

## Hungary – National Report

### **Introduction**

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 Committee regarding its work is not absolutely recent because from 1999 until the establishment of this present Committee the Committee on Examination of Equal Opportunities had carried out similar tasks.

The committee established in 1999 was responsible for the study of the realization of equal opportunities within the Hungarian Defence Forces. While the committee had been operating, need has arisen to deal with the status of female service personnel on a much larger scale.

The purpose of the establishment of the Committee on Women of the Hungarian Defence Forces are the analysis of the circumstances of women in professional and contracted service, study of topics relating to female personnel and handing in proposals for the solution of problems to the leaders in the Ministry.

The responsibilities of the Committee are as follows:

- study and assessment of everyday life and work-related circumstances, allowances and social benefits
- elaboration of recommendations answering the problems in the above mentioned fields, handing in specified proposals for the leading authorities in the Ministry
- protection of minorities among women in Hungarian Defence Forces
- large scale application of positive findings
- maintaining relations with national and international organizations working in the same field
- collecting international experience regarding the status of women in the military and making proposals for the domestication and national-level application of the findings
- participation in the work carried out by the "Committee on Women in the NATO Forces"

The Committee on Women of the Hungarian Defence Forces has 11 members who are the representatives of the numerous organizations and units of the Ministry of Defence and the Defence Forces.

The chairman of the Committee: LtCol Zsuzsa BALLAINÉ KRIKKER

The secretary of the Committee: 1Lt Judit MUDRÁNÉ KUSTOS

The members of the committee are responsible for the representation of the following areas within the Hungarian Defence Forces: Land Force Command, Air Force Command, Ministry of Defence and Defence Staff integrated in the MOD, Joint Logistics Support Centre.

The Committee has revealed difficulties in the following fields:

- Accommodation  
The rate to which accommodation, resting and hygienic conditions of contracted personnel within the barracks are guaranteed.
- Founding a family and bringing up children  
The difficulties of accommodation and travel having founded a family.  
The insecurity of female personnel returning from maternity leave.
- Married soldier couples  
The problems of being on duty.
- The relation of gender and deployment, promotion, advancement or positions
- The degree of supply of clothing: availability and accurate sizes
- Norms of conduct between a female and a male soldier  
The presence of civilian behavioural patterns in the military.

## **Policy**

The constitution of the Republic of Hungary states that the Republic assures the equal rights of men and women in every aspect of civilian, political, economical, social and cultural laws as well as human and civil rights for every person being within its territory, without any discrimination as to race, skin colour, gender, language, religion, political or, without discriminating against difference of opinion, national or social origin, property, or age.

The above stated prohibition against discrimination is supplemented in the Service Law, relating part quoted here: "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, taking into account the payment related to rank and post." In this context, the legal context for any kind of freedom from discrimination can be regarded as guaranteed by both the Republic of Hungary and the Hungarian Defence Forces.

## **Organization**

The governing body of the Hungarian Defence Forces is the Ministry of Defence. The Ministry of Defence - accomplishing dual fundamental function - is the central, governmental authority of the Republic of Hungary. Besides the administrative duties of the defence sector, as the military high management body it is responsible for the governance and military leadership of the Hungarian Defence Forces.

The leadership of the Hungarian Defence Forces is the all-time right and obligation of the Chief of Defence Staff. The Chief of defence Staff practices his rights within his sphere of authority and carries out the commands and directives of those who are legally authorized to do so.

The professional leadership of the Hungarian Defence Forces lies with the service commands - Land Force Command, Air Force Command, Joint Logistics Support Center - which operate in direct subordination to the Chief of Defence Staff.

The personnel is made up of professional, contracted and conscript soldiers.

The conscript service will discontinue at the end of 2004.

Women are integrated in units under the command of the Chief of Defence Staff and in the MOD and its subordinated organizations. They work and train together with their male counterparts and are subject to the same chain of command, standards of performance and discipline.

It is regulated by the Service Law that female soldiers can fill all positions within the Hungarian Defence Forces. The vast majority of them perform their duties in administrative, personnel and medical positions.

## **Recruitment**

In Hungary there has been compulsory military service in the past. This system of universal conscription is coming to an end, the Defence Forces is experiencing narrowing conscription which is to cease finally in May.

The Hungarian Defence Forces is switching to voluntary service these days. It is expected that the conscript personnel will be replaced by a contracted one by the end of this year.

