

## **POLAND – NATIONAL REPORT 2004**

### **I. Changes in the policy concerning military service of women**

#### **Equalisation of men and women status in the Polish Armed Forces**

Regulations of the Law on Military Service of Professional Soldiers (pragmatic law) that came into life on 1 July 2004 have dramatically changed the perspective of service evolution of women. These regulations create a possibility of access of servicewomen to any post in the military. Rules of recruitment, course of service and retirement from the military give the same rights and they impose the same duties on men and women. The law has also equalised the age of obligatory retirement of both genders from the military (60 years of age). It has granted women in candidate service a one-year unpaid leave in case of becoming pregnant, which gives them opportunity to finish military school. Rights concerning paternal duties have also been equalised for all soldiers – both parents are entitled to circumstantial leaves.

These regulations differ in case of recruitment to professional private corps and rights connected with maternity – rules of admitting maternity leaves do not apply to male professional soldiers.

In Polish Armed Forces there are ongoing education and information activities resulting from the “National Program of Countering Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Intolerance” and “National Program of Activities for Women”. The issues of countering discrimination, eliminating prejudice and stereotypes, as well as these of equality of genders have been included in the programs of civil education of conscripts and seminars for professional soldiers.

#### **Areas requiring regulations**

Present rules do not cover – among others – issues of military service of military married couples – their service in the same unit or garrison, service subordination, carrying out tasks abroad by both partners and care of children during their mission abroad. Also recruitment of women in professional privates’ corps calls for changes in regulations concerning, for instance, creating recruiting boards for women.

#### **Equal rights and equal chances**

Legal equalisation of rights and rules of military service does not mean that possibilities in this area are equal for everyone, even for servicewomen. Until 1999

women were admitted to service on the basis of “special” procedures. These women possessed “civilian” experience, but they did not have experience typical for soldiers trained during military studies.

Recruitment of women to military schools and academies began in 1999. First graduates took up their military posts in 2001 (warrant officers’ schools) and in 2003 (officers’ military colleges). Military preparation during candidate service as well as expertise gained during service on lower posts is – according to new military pragmatism – one of the stipulations of professional development and promotion to higher positions in the structures of armed forces. Therefore women-graduates of military colleges and academies who took over their posts according to new pragmatism, face different perspectives of professional development.

## II. Organisation of women’s military service in Polish Armed Forces

### Professional service

As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005 there are 512 women on service in Polish Armed Forces.

Women’s professional Military service	Officers by ranks					Total Officers	Total NCOs	Total
	Lt Col.	Maj.	Capt.	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt.			
Regular service	4	27	86	74	154	345	167	512

### Number of servicewomen in Polish Armed Forces in 2000-2004

2000			2001			2002			2003			2004	
Officer	WOff.	NCOs	Officer	NCO									
182	51	5	213	74	16	215	125	17	232	126	18	345	167
238			303			357			376			512	

*Officer – means Officers’ Corps*

*Woff – Warrant Officers’ Corps*

*NCOs – Non Commissioned Officers’ Corps.*

Figure 1. Women in Polish Armed Forces (1.01.2004 and 1.01.2005)

