

Annual Meeting 2009 Committee on Women in NATO Forces

NATIONAL REPORT FOR 2008 – WOMEN IN THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES

1. POLICIES (POLICY CHANGES/NEW POLICY AFFECTING WOMEN IN UNIFORM)

The most recent amendment to the Defence Act (Article 16) dated 2004 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 genders differences and thus ensure the same conditions for everyone. In the end of 2007 the new law Service in the Slovenian Armed Forces Act 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 specialization) – (amendment already in force). The Standard operational procedure for tolerance with regard to discrimination and the Statement about zero tolerance were introduced in 2007 to eliminate or lower unwanted actions. Due to the changes of the Employment Relations Act in 2008, the Slovenian Armed Forces adopted additional Standard operational procedure which is covering procedures in case of alleged mobbing. In the middle of 2009 a military codex will be passed which will lay down principles and standards of behavior.

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.

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 2008.

The legal and military bases for employment are the following:

- Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia,
- Employment Relations Act,
- Defence Act,
- Service in Slovenian Armed Forces Act,
- Civil Service Act,
- Decree on the internal organisation, systemisation, working posts and titles in bodies for public administration and in judicial bodies.

2. 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 soldiers lower rank than NCO and equivalents	% of female soldiers participating in military operations
Army	667 (9,5%)		39 (0,6%)	85 (1,2%)	166 (2,4%)	377 (12,3%)	94* (out of 667 off all in military operations = 7,56%)
Military Specialist	237 (3,4%)		104 (1,4%)		133 (1,9%)		
Civilians	220 (3,1%)						
TOTAL	16% 1124		2% 143	1,2% 85	4,3% 299	12,3% 377	1,3% 94

* 667 military personnel were deployed on overseas missions in 2008, out of that 94 women (7,56 % of all deployments). 16 officers, 19 non-commissioned officers, 50 soldiers and 9 senior military specialists).

3. 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

Officer Candidate School - provides for Slovenian military professional education and training for Slovenian Armed Forces officers. Its overall duration is 12 months. Upon successfully completing the programme, officer candidates are promoted to the rank of Second Lieutenant and detailed to a Slovenian Armed Forces unit.

Non-commissioned Officers School - provides military professional education and training for NCO candidates, non-commissioned officers and junior uniformed specialists of the Slovenian Armed Forces.

Command and Staff School - provides advanced education for Slovenian Armed Forces officers.

Entrance criteria to Officer Candidate School and Non-commissioned Officers School is basically the same for genders, with exception of the criteria of the fitness tests, which are differing with regard to the gender.

New initiatives

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

Retention programs

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 program of re-socialisation for those who leave the Slovene Army. These programs 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

There are no forbidden areas for female soldiers nor excluded programs or disciplines for women in the SAF

4. TRAINING

New policies/programs

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

Physical fitness

Members of the Slovenian Armed Forces are checked in the area of physical fitness in three disciplines (push-ups, sit-ups and running 3200 meters), standards for women are different of those for men. On entry to the Slovenian Armed Forces, 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 programs for candidates for work in the Slovenian Armed Forces. Officer and NCO candidates and members of special units are further checked through special selection programs.

5. DEPLOYMENTS

Women in PSO in 2008

	OF	NCO	Soldiers	Senior Military Specialist	Military Specialist	Total
ISAF	2	2	5	1		10
EUFOR	4	2				6
KFOR	10	15	45	4	4	67
Total	16	19	50	5	4	94

667 military personnel were deployed on overseas missions in 2008, out of that 94 women (7,56 % of all deployments). 16 officers, 19 non-commissioned officers, 50 soldiers and 9 senior military specialists).

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.

6. CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Mentoring programs

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 programs 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 programs

Research work has begun. Within the framework of Target Research Programs which are taking place at MORS (The 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 Programs executed by universities and focused mostly on different views on organizational 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 organizations, 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 program 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 program. NCOs are trained during their career at advanced courses for NCOs, Senior NCO courses and for the highest duties, in SGM Courses. 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 programs.

Leadership programs

There is no special leadership program 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.

7. SPECIAL INTEREST ITEMS/EVENTS (RECENT AND PROJECTED DEVELOPMENTS)

Concerns and success regarding integration

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

As mentioned above the principles and procedures for ensuring non-discrimination were implemented into the army legal system. To insure compliance with the legal basis members of the Slovenian Armed Forces had to sign the statement about zero tolerance and now, consequently to the published Standard operational procedure which is covering procedures in case of alleged mobbing, the statement for compliance will have to be signed by every member.

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 or the right to the parents to work less than 8 hours per day to provide care for their children.

The concern or challenge of the Slovenian Armed Forces in this moment is regarding the implementation of the civilian legislation in sense how to combine the operational requirements of the military work with all the rights (for example - Employment Relations Act gives rights to mothers for breast feeding during work hours, ect.)

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

The new Service in Slovenian Armed Forces 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.

8. CONCLUSION

Trends

With the development of professionalisation, when systemic matters will be fully arranged, the possibilities of career of women in the SAF will be better organized and will enable a greater influence of individual and 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.
- Suitable physical fitness.
- Providing information before entry to service, since their expectations are often different from the work and tasks they later perform in the SAF.

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