

Annual Meeting 2008 Committee on Women in NATO forces

NATIONAL REPORT FOR 2007 – WOMEN IN THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES

Policies (policy changes/new policy affecting women in uniform)

The most recent amendment to the Defence Act (Article 16) includes the principle of equal opportunity for men and women in employment and in establishing employment contracts (complement to Article 92). This makes it possible to exercise positive discrimination in favour of women, or, in other words, to take into account gender differences and thus ensure the same conditions for everyone. In the end of 2007 the new law came into effect with more defined principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination clauses. The contents of ensuring equal opportunities have been defined in regulation acts; Declaration on safety at work with risk assessment, Slovenian Armed Forces Regulations, Classification of Military Duties (MOS –military occupational specialisation) – (amendment already in force). The Standard operational procedure for zero tolerance with regard to discrimination was introduced to eliminate or lower unwanted actions.

On the basis of the obligation of the Ministry of Defence to adopt provisional special measures for implementing recommended practices on the basis of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (EU), various measures have been drawn up for the entire Ministry and consequently for the female members of the Slovenian Armed Forces. These include general measures, which define the position of female service members of the Slovenian Armed Forces.

The employment policy of the Slovenian Armed Forces is moving in the direction of employing professional soldiers than other personnel profiles.. In 2007 we planned to employ 600 soldiers, mainly in the infantry and logistics units, but we managed to employ only 246 (43 women) due to increased economic growth and an inability to interest young people in a military profession.

We have not achieved this goal to date in 2008 but we intend to employ around 400 personnel, mainly in the NBC branch.

There are no changes that will affect the status of women in uniform, since we are adhering to the existing legalisation in the conduct of our personnel policy, which has not changed in the last year.

The legal and military bases for employment are the following:

- Employment Relations Act,
- Defence Act,
- Military law,
- Civil Service Act,
- Decree on the internal organisation, systemisation, working posts and titles in bodies for public administration and in judicial bodies.

- **Organisation**

	Total % of Female soldiers	% of female flag officers and equivalents	% of female senior officers and equivalents	% of female junior officers and equivalents	% of female NCO and equivalents	% female of equivalents lower rank than NCO and	% of female soldiers participating in military operations
Army	15,8%	2/ 0,18% + 2/ 0,18%	13/ 1,16% + 17/ 1,52%	99/ 8,85% + 37/ 3,31%	176/ 15,73 + 60/ 5,36%	547/ 48,88% + 7/0,63%	88/ 7,86*
Civilians	159/ 14,21%						
TOTAL	1119						

* In 2007 1282 military personnel were deployed on overseas missions, out of that 88 women (6,86 % of all deployments; 15 officers, 21 non-commissioned officers, 45 soldiers, 5 senior military servants and 2 military servants).

- In the obligatory reserve at this moment no women are present, in the voluntary contract reserve there are 3 military servants of the 3rd Grade (equivalent to OR2), 4 soldiers and 1 candidate for Officer's school.

Recruitment

The primary task in the recruitment of women in SAF is to employ them in all units and areas of service. The main reason for this employment of women is that population and birth rates in R of Slovenia are dropping and therefore women are required to take on many of the roles traditionally held by men. The target age population for employment is between 18 and 25. In 2002 the number of people within this age group was 233.918, in 2008 it was 203.386 and the estimation for 2009 is 198.492 and for 2010 it is 192.207. Due to this fact and abolishing of the conscripts system in 2002 the SAF is trying to recruit soldiers using promotion in the media and other motivation procedures such as higher salaries, additional bonuses, educational possibilities and defined career paths.

Employment selection procedures are based on criteria of certain age for employment (between 18 and 27 years of age), at least 4th degree of high school education, fulfillment of medical health criteria which also consists of fitness tests and a clear criminal record.

The type and content of the medical check-up does not alter regarding the gender, with exception of the height and weight criteria. The criteria of the fitness tests are differing with regard to the gender. The basic military training, which all candidates have to finish, is basically the same for genders, further education and training is related to the specialisation of the soldiers and not to the gender.

- **Entrance criteria to Military Academies, Colleges**

The SAF does not have any military academy.

- **New initiatives**

A suitable recruitment and retention policy needs to be found due to a decrease in the numbers being recruited and an increase in the requirements for participating in PSO operations.

- **Retention programmes**

In relation to leaving the service, it is necessary to take into account existing legislation, which enables individual benefits for members of the Slovene Army who have been in the system for at least 10 years (amendment to the Defence Act). We prepare a programme of re-socialisation for those who leave the Slovene Army. These programmes are the same for both men and women and are conducted in accordance with the aforementioned statutory requirements, and we also have proposals and initiatives ongoing for supplementing or amending the legislation in this field.

- **Areas forbidden for female soldiers**

The SAF does not employ women in the special forces unit.

- **Areas now opened to female soldiers lately, which have been closed / forbidden for women in past**

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- **The most popular programmes or disciplines chosen by female applicants in military academies**

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- **Excluded programmes or disciplines for women, if they are**

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Training

- **New policies/programmes**

The training programme is the same for both male and female. With the professionalisation of SAF we have changed the programme and removed the three weeks basic training programme for those soldiers who were trained in the former conscript system.