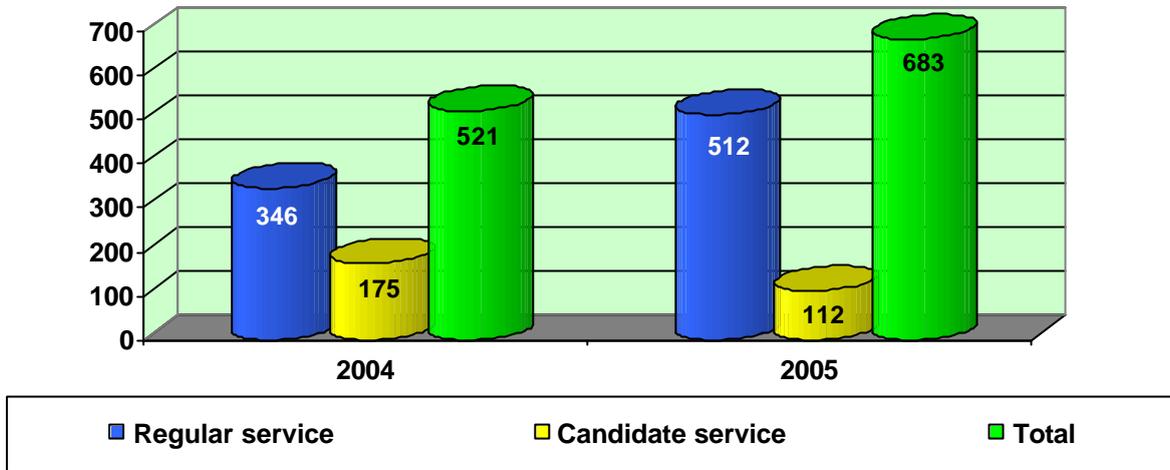
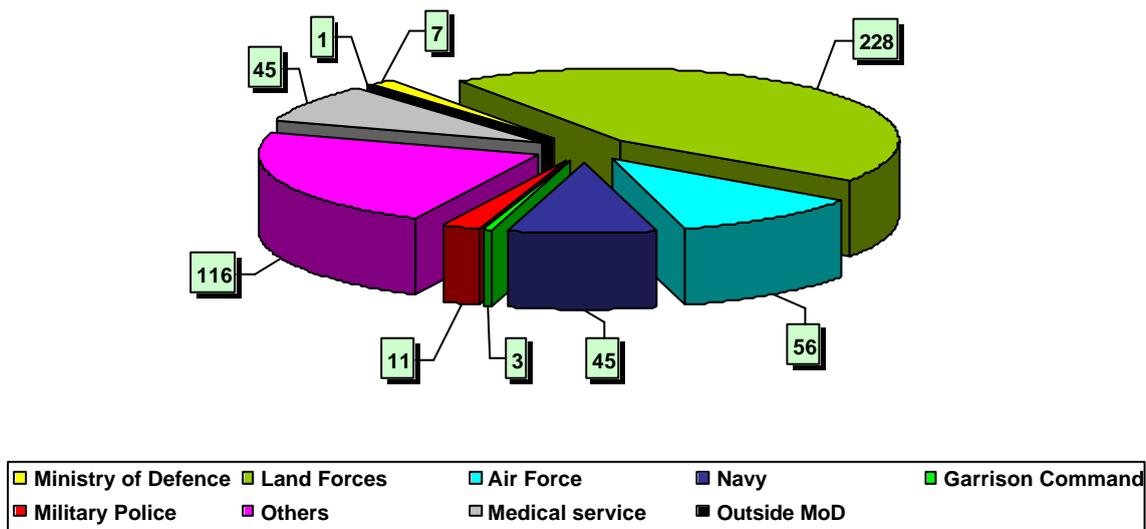


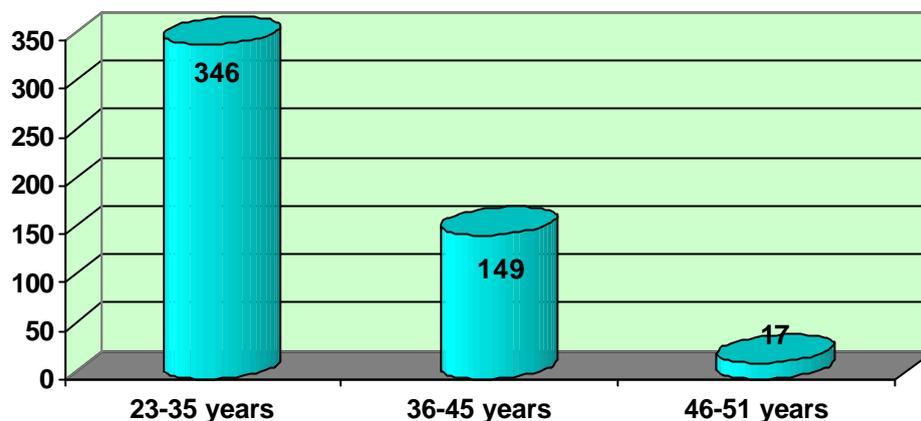
Figure 2. Place of service in structures of the Polish Armed Forces