In order to strengthen the professional characteristic of the Hungarian Defence Forces the Defence Law makes it possible that certain positions open for officers, non-commissioned officers and conscripts can be filled with contracted personnel. Positions open for contracted soldiers are filled via admission of voluntary applicants.

The role of Recruiting Offices introduced 01 October 2001 have become of great importance. currently 7 offices operate in the country.

The Hungarian Defence Forces conducts its recruiting with no gender restriction. In the case of people applying for contract service, the basic components of the entrance requirements are:

Personnel category	Education	Age
contracted enlisted personnel	8 class primary school certificate	18 -47 years old
non-commissioned officers	secondary school, school leaving exam certificate	
officers	higher education certificate (college or university degree)	

### Education

What concerns education, there are equal opportunities for female and male personnel in the Defence Forces. They are allowed to continue their studies at all military educational facilities. Women can apply for the same courses or deployments as men.

### Training

People applying to become professional NCOs are trained centrally. The length of the training is 1 year.

People desiring to become professional officers continue their studies at the Miklos Zrinyi Defence University for 4 (college) or 5 (university) years.

Students/Cadets having graduated from the officer or NCO training are promoted to their first ranks accordingly: sergeant or lieutenant.

In opposition to the practice followed in the past, applicants for contracted service are now being trained at a central training base. The training is comprised of a 3 month long basic training and a 3 month long profession-related training.

Tasks and principles of modernization in the field of training even after the Defence Review applies to all members of the Hungarian Defence Forces regardless to their sex.

Main tasks in training:

- Standardised basic training concept (3 months)
- Specified expert training (2-3 months)
- Unit training based on the requirements of the military capabilities (3X6 months rotation period)
- Complex training for peacekeeping operations and V. Article operations.

### Physical Fitness

The fulfilment of the physical requirements is accounted for in a greater extent in the Hungarian Defence Forces. The requirements differ according to gender, age and filled position.

The completion of requirements is measured via the following exercises: 3200m running or 4000m walking, sit-ups and push-ups.

### Deployment

Hungarians have been deploying in support of IFOR, SFOR, KFOR, MSU, MFI, ISAF and SFIR missions since 1996. They continue to serve as doctors, medical technicians, observers as well as in personnel and administrative posts, in signal corps and in patrols.

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

Women of the Hungarian Defence Forces are allowed to take part in international peace support operations as well as males. It is generally stated that women undertake commanding or operational positions rarely, but in medical and signalling posts their applications are significant.

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

### **KFOR**

Troop contributions:

- HDF Guard and Security Battalion, Pristina (HGSB) (253 personnel, guarding of KFOR main HQ & Camp Vrelo, escort and security force, guarding of their own camp, KFOR HQ sector reserve platoon);
- HDF Preventive Medical Laboratory, Pristina (PML) (10 personnel, military medical control);
- 4 persons at the KFOR HQ.

There are 24 female soldiers serving at the HGSB, and 6 working in the PML.

### **SFOR**

Troop contributions:

- HDF Military Law Enforcement Contingent, Sarajevo (MLEC) (max. 108 persons in the Italian led Multinational Specialized Unit with 1 company);
- Hungarian Military Transportation Platoon, Velika Kladusa (HMTP) (North-West Bosnia-Herzegovina, 28 persons, based on a bilateral agreement with the Canadian Armed Forces, to conduct troop and personnel transportation, participation in the guarding of the camp);
- 5 persons at the SFOR HQ and 2 persons at the Allied Military Intelligence Battalion.

There are 5 female soldiers serving at the MLEC.

### **Operation Allied Harmony (FYROM)**

The HDF Guard and Security Platoon, Skopje, FYROM (HGSP) (40 persons, guarding of the NATO HQ Skopje, quick reaction unit, escort tasks. The platoon specialist conducts the medical tasks of the NATO HQ). One person serves at the NHQS staff.

We have 1 female soldier working at the HGSP.

### **The UN-led Peace Support Operations**

#### **UNFICYP (CYPRUS)**

The HDF has one company in the United Nations Forces in Cyprus mission in the Slovakian-Hungarian Battalion, and Hungarians are serving at the 4th Sector HQ at Famagusta, as well as at the UNFYCIP HQ at Nicosia. The total number of the personnel: 121.