- **Physical fitness**

Members of the Slovene Army are checked in the area of physical fitness in three disciplines (press-ups, sit-ups and running 3200 metres). On entry to the Slovene Army, candidates are checked with a series of physical tests. Due to problems with the physical fitness of candidates, in future we will introduce the carrying out of selection programmes for candidates for work in the Slovene Army. Officer and NCO candidates and members of special units are further checked through special selection programmes.

Deployments

- **References**

In 2007 the Slovene Army had 88 women out of 1282 participants in PSO's, i.e. 6,86%.

Women in PSO in 2007

	OF	NCO	Soldiers	Senior Military Specialist	Military Specialist	Total
ISAF	2	1	4			7
EUFOR	4	8		2		14
KFOR	9	12	41	3	2	67
Total	15	21	45	5	2	88

- **Lessons learned**

The great majority of female members adequately perform their work in missions. We have not encountered any special difficulties in these operations that are specific to women.

The existing state indicates the inclusion of women in units intended for support or ensuring operations. Such units are not specifically intended for inclusion in operations, which results in the non-inclusion of women.

The planned assignment of women to Slovene army units intended for inclusion in operations would certainly contribute to a greater participation of women in operations. One possible solution for raising the participation of women in operations would be the establishment of suitable motivational factors already at the starting phase of training for a military career and

stressing the positive experiences of the functioning of mixed teams in operations.

Career Development

- **Mentoring programmes**

All candidates for employment as soldiers in the Slovene army perform a traineeship. The length depends on the qualifications of the trainee. Traineeship is performed by individual traineeship programmes under the leadership of a mentor and co-mentor. Officer candidates are also subject to a probation period in units as a part of their training.

- **Education and awareness programmes**

Research work has begun. Within the framework of Target Research Programmes which are taking place at MORS (Ministry of Defence) and the Ministry of Education and Sport, a project task “Women in the Slovene Army – Operationalisation of Equal Opportunities” is underway. Several other Target Research Programmes executed by universities and focused mostly on different views on organisational climate, include interpersonnel relations and gender issues. Although some smaller research carried out within some units indicates that a feeling of discrimination and being “left-out”, has more to do with completely personal relations than with the gender issue in general. We have also continued providing information to and raising awareness among members of the Slovene Army with regard to creating and maintaining suitable inter-relations, with an emphasis on relations between the sexes. In all our units we have executed several lectures and workshops with an emphasis on ensuring conditions of sound and proper psychosocial climate in general. The inter-gender relationships and possible unwanted behaviour constituted the better part of it, especially when it comes to units on peacekeeping operations, which tend to be the most vulnerable group (special conditions, being separated from families etc). Members of the Slovenian Armed Forces of different rank were included in different working groups and meetings were led by governmental and non-governmental organisations, in relation to the issue of discrimination and equal opportunities.

On entry into the Slovenian Army, all candidates perform 3 months of professional military training. Soldiers continue training in basic professional military training to obtain specialization for military occupation. Officer candidates continue training in basic professional military education and training, where they are trained for performing the lowest officer duties of the branch or service. NCO candidates are selected after several years of successful service and are included in basic professional military education and training of NCOs for performing the lowest NCO duties of the branch or service. Military employees are trained according to the basic programme of training for work in the army.

During their careers, officers are trained at staff courses, higher staff courses and, for the highest duties, in the general staff programme. NCOs are trained during their career at staff courses for NCOs and higher staff courses for NCOs. Some members of the Slovene Army undergo their staff training on comparable courses abroad.

Training in safety at work takes place in accordance with general legislation. There are no special programmes.

- **Leadership programmes**

There is no special leadership programme in the Slovene Army. Members of the Slovenian Army gain knowledge in the field of leadership in the process of training for performing tasks and in individual specialised courses.

Special Interest Items/Events

- **Concerns and success regarding integration**

We do not have special programmes for the integration of women for work in the army since our legislation dictates equality of treatment of the two sexes. We are therefore endeavouring to ensure that aspects of the equal inclusion of women are taken into account in all fields of work in the Slovene Army, and that the aforementioned endeavours will continue to be included in the process of professionalisation of the Slovene Army.

- **Maternity/Paternity leave (short description of rules)**

The civilian laws with regard to protection of women during pregnancy, maternity leave and post maternity rights are applicable to all members SAF.

The Parental Protection and Family Benefit Act provides the basis for fathers to avail of paternity leave.

- **Initiatives to improve the work-life balance (day care for children, flexible hours, part-time work etc.)**

The new SAF Service Act brought lots of benefits in the area of Family Friendly Policies such as health care, legal assistance, child care assistance, insurance, pension schemes, rent assistance etc.

- **New facts**

As mentioned above the new SAF Service Act brought lots of new benefits and bonuses for all SAF members.

Conclusion

- **Trends**

If we compare the position of women in the Slovene Army with the position of women in civilian society, especially economically, it can be said that employment in the Slovene Army offers women greater social security than their civilian counterparts. Social Security is one of the most important motives for employment for the majority of women. With the development of professionalisation, when systemic matters will be arranged, the possibilities of career or women will be better organized and will enable a greater influence of an individual on her or his own professional development.

We believe that in the employment of women in the armed forces more attention should be devoted to the following:

- suitable professional training,
- more suitable physical fitness,
- more stress on providing information before entry to service, since their expectations are often completely different from the work and tasks they later perform in the Slovene Army.

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