In comparison with 2003, total number of women in the military in 2004 increased by 166, from 346 to 512. Total number of women in officers' corps increased from 213 to 345, and those in NCOs' corps – from 18 to 167 (this growth was mainly caused by suppression of warrant officer corps and its inclusion into NCO corps).

Most women serve with Land Forces - 228, Air Force – 56, medical service – 45, and the Navy – 45 (see Annex 1).

*Figure 3. Women in the Polish Armed Forces by age (1.01.2005)*



### **Candidate service**

As of 15 October 2004, in officers' colleges and military academies, there are total 171 women, including 59 already promoted professional women-soldiers on complementary studies.

First women graduates of military colleges were promoted in 2003. In June 2004, among Military Technical Academy graduates promoted to the rank of second lieutenant, there were 58 women; they continue their education on complementary studies. Many of them were very good students, many of them had considerable sport achievements. In the Naval Academy there were 8 women graduates, in the Air Force Officers' Military College – 10, and in the Land Forces Officers' Military College – 35.

At present 35 candidates for professional soldiers are studying on the fourth, last year of education in military colleges. In the mid-2005, together with Officers' Military College graduates, they will begin their professional military service.

It happens that some students due to different reasons are not able to complete education at military colleges and academies. These reasons include:

- lack of progress during studies (NA – 1; MTA – 3)
- health (AFA –1, MTA – 1)
- choosing another school (MTA –1)
  - death (MTA –1).

Figure 4. *Women at military colleges and academies* (15.10.2004)

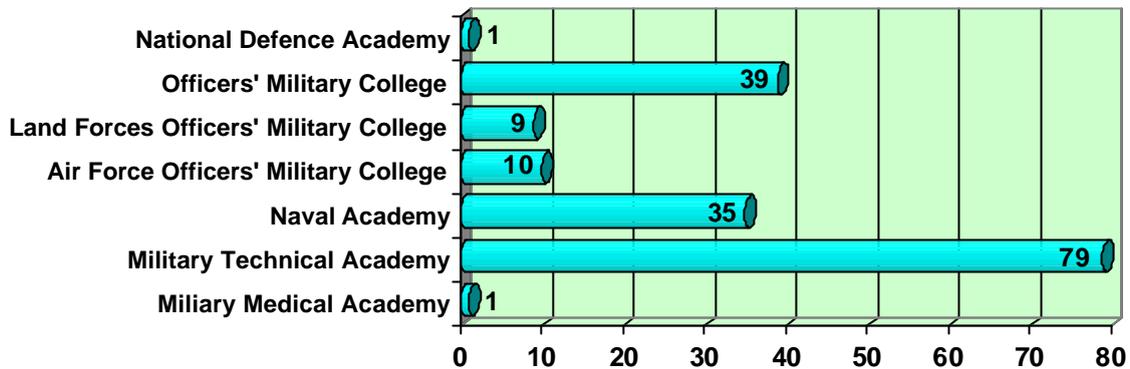
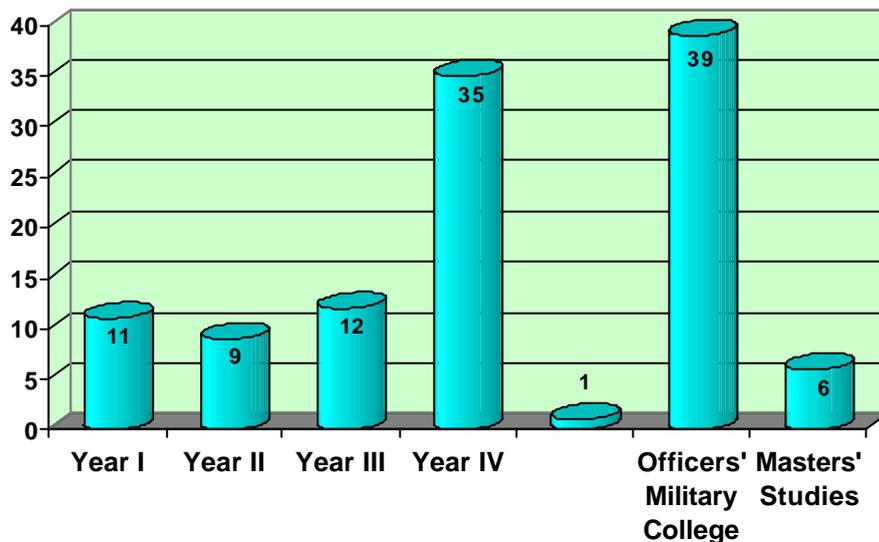


