj | Ltc | Col | Gen | Total |
|--------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|
| Army | 45 | 24 | 29 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 110 |
| Air Forces | 29 | 25 | 26 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 89 |
| Joint Logistics Support Centre | 10 | 17 | 29 | 13 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 74 |
| MOD | 36 | 57 | 39 | 44 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 203 |
| Other institutions | 52 | 57 | 67 | 72 | 36 | 6 | 0 | 290 |
| Total | 172 | 180 | 190 | 145 | 73 | 6 | 0 | 766 |

Percentage of servicewomen per ranks

| RANK | NUMBER | RATIO |
|-----------------------|--------|---------|
| Sergeant | 312 | 12,65% |
| Staff sergeant | 569 | 23,06% |
| Master Staff sergeant | 915 | 37,09% |
| WO | 538 | 21,81% |
| SWO | 128 | 5,19% |
| MSWO | 5 | 0,20% |
| Total NCOs | 2467 | 100,00% |
| RANK | NUMBER | RATIO |
| 2LT | 172 | 22,45% |
| 1LT | 180 | 23,50% |
| CAPT | 190 | 24,80% |
| MAJ | 145 | 18,93% |
| LTC | 73 | 9,53% |
| COL | 6 | 0,78% |
| GEN | 0 | 0,00% |
| Total officers | 766 | 100,00% |

The rank distribution of female servicewomen do not show any differences comparing with male's one. However, it might be interesting that the highest rank the female officers are wearing in the HDF is colonel and there is not general among them.

Employment

As it is regulated by the Service Law servicewomen are integrated to the Hungarian Defence Forces. Women work and train together with their male counterparts and are subject to the same chain of command, standards of performance and discipline. The requirements are the same, and they are naturally granted the same opportunity for promotion as men.

Servicewomen are entitled to maternity leave in case of giving birth. After 6 months of maternity leave they are allowed to be assigned in so called "personnel reserve status" for a year. However, continuation of their military carrier is ambiguous and more complicated, especially in cases if the units they have leaved have been disbanded during their absence due to restructuring of the military. Women reporting back to the work after giving birth to their babies are entitled to breast feeding breaks until their babies' 6 months age.

Recruitment

The role of Recruiting Centres introduced 01 October 2001 is becoming more and more important. Currently there are 7 recruiting offices operating in the whole country. There is no gender discrimination in the recruitment process including medical, mental, physical, educational, moral requirements for women and men. In the case of contract service application the basic components of the entrance requirements are:

| Personnel category | Education | Age |
|---------------------------|---|------------------|
| enlisted personnel | 8 class primary school certificate | 18 -47 years old |
| non-commissioned officers | secondary school, with final exam certificate (12 classes) | |
| Officers | higher education certificate (college or university degree) | |

Female soldiers entering the service have to complete the integrated basic training. They are trained as their male counterparts, however female soldiers have different physical standards. Physical standards of the assigned personnel to positions are similar to male personnel, however these requirements may vary according to gender, age and filled position. All the personnel have to fulfil an annual test of physical fitness.

Last year 210 women have entered into service. Due to high interest from female candidates for service currently there is no need to develop special recruitment programs for women.

Training

The standards and requirements are the same for all the applicants to Hungarian Defence Forces regardless to their sex.

Candidates for professional NCOs are trained in the single NCO Training school. The length of the training is one year. Candidates for carrier officers are trained at the Miklos Zrinyi National Defence University for 4 years. The first women cadets appeared only in 1994 in some specialities, like finance, signal, etc. Starting from this year the previous restrictions for commanding positions training of women (light infantry, artillery and reconnaissance etc) have been lifted. It is worth to mention that the first female fighter pilot cadet is currently ongoing her training in the Canadian Air Force training program. Cadets completing the NCO or officer training are promoted to ranks of sergeant or second lieutenant accordingly, and are assigned to their first assignments.

Applicants for contracted service are trained at a central training base. Training is comprised of a 3 month long basic training and a 3 month long specialty training. This training cycle meets the requirements of the 3X6 months rotation period of the units.

Deployment

Hungarian military personnel have been deployed to missions since 1996 to support the efforts of the international community, such as IFOR, SFOR, KFOR, MSU, MFI, ISAF and SFIR. They have been served and continue to serve as doctors, medical technicians, observers, administrative, communications, guarding and patrol personnel.

Ratio of servicewomen in international missions

| Mission | number of deployed personnel | number of deployed service-women | percentage of women |
|---|------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| KFOR Guard and Security Battalion, Pristina | 257 | 24 | 9,34% |
| KFOR Preventive Medical Laboratory, Pristina | 10 | 6 | 60,00% |
| SFOR Military Law Enforcement Contingent, Sarajevo | 115 | 5 | 4,35% |
| SFOR Military Transportation Platoon, Velika Kladusa, North-West Bosnia-Herzegovina | 28 | 0 | 0,00% |
| ISAF operation in Afghanistan. | 41 | 8 | 19,51% |
| SFIR operations in Baghdad, Al-Hillah (until 2005) | 302 | 7 | 2,32% |
| <u>Operation Allied Harmony (FYROM)</u> | | | |
| Guard and Security Platoon, Skopje, FYROM | 40 | 1 | 2,50% |
| UNFICYP United Nations Forces in Cyprus, Famagusta, Nicosia | 121 | 19 | 15,70% |
| MINURSO, military observers, Western-Sahara | 7 | 1 | 14,29% |
| <u>Peace Support Operations of the OSCE</u> | | | |
| military observers, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Tajikistan | 5 | 0 | 0,00% |
| military police, in the Sinean peninsula | 26 | 9 | 34,62% |
| TOTAL | 952 | 80 | 8,40% |

Recruitment policy for these missions is the same for women and men: the screening process includes physical and mental examination and military peacekeeping training.

Their participation in the Afghanistan Medical Contingent and Sinai MFO mission has been extremely relevant for years.

Career development

Equal opportunities are granted for female and male personnel in career development. As for promotion the factors to be considered are professional qualifications, experience in the given field, evaluation and service needs. The person's sex is not taken into account when promotions are discussed.

In 2003 a new career development and promotion system has been introduced. A person may be assigned to a higher position and be promoted only after successful completion of the necessary course.

Special events

In November 2004 the Committee held the first conference on actual issues concerning female soldiers. The Chief of Defence Staff has opened and chaired the conference, all services' leadership were represented. The conference aimed at reveal of problems and seeking their solutions with sharing information. The committee intend to organise annual conferences.

The conference has launched an overarching study on the sociological character of the women in service for improving equal opportunities for service woman in the HDF. The establishment of a net supporting families in progress. Thin net is aiming to support families of personnel in missions, and also assisting deconfliction of specific family issues in case of both members of a family couple are military personnel.

Conclusion

Currently servicewomen represent about 16% of the total personnel strength. Ration of female military personnel has significantly been increased in recent years. The density of women personnel is still the highest in "traditional women" position, like in the medical service. Women cadets have graduated from National Defence University since 1998. Servicewomen are integrated to the military and have equal rights.

Female NCOs and officers take active part in the missions abroad. Ratio of women in deployed personnel is more then 8 percent.

Establishment of the Committee on Women in the HDF is considered as progress, it pays an important role in promoting gender equality.