

## Slovenia – National Report

### **♀Introduction**

Along with the desire to realise the external security of Slovenia within the NATO Alliance, the question of participation of female members of and in the Slovenian Armed Forces after 1995 has reached new dimensions. Comparison with the NATO, among other things, opens the issue of professional soldiers. The militia which is based on the general mandatory military service for men cannot fulfil the NATO expectations because of the simple fact that conscripts can not be sent on missions outside the country. Professional soldiers therefore represent that part of the armed forces which as a rule most often and with greatest ease participate in NATO Alliance activities; professional soldiers are recruited on the labour market, where women also offer their services. In April 2002 the government of the Republic of Slovenia decided to abolish the mandatory military service system as of June 2004 and to dismiss mandatory reserve forces in 2010. Female participation in the Slovenian Armed Forces represents 19 %, which ranks the Slovenian Armed Forces among the most feminized armed forces in the world.

Changes in international military human resources policies have contributed to the increase in the number of women in societies with a relatively high percentage of women in armed forces. In the first instance we are dealing with change in the general reduction of armed forces following the end of the Cold War; demographic changes come second, followed by a decrease in the number of children. Requests for gender equality are gaining ground in the wider civil society and this has consequently had an impact on the armed forces which are more willing to open their doors to women. Women are becoming more and more active in the international environment. There is a shortage of male recruits as a result of internal or external pressure (e.g. EU legislation) most societies are doing away with legal restrictions concerning the employment of women in the military.

### **♀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 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. The contents of ensuring equal opportunities will have to be defined in regulation acts: Declaration on safety at work with risk assessment, Slovenian Armed Forces Regulations, Classification of Military Duties (MO military occupational specialisation) - (amendment already in force).

On the basis of the obligation of the Ministry of Defence to adopt provision special measures for implementing recommended practices on the basis of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 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 apply to all female Ministry of Defence employees, and specific measures, which define the position of female service members of the Slovenian Armed Forces.

- to establish in rules which define the career of the Slovenian Armed Forces service members that upon joining the armed forces, standards will be set which take into account the special situation of women and men, so that women will have the opportunity to join the Slovenian Armed Forces and, in the course of their careers in the Slovenian Armed Forces, have opportunities for promotion (setting minimum entry standards which can be reached by both men and women; enabling women to undertake such training that following appropriate physical training they will obtain the physical abilities which meet the set standard for performance of military duties; setting standards for functional groups in which male and female members of the Slovenian Armed Forces are distributed on the basis of their satisfying such standards and on an equal footing
- adoption of the declaration on the Ministry of Defence policy against sexual harassment, which defines a zero rate of tolerance for sexual harassment at the workplace and is based on the principle that any infringement of human dignity and integrity is unbearable and unacceptable,
- to ensure better female representation and participation in decision-making processes – in working parties which prepare the regulatory foundation relating to status, career and education, participation of women must be ensured,
- to prevent both vertical and horizontal segregation in the administrative sections of the Ministry of Defence and the Slovenian Armed Forces,
- to eliminate discrimination against women in the Slovenian Armed Forces with respect to functions which guarantee promotion;
- to anticipate workplaces in which, (according to the requirements of the work process) it is not possible to work shorter hours (four-hour period) because of maternity and parental leave and care leave, used for taking care of family members,
- to organize work in such a manner that female employees who are breastfeeding can exercise the right to take breaks for breastfeeding,
- to guarantee professional help and counselling within the framework of the family support system regarding the fields of maternity preparation and parenthood for both male and female service members of the Slovenian Armed Forces and, at the same time, to define support in the regulatory document concerning childcare and custody matters,
- to include, on the basis of the risk assessment for a particular workplace position or duty (taking into account the Classification of Military Duties), a declaration about certain safety at work provisions which will give pregnant women the opportunity for temporary reassignment to workplace positions where pregnancy does not have any impact on the appropriate execution of work duties,
- to include in educational and training programmes provisions which will ensure and permit female service members of the Slovenian Armed Forces to achieve specific additional training so that following their maternity leave they can again perform activities which they used to perform before taking maternity leave,

- to adapt military uniforms during the period of pregnancy,
- to adapt basic living conditions, sanitary facilities and special hygienic conditions to the needs of women in the armed forces,
- to redesign and adapt military uniforms, protective and other equipment such a way so that they fit women and are suited to their physical particularities,
- to adapt, if possible, complexity characteristics of certain workplaces in the armed forces due to differences in physical characteristics between average men and women.

#### ♀ Organisation

The Slovenian Armed Forces is a small force which will, according to development plans, comprise 14,000 service members, of which at least 8,000 will be regular active duty personnel. The Slovenian Armed Forces are structured according to type (we do not have Army, Navy, Air Force) but according to branches.