Figure 5. *Women in candidate service as for the year of education* (15.10.2004)



### III. Employment

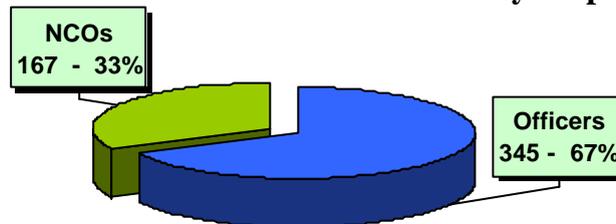
In the Polish Armed Forces women serve in officers' and non-commissioned officers' corps. As a result of legal regulations, in 2004 warrant officers' corps was included in non-commissioned officers' corps.

Recruitment of women to military schools that started in 1999 caused the increase in number of military specialities women serve for. As previously, there is a considerable number of women serving with medical services (242), but we can notice an increase in other services: general military (50), telecommunications (23), intelligence (22), legal services and logistics. Relatively numerous is the group of

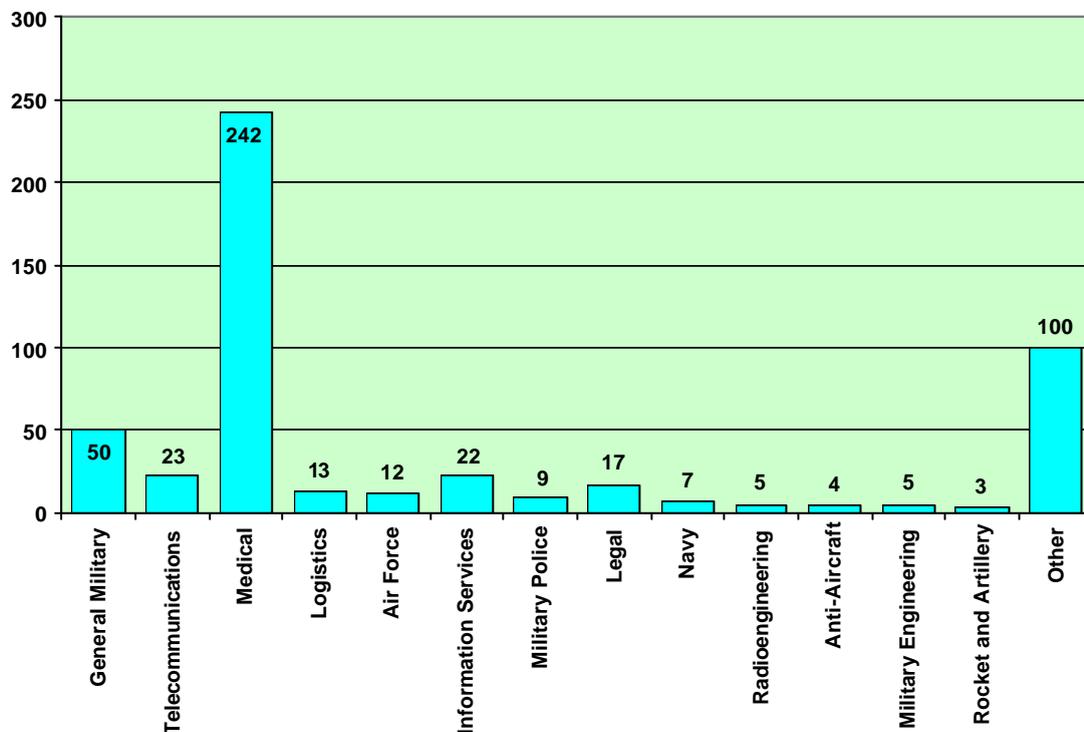
women graduates of military colleges who took over the posts of platoon leaders. Department of Personnel and Military Education is monitoring the process of their adaptation on these positions. Results of inspection confirm that women function very well on commanding posts – they are good specialists as platoon leaders, they are ambitious, they possess high motivation in service, and they cope well with tutorial problems. They exercise good opinions from superiors and are accepted by subordinates. They have so called “soft skills”: abilities to establish social contacts, creating ties, finding compromise, organising team work including every single participant, which is so important in military service and management.