There are 19 female soldiers serving in the UNFICYP HUNCON, 1 of them working at the UNFICYP HQ in Nicosia, 4 of them at the 4<sup>th</sup> sector HQ at Nicosia (in the Slovakian-Hungarian Battalion HQ), and 5 of them at the Hungarian Company's HQ.

#### **MINURSO (Western-Sahara)**

The Hungarian Defence Forces has 7 military observers in the mission that was established for the settlement of the conflict of Morocco, Algeria and Mauritania. Currently Hungary fills in the position of the force commander as well (MG György Száraz).

We have one female UN observer in the MINURSO mission.

#### **Peace Support Operations of the OSCE**

As it was already mentioned at the other participations of the Hungarian Defence Forces at the Balkans, currently we have 1 officer serving in the OSCE's mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina. We have 3 officers serving in Georgia for the OSCE, conducting primarily border observer tasks. One Hungarian officer has just started his service at the OSCE mission in Tajikistan.

#### **MFO**

Hungary has an MP contingent serving at the Egyptian-Israeli border at the Sinai-peninsula with 26 soldiers and 15 policemen.

There are 9 female soldiers working for the MFO HUNCON, most of them are serving as patrols, but one of them is an investigator. Their job is crucial, since only they can handle matters in which local females are involved.

### **ISAF operation**

Currently we have 10 military persons serving at the Afghan International Security Assistance Force. The Hungarian Parliament has approved our further participation in the mission until it is a NATO-led mission, with a contingent of maximum 50 persons. Under this mandate currently 31 soldiers are serving in Afghanistan.

Currently there are 3 female soldiers serving at the Kabul Multinational Brigade Field Hospital, one of them is LTC dr. Zsuzsanna Hídvégi, who is the clinic director of the Hospital.

Last year, when we had a Medical Contingent in ISAF, we had 8 female soldiers serving in Afghanistan.

### **SFIR operations**

The Iraqi Hungarian Military Contingent participates on three levels of the SFIR operations: 1 BG (János Isaszegi) at the CJTF-7 HQ (DCJ-3) at Baghdad, 7 staff officers at the MND CS HQ at Babylon, and the Hungarian Transportation Battalion (HTB, 292 persons) at Al-Hillah, in the Logistic Camp. The HTB is under the Polish-led MND Centre-South, executes military, humanitarian transportation and convoy escort tasks. With the rotation of the contingent this spring, our representation at the CJTF-7 and MND CS will slightly change, without affecting the overall number.

We have 2 liaison officers serving at the US CCC at Tampa, Florida. This command coordinates the SFIR operations.

We have 7 female soldiers working in Iraq.

### **Career development**

In 2003 a new career development - advancement system has been introduced according to which a higher position can be only filled and the adjoining higher rank can only be obtained if the person concerned had successfully taken the necessary advancement course.

The specific qualification- and course-related and medical requirements for a position are the same for men and women in the military. However in certain special fields such as physical fitness there are different norms set for men and women.

Equal opportunities are awaiting female and male personnel in career development as well. 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.

The highest ranked Hungarian female soldiers are colonels at present. Actually there are 7 colonel ranked female officers in the Hungarian Defence Forces: 2 doctors, 1 lawyer, in MOD or at the Defence University.

The Government of the Republic of Hungary has kept on studying issues relating to women, amongst other fields the ways of increasing women's employment in the long run. The Government is working on the elaboration of the necessary means and actions in order to achieve the above stated goal.

Studies have shown that women fall behind men in the labour market. One of the reasons for this phenomenon is that women leave the market for a shorter or longer period of time to raise their children and during this time frame they have limited chances for widening and updating their professional knowledge. It naturally leads to certain negative effects on their career development.

Women in the Defence Forces are facing similar difficulties. They need to balance and reconcile being a mother and a soldier at the same time. Female soldiers are experiencing some level of insecurity when they are returning from maternity leave.

**Special events**

In autumn this year the Committee is organising a special conference on actual issues concerning female soldiers.

Steps have been taken to establish good relationship between the Committee and female soldiers. In order to achieve it, the committee regularly visits military garrisons to conduct dialogue with women in the HDF in order to provide a close contact and presentation, as well as to collect concerns and suggestions to work with to improve women's position and status in HDF.

Besides these visits, committee members have been working on establishing a so-called "Helpers' network". The basic idea of this network is to find contact points at unit level in the fields the members represent and these contact persons committee members can keep in touch with and build closer and more direct contact with. The committee members communicate with these points of contact who represent the female soldiers of the unit they are from.