

## BULGARIA – NATIONAL REPORT 2005

There are several main issues, related to women in Armed Forces like the factors for women's acceptance in the Armed Forces, their relative part in comparison with men and their presence in the kind of Armed Forces, the conditions of work, the possibilities for professional development, the attitude of society, which are subject to that report.

### **Service regulations concerning employment of women in Bulgarian Forces**

The right to admission of women to practice the military profession is guaranteed by the Constitution of Republic of Bulgaria, written in Article 6 "all citizens are equal by virtue of law".<sup>1</sup> "No discrimination is allowed on any basis including sex".<sup>2</sup> The Constitution of Bulgaria is a supreme law so the other customary laws such as Law on Defense and Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria are developed in accordance with it.

According to Article 88 of Law on Defense and Armed Forces of Republic of Bulgaria "women in Bulgarian Army are appointed to professional military service in the Army on positions, determined by Minister of Defense and proposed by the Chief of the Staff."<sup>3</sup>

### **Professional status**

Women have equal professional rights like men in the Bulgarian Armed Forces. Significant example for legal equality in the possibility for professional development is the organization of education and qualification. Equality is guaranteed by the equal possibilities for education and qualification.

According to Rules of Procedure for the Professional Military Service (2001) regulation of Minister of Defense ? 2/07.03.2003 officers may apply for education and Staff Faculty of the Rakovsky Defense and Staff College, with no requirement for sex. The final position is per specialty and form of education – in the order of the competitive ball.

### **Social status**

The Law on Defense and Armed Forces of Republic of Bulgaria and the Rules of Procedure for the Professional Military Service provide for additional special rights for women in uniform concerning their special conditions during maternity. Special protection is provided from Labor Code and professional code of conduct of the military service, which provide for Constitutional principle for protection of child and woman- mother. On account of these are social public interests, most of the rights at definite conditions may be of professional interest.

### **Current numbers of women in Bulgarian Armed Forces**

Up to now the figures about women on military duty are: officers – 1,9 %; sergeants – 6,8 %; soldiers – 13,3 %.

The age distribution of officers is as follows:

- ✓ Up to 25 years – 26 officers (12% in Army, 35% in Air Forces, 38% in Navy and General Staff);
- ✓ 26-30 years – 64 officers (31% in Army, 42% in Air Forces, 5% in Navy and General Staff);

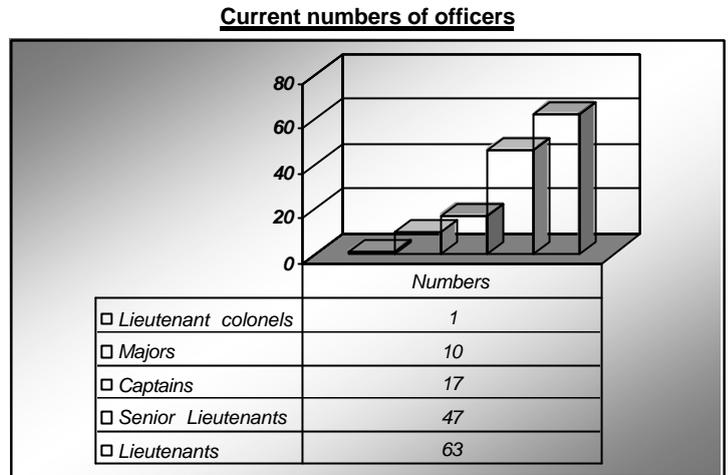
<sup>1</sup> Official text translated into English is available on <http://www.ciela-law.bg>

<sup>2</sup> ibid

<sup>3</sup> Official text translated into English is available on <http://www.ciela-law.bg>

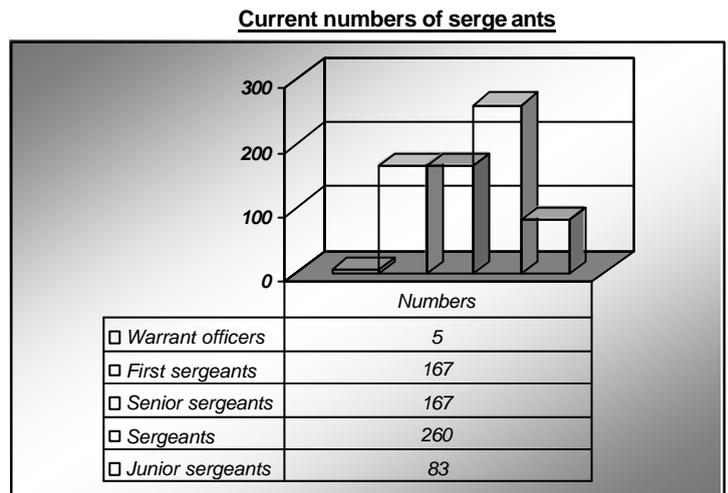
- ✓ 31-35 years – 26 officers (46% in Army, 19% in Air Forces, 12% in Navy and General Staff);
- ✓ 36-40 years – 14 officers (43% in Army, 28% in Air Forces, 8% in Navy and General Staff);
- ✓ 41-45 years – 8 officers (38% in Army, 24% in Air Forces, 38% in General Staff)