Their further professional career and development depends on implemented armed forces development program, real possibilities of promotion (limited number of senior posts, limitations caused by plans connected with family life and maternity.

*Figure 6. Women in Polish Armed Forces by corps (1.01.2005)*



*Figure 7. Women in Polish Armed Forces by profession*



#### IV. Recruitment

- In 2004 107 women joined professional service after promotion to the first officer rank (2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant).
- It is to be expected that regulations of new Law on Military Service of Professional Soldiers will ensure permanent affluence of women to all military service corps.
- In 2004 only two military colleges conducted recruitment to candidate service – 11 women started military education at Air Force Officers' Military College in Deblin and Land Forces Officers' Military College in Wroclaw. 39 women graduates of civilian universities were qualified to the one-year Officers' Military College.
- Since 1 July 2004 in the Polish Armed Forces professional privates' corps has been being formed. One of the conditions to serve with this corps is completion of conscript service. As women are not able to fulfil this stipulation, if they possess special qualifications and abilities they will have a chance to join professional privates' corps *"according to current needs of the Polish Armed Forces"*. Recruitment to professional privates' corps conducted until now was aimed at gaining for service contract soldiers, as well as former conscripts.
- It is expected that approximately 100 women per year will join schools for non-commissioned officers, and in a couple of years their number in the NCOs' corps will grow up to 700. It is also assumed that inclusion of women in professional privates' corps can dramatically change the ratio of number of men and women in the armed forces, which will lead to growth in proportional number of women in the military.
- Recruitment of women to the military depends on several linked factors – final manpower of the Polish Armed Forces, interest of women in service, their adaptation to professional service, resigning from service and others. As the process of changes in the military has not finished yet, any forecast on numerical growth in number of women in military service can only be treated as perspective planning. It is even harder to work out a forecast concerning development of service of women in both – NCOs' and professional privates' corps. At present we have no experience connected with recruitment of women to schools for non-commissioned officers and to professional privates' corps.

**Table 3. Number of women in professional military service in years 1988-2004**

<b>Corps</b>	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Officers	2	15	32	64	87	101	110	111	125	146	160	182	200	213	214	213	345
Warrant Officers							1	1	2	4	6	51	63	74	125	115	-
NCOs												5	14	16	17	18	167
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>512</b>

## **V. Training**

Pursuant to the new pragmatic law, before promotion to a new post (and/or higher rank) every soldier should undergo a relevant training course. Basically, women and men face the same service requirements regarding various forms of training in professional or candidate military service; there some are differences in physical fitness evaluation criteria applied to men and women. In 2003 new criteria for women physical fitness evaluation were elaborated, considering their physical abilities and age categories. Every woman-soldier should pass physical fitness test, and final result of this test has considerable influence on general opinion and evaluation of her qualifications for military service.