Female service members are integrated in units under the command of the Chief of General Staff. They work and train together with men and are subject to the same chain of command, standards and discipline. In the past there was no compulsory service for women and women couldn't be militarily trained in the same terms as conscripts. A new training system was established through professionalisation. All candidates should meet the same educational and training requirements.

#### Current numbers of total force by services

The following table shows the rate of employment of women compared with that of men:

Gender	M	F	%
Date			
19-Dec-01	4315	729	16.9
23-Dec-02	4734	828	17.5
12-Dec-03	5339	1037	19.4
1-Apr-04	5573	1069	19.2

♀

- breakdown of rank structure by service and types of position

COs	Rank	F	M	%	NCOs	Rank	F	M
	general		2	0				
	1st lt		11	0				
	2nd lt		37	0				
	1st lt	3	78	4		sgt	0	2
	maj	6	208	3		maj.		
						Warrent off.	9	51

	cpt	20	415	5		sgt 1 <sup>st</sup> class	36	174	
	1 <sup>st</sup> lt	39	197	20		staff sgt	141	951	
	2 <sup>nd</sup> lt	53	624	8		sgt	55	466	
Total		121	1572	8%	Total		241	1644	
Regula rs	Rank	F	M	%					
	corp.1 <sup>st</sup>	0	4	0					
	corpora	24	538	4					
	pr.1 <sup>st</sup> class	27	478	6					
	privat	417	550	21					
Total		468	1566	30%					
Civilian		239	791						

The data reveals that women constitute 19.2 % of the peacetime structure. Most of them perform auxiliary and support tasks in the area of logistic supply (combat service support) of commands and SAF units.

However, data on the number of professional female NCOs and COs are completely different. With regard to the number of employees in the Slovenian Armed Forces, 28 % are NCOs, 15 % of which are women. The highest ratio of female NCOs (26 %) is employed in the SAF General Staff and Force command, and the lowest in 52nd Brigade units. The ratio between lower and higher NCO ranks shows that women have predominantly lower NCO duties.

An even less favourable ratio between men and women exists at the level of officer duties. According to recent data, women make up 8 % of all officers in the Slovenian Armed Forces. A little less than 9 % are employed in officer duties in the units of the Slovenian Armed Forces. Most female officers are service members of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade and 18<sup>th</sup> NBC Battalion. The 52<sup>nd</sup> Brigade has the lowest number of female officers.

Most female officers have captain, 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant and 1<sup>st</sup> lieutenant duties, and there are fewer women who have major and lieutenant colonel duties. The latter are only performed by three female service members of the professional structure. This data depicts the situation of the entire Slovenian Armed Forces.

The Ministry of Defence or, to be more precise, the Defence Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia, employs one of our colleagues who holds the personal rank of colonel.

Leading workplaces in our Armed Forces that are occupied by women are regarded as "less important" or, in military terms, "less operational": motivation, personnel and legal affairs, training, finances and commissary. With the exception of one woman, female service members do not occupy leading positions in the Slovenian Armed Forces (Chief of Staff in the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade).

The lowest ratio of female officers can be seen in highly specialised units. This is particularly true for units which consist of personnel who were educated at military academies (aircraft units, Air Defence missile units, Air Traffic Control units, anti armour units, armoured units, signals units, engineering units, logistics).

Female service members in SAF units mainly carry out auxiliary work in the kitchen, and commissary, financial and administrative duties. There are some female officers in command units, in areas such as personnel, operations, mobilization and logistics, in particular finance, motivation and training.

#### **♀ Employment**

The largest proportion of female service members works in the field of logistics and units for combat service support (CSS). As evidenced by the above table there has been a growing interest in employment in the armed forces in recent times. Professionalisation and the abolishment of the mandatory military service system brought about the problem of how to fill the peacetime structures with professional soldiers. Equal employment opportunities for men and women enable employment in all kinds of units, both combat and non-combat ones. This also affected the distribution of women. After they finish military training, women are distributed in the same way as men. Problems arise later, for instance due to excessive physical burden or pregnancy. That is why after the first two or three years of service women are reassigned from combat units into units for combat service support. Their careers differ from the careers of their male counterparts. This can already be seen in the rank chart, as the highest rank held by a woman in the Slovenian Armed Forces is that of Lieutenant Colonel. Women likewise do not perform commander duties other than in squads. This means that after serving in the Slovenian Armed Forces for some time, women perform less typically male duties (commanders, XO, operations....)

