

LATVIAN NATIONAL BRIEF

Gender equality is officially ensured by Latvian legislation, international and European legislation that serve as basis to create real gender equality in all life spheres.

Generally the role of women increases year by year. From the February 2006 the Minister of Defense in Latvia is a woman.

Generally the problems still exist women in uniforms face with it a less than women in civil society. From the point of legislation there are no problems in the Latvian Armed Forces, the normative documents regulating all procedures have been based on the principles of equality in service between men and women.

Women are accepted in the professional service from 19 years of age, provided they comply with the health, education, professional and physical fitness and state language law requirements and possess required moral and psychological qualities. The soldiers' salary depends from rank and position and there is no gender influence.

Requirements and prerequisites for promotions and assignments are identical for both genders. A soldier in the Latvian army becomes eligible for promotion if he/she has received a positive evaluation by the attestation board and meets all requirements for promotion in general and for the specific rank in particular and has no record of punishment in his/her file.

Also prerequisites for joining professional military service are identical for both genders (except physical training tests, which are differentiated by age and gender). A person must meet certain age, health, educational, professional, physical training and Latvian language skill requirements and possess certain moral and psychological qualities in order to join military service. After joining military service personnel training must complete a military training course required by the particular position.

All training requirements and programs in the Latvian Armed forces are based on identical principles for males and females.

Women in Latvian Army are actively involved in pursuing career and qualification improvement goals; they participate in international peace operations and successfully serve in positions at all levels. They are posted to NATO staff's and military attaches positions.

Integration of women in the Latvian Armed forces has been successful and a gradual positive progress is observed in this area.