Most women do not expect any privileges or allowances in service – they are ready to participate in regular service duties or field exercises and so on. In their opinion, by giving privileges commanders and comrades make it harder to gain expertise and full participation in training.

## **VI. Career development**

The new pragmatic law creates so called military career model for officers and NCOs. At present following opportunities in this area are available:

- post-graduate studies;
- higher studies (day classes, evening classes, weekend classes – as a second faculty);
- scholarly career – a PhD degree on a civilian or military academy;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> degree studies at the National Defence Academy;
- participation in different courses, training, classes, workshops, and so on.

During military training women undergo leadership skills training. Some of them already during military education have a chance to test leadership skills so that they can be developed during professional training.

## **VII. Participation in peacekeeping operations**

Women for several years participate in peacekeeping operations and their number does not exceed 20 women a year. Within Polish Military Unit in Iraq, 54 women have taken part in 3 consecutive rotations of peacekeeping and stabilisation mission: with CIMIC – 3, with medical services – 44, with troops – 7. At present, in the fourth rotation of the mission there are 20 women. Recruitment for posts in peacekeeping and stabilisation missions is conducted according to the needs of Polish Armed Forces, without any reservations towards a soldier sex.

## **VIII. Achievements, events and plans**

- On 30 March 2004 Parliamentary Commission of National Defence held its meeting with participation of representatives of the Ministry of National Defence and representatives of National Security Bureau of the President of Polish Republic. The subject of the meeting was military service of women under new legal regulations.
- On 1 April 2004 in the Department of Personnel and Military Education a post of chief advisor for military service of women was created. This post is occupied by Lt Col. Beata Laszczak.
- In June 2003 in Polish military colleges academies promotions to first officer ranks took place. Among promoted soldiers there were 58 women: in the Naval Academy – 10, in the Air Forces Officers' Military College – 8, and in the Land Forces Officers' Military College – 35. Many graduates assumed commanding posts such as: reconnaissance battalion platoon leader, anti-tank battery platoon leader, communications officer on "Kaszub" warship; Midshipman Agnieszka Slowik is a commander of the gun on "Xawery Czernicki" warship.
- In July 2004 entrance exams to Land Forces Officers' Military College and Air Forces Officers' Military College were held. 2 women started education in the first one, 48 in the latter, including 39 in the Officers' Military College.

- Capt. Dorota Stachura, the first woman to participate in battle units in Iraq, was awarded the “Buzdygan” [a mace] – journalist award of military weekly magazine “Polska Zbrojna”. Candidates to this award are people with very special skills and features – aggressive, brave in action, above the ordinary, breaking old-fashioned habits. Serving with CIMIC section in the staff of the international brigade in Iraq, Capt. Stachura showed exceptional courage and ability to function in extreme conditions. She was elected the chairman of the committee supervising the turning over of sovereignty in two provinces of Iraq.
- In December 2004 a new book by Maj. Dr Anna Debska “*A woman in uniform. New quality in the security system*” was promoted. This book is a result of empirical research and it presents a sociological study of women in the military as well as problems they face during military service.
- In December 2004 the Council on Women in the Polish Armed Forces could celebrate fifth anniversary of its existence. On this occasion, Undersecretary of State for Social Affairs in Polish Ministry of Defence met with women-soldiers. Participants of the meeting summed up 5 years of the Committee’s activities and they defined further directions of action and main areas of activity. A special, jubilee issue of information magazine “*Military service of women in Polish Armed Forces*” was edited on this occasion.
- Council on Women in the Polish Armed Forces co-operates with organisations of government administrations (Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Women and Men), non-governmental organisations, associations and foundations acting for equality of genders, promoting women. The Council representatives participated in conferences, courses and initiatives concerning support for policy of equal treatment of women and men – for example those organised within programs elaborated by European Union and implemented in Poland.
- Within the Polish Armed Forces there are plans to elaborate and implement drafts for classes and information materials concerning negative phenomena in human relations – mobbing, sexual assault, discrimination and others. These issues have become a subject for supervising and sociological research. It is to be expressed that in the Polish Armed Forces there exist such means as Military Confidence Telephone and Military Confidence Internet-box. They enable people to inform

military authorities – also namelessly – about problems connected with military service and falsities in human relations.