#### **Recruitment**

In accordance with equal employment opportunities, there exists, in principle, no gender bias in the selection process. Distribution policy does not take into account gender differences either. On the basis of provisions relating to safety, work and past experience, the General Staff started to prepare the bases for the employment strategy for women in the military by analyzing problems which arise. The strategy has not been presented and is still in its initial phases.

The Slovenian Armed Forces employed 977 new service members in 2003, of which 723 were men and 254 women.

67 women were employed in 2004. 62 completed basic military course, 17 of them served in the NBC unit, 12 in logistics, 7 in AD, 5 in signals and 21 in infantry.

#### **Retention programs**

The program is the same for all service members of the Slovenian Armed Forces. If the organization establishes that upon the expiry of the contract of an armed forces service member it still needs the member, it reviews its work assessment (which must be positive), assigns him to the same or similar position and proposes to extend his or her contract. It is very important to ensure a balanced arrival of new cadre when the old cadre leaves. Contracts of professional soldiers expire after 10 years of service in the armed forces, which

contracts of officers and non-commissioned officers expire after 20 years of service in the organisation.

If it is not possible to employ an armed forces service member following the expiry of his or her contract, the Ministry of Defence tries to find him/her a suitable work position in public administration or in a business organization, with which the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia cooperates. In the latter case the Ministry of Defence can co-finance additional training.

#### **♀ Training**

Following reorganization and professionalization, a training centre has been set up which provides training for both men and women. Gender differences are not taken into account in the advanced training. Apart from this, the Minister of Defence adopted certain decisions relating to the implementation of equal opportunity principles in the field of training of women, which provide for the following:

- to introduce the issue of equal opportunities of men and women into the educational programmes of the Ministry and to obtain knowledge relating to this field outside the Ministry,
- to introduce quotas when selecting candidates for educational programmes which are necessary for promotion and assignments to military positions (commander duties and prominent General Staff duties), that will ensure the proportion of women with particular duties which is proportionate to the percentage of women in the Slovenian Armed Forces according to individual levels of education and ranks (with programmes that require testing, the quota must be introduced in the selection for the testing; if there is no testing involved, a quota of female participants in the educational programme must be ensured),
- to organize education and training relating to the field of human dignity and to introduce themes of sexual integrity in all educational and training programmes, especially in programmes for management cadres and employees, which will participate in the implementation of the policy against sexual (discrimination).

#### **♀ Physical fitness; job (career) qualification standards**

The principle of equal opportunities enables the introduction of different criteria for physical preparation according to gender characteristics. On the basis of the adopted measures and policies, different standards will have to be defined in the »Classification of Military Duties« for different positions or duties which vary in their complexity, taking into account particular female physical characteristics when setting the minimum standards for the performance of duties within a particular military position. At present it is required that in physical training the principle of gradually raising the intensity of physical preparation is taken into account for both genders.

#### **♀ Deployments**

It can be concluded that new tasks and a new role of armed forces have contributed to the increased number of women in the military. Men prevailed in armed forces in wars for homeland protection and in large expansion wars, while prior to the introduction of mandatory military service women were present in the

armed forces only in support supply units. The expansion of peacetime military operations, in which armed forces assume the roles of establishing peacekeeping, humanitarian tasks and participate in natural disaster relief operations, will probably contribute to an increase in the number of female service members. New tasks, which very often take place in environments where military crises have passed, or even in environments where there is no threat of use of military force, allow the participation of a larger number of women. These tasks do not presuppose great physical power and the use of weapons (most mandates of UN peacekeeping operations allow the use of force only in self-defence), on the contrary, what is needed are excellent negotiation skills, better appreciation and understanding of different cultures and empathy with the civilian population in the territory of operation.

Female members of the Slovenian Armed Forces began to actively participate in peace support operations as early as in 1997, when the first Slovenian Armed Forces contingent was sent to Albania within the framework of the »ALBA« humanitarian operation. So far 60 female members of the Slovenian Armed Forces (5.3 %) have taken part in the peace support operations in which the Slovenian Armed Forces have participated or are continuing now (»ALBA« in Albania, »ALLIED HARBOUR« in Cyprus, UNFICYP in Cyprus, CONCORDIA in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, UNTSO in the Middle East, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan and »JOINT FORGE« and »JOINT GUARDIAN« in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo).

- Of the total of 60 female service members, 18 (30 %) are officers, 24 (40 %) are non-commissioned officers, 10 (17 %) are non-commissioned soldiers and 8 (13 %) perform civil duties (medical unit).
- The largest proportion of female service members participated in the medical unit (25 %), in KFOR MLF (18 %), in KFOR HQ (12.8 %), in NPE (6.7 %), UNFICYP (4 %), in MNBG (2 %), in MSU (1.7 %).
- The smallest proportion of women (0 %) was in the following PSOs: SU RISE, ALLIED HARBOUR, EUFOR, SFOR HQ, UNTSO and ISAF.
- The ratio of men and women by rank and CO duties: 9 % officers, 6.6 % non-commissioned officers, 1.8 % non-commissioned soldiers and 26 % commissioned officers (the latter performed officer, non-commissioned officer and non-commissioned soldier duties in SnVod).