The rang distribution among officers is given in Table 1:



**Table 1**

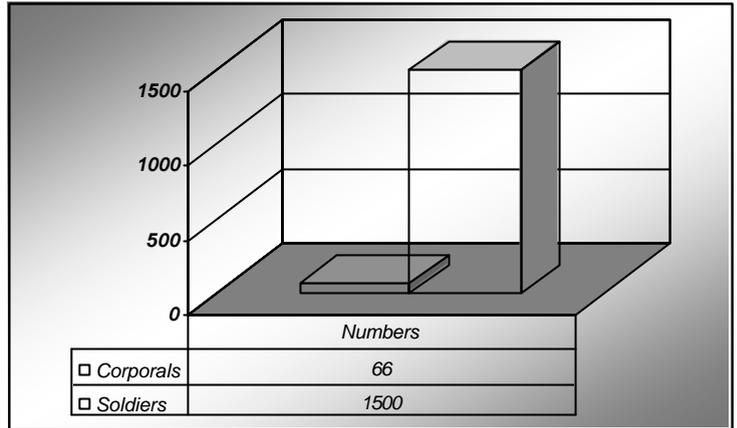
The rang distribution among sergeants is given in Table 2:



**Table 2**

The rank distribution among soldiers is given in Table 3.

**Current numbers of soldiers**

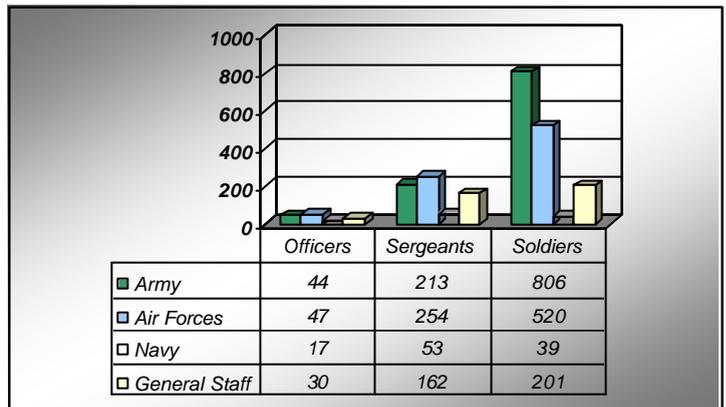


**Table 3**

As a summary the total number of women on active duty today is: 2386 approx 6% of the current Armed Forces personnel.

The distribution among different Services is given in Table 4.

**Women in Bulgarian Armed Forces 2005**



**Table 4**

All figures and numbers are about active duty personnel.

## Recruitment and education

The physical and professional criteria for recruitment of men and women Bulgarian Armed Forces are provided in the Law on Defense and Armed Forces of Republic of Bulgaria and the rules of Procedure for the Professional Military Service.

The new model of the military education is built on the principle of consequence continuity of the education.

? The first level comprises of the National Military University education where cadets, after being taught in the course for 4 years, receive the educational and qualification level of "bachelor" in a military and civilian specialties. Under certain conditions, they can receive a master's degree in a civilian specialty through additional training in the course of the year.

? The second stage is education in the Command and Staff Faculty of the Defense Staff College.

? The third stage is education and qualification in the General Staff course (a long program) or in the Strategic Course delivered in 4-month period for teaching. This is for receiving the highest degree of qualification.

**The National Military University** (Army Faculty, Air Force Faculty, Artillery Defences and Communication and information systems Faculty):

This year the National Military University will promote 22 women officers.

They are distributed as follows: Air Forces – 9 (from them: Pilots – 2); Air Logistics – 5; Air-Defences – 2; Communication and information systems – 2.

The curriculum structure of the military education complies with the State Requirements related to higher education, where there are fixed figures regarding the minimum content for each of the subjects taught at the National Military University. The military subjects are as