## **IX. Conclusions**

- It could seem that the best way to achieve considerable growth of number of women in the military is to establish equalities. Nonetheless, considering changes in the Polish Armed Forces, authorities decided to abandon this way of recruitment of women to service. Instead they will try to prefer natural process of inflow of women to all corps, according to existing regulations and possibilities. Thus, the number of women in the armed forces will depend, among others, on the level of interest of women in fulfilling their professional aspirations in the military. Authorities plan a more offensive promotion of military profession in secondary and higher schools. Women graduates of these schools can provide candidates for NCOs and professional privates' corps.
- In the years to come we should not expect spectacular promotions of women in service hierarchy. According to regulations of pragmatic law, professional development requires gaining expertise on consecutive posts, due to models in every personnel corps.
- The decree [order] of Minister of National Defence on the service hours of professional soldiers gives the commanders the right to regulate time of work of their subordinates, which can enable women-soldiers to reconcile service with care for their children. One of the attractive forms of this reconciliation is part-time (half-time) service.
- An important problem to be resolved is the issue of uniforms for pregnant women-soldiers.
- Another serious question is introduction in basic military documents (i.e. general statute) regulations describing unlawful, forbidden behaviour, such as comprehensive meaning of sexual assault.
- It is necessary to begin aggressive promotion of military profession within young women, especially those in the final years of secondary and higher schools.

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**Place of women in the Polish Armed Forces  
by corps and subordination (1.01.2005)**

Cadre	Officers					Total officers	NCOs	Total	To soldiers total (%)
	LtCol	Maj	Capt.	1stLt	2ndLt				
Land Forces		4	48	28	39	119	109	228	0,6%
Air Force		2	11	7	14	34	22	56	0,4%
Medical service	2	16	11	1	14	44	1	45	3,7%
Navy		2	13	9	7	31	14	45	0,7%
Military Police				1	3	4	7	11	0,9%
Ministry of Defence	1	1	4			6		6	1,0%
The Warsaw Garrison Command		1		1		2	1	3	0,2%
General Staff	1					1		1	0,2%
Other units		3	10	23	67	103	13	116	2,0%
Outside MoD		1				1		1	0,2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>0,7%</b>

**Women in Polish Armed Forces by professional specialities**  
(1.01.2005)

Corps	Officers	NCOs	Total	Percent in total number of military personnel
Medical	155	87	242	9,7%
General military	25	25	50	0,4%
Telecommunications	8	15	23	0,2%
Financial	1		1	0,3%
Logistics	2	11	13	0,1%
Justice and legal	17		17	5,1%
Air Force	8	4	12	0,2%
Military Police	3	6	9	0,9%
Navy	5	2	7	0,3%
Anti-Aircraft		4	4	0,2%
Rocket and Artillery	1	2	3	0,1%
Radioengineering	4	1	5	0,2%
Information service	19	3	22	1,7%
Military Engineering	2	3	5	0,1%
Chemical defence		2	2	0,2%
Non-defined	95	2	97	2,8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>0,7%</b>

## Women – professional soldiers by age (1.01.2005)

Age	Corps		Total
	Officers	NCOs	
51	2		2
50	1		1
48	2		2
47	4		4
46	5	3	8
45	6	2	8
44	6		6
43	16	3	19
42	10	3	13
41	11	4	15
40	19	6	25
39	17	5	22
38	9	5	14
37	10	6	16
36	7	4	11
35	8	7	15
34	18	7	25
33	12	9	21
32	12	8	20
31	5	9	14
30	15	13	28
29	12	14	26
28	11	13	24
27	12	2	14
26	6	6	12
25	33	14	47
24	73	24	97
23	3		3
<b>Total</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>512</b>