Despite the fact that female service members in the Slovenian Armed Forces formally perform all military duties and that the same holds true for their participation in peace support operations (PSOs), it is observed that – also in PSOs – the majority of female service members perform support and auxiliary tasks in the field of medical care, logistic supplies, staff functions, commissariat and administrative and financial operations. These are positions which are still considered »less important«. Yet it should not be overlooked that female service members are increasingly assuming »more operative« positions in PSC namely: platoon leader and deputy battalion commander in MNBG/SFOR, assistant for intelligence matters and BOV soldier-driver in MSU/SFOR, and, for instance, in the second rotation of the Slovenian contingent in the ISAF forces

Afghanistan, a female lieutenant colonel of the Slovenian Armed Forces is one of the candidates for lieutenant colonel duty (officer in the ISAF).

As the proportion of female service members in PSOs is increasing and due to the fact that their posting occasionally raises doubts whether or not they are able to successfully perform tasks abroad, far away from home and family and, with regard to safety, in risky territories, the 1st Battalion staff has decided to carry out a survey among those female service members of the Slovenian Armed Forces who have already participated in PSOs. Answers to questions which we divided into two groups:

1. general questions about participation in PSOs, and
2. participation of female service members of the Slovenian Armed Forces who have children in PSOs,

will be very useful in the future development of criteria for setting the requirements, which service members of the Slovenian Armed Forces must satisfy before they can participate in peace operations; they will also be useful in the processes of structuring (amending) the overall supply of service members of the Slovenian Armed Forces and guaranteeing the same opportunities for men and women in this field.

- Of the total of 1,138 service members of the Slovenian Armed Forces, who have participated in PSOs until 10 April 2004, 60 are female service members (5.3 %).
- Of these 60 female service members, 18 (30 %) are officers, 24 (40 %) are non-commissioned officers, 10 (17 %) are non-commissioned soldiers and 8 (13 %) perform civil duties (medical unit).
- The largest proportion of female service members participated in the medical unit (25 %), in KFOR MLF (18 %), in KFOR HQ (12.8 %), in NPE (6.7%), in UNFICYP (4 %), in MNBG (2 %), in MSU (1.7 %), while the smallest proportion (0 %) participated in the following PSOs: SUN RISE, ALLIED HARBOUR, EUFOR, SFOR HQ, UNTSO and ISAF.
- The ratio of men and women by rank and CO duties: 9 % officers, 6.6 % non-commissioned officers, 1.8 % non-commissioned soldiers and 26 % commissioned officers (performed officer, non-commissioned officer and non-commissioned soldier duties in SnVod).

#### ♀Firsts

The first female helicopter pilot was employed last year. Following educational training abroad, the first female Lieutenant Colonel was assigned to the duty of Chief of Staff in a brigade. This year the first female started to perform leadership duties in SFOR's SIKON operation. The same one was the first in SAF Command and staff course (among 15 male officers).

#### ♀Conclusion

Although the Defence Act sets equal opportunities for the integration of both genders, the policy of the Slovenian Armed Forces remains to be seen. The Ministry of Defence has yet to prepare special forms of safety declarations regarding equal opportunities for the employment of women, especially in the Slovenian Armed Forces system, but there are all the necessary bases for the preparation of such documents in rules in force of the Ministry. More precisely,

the Safety Declaration of the Ministry of Defence, no. 102-00-1/01-32 of 1 August 2001 the abovementioned foundations are already included, therefore one of the main future policies is to ensure such level of implementation of safety measures for these categories of female employees throughout their entire work process in the Ministry, which guarantees overall safety and health for all categories of female employees in the Ministry, not only in their most sensitive periods, for instance pregnancy and the period after childbirth, but throughout their entire work and career, irrespective of the work that they perform or will perform. The Ministry of Defence will continue its efforts to implement the principle of equality by amending, if necessary, acts, regulatory decrees and internal regulations and proposing such amendments, in order to define this field more comprehensively. Apart from that, it is already doing everything in its powers to enable pregnant women to perform less physically demanding duties or duties which will not have a negative impact on their pregnancy by organizing special organisational forms of work, such as working parties for performing special defined tasks. In this way, both less demanding work and a rational use of knowledge and flow of specific skills within the Ministry will be ensured, which will result in more effective and rational performance of tasks of the Ministry and the Slovenian Armed Forces as defined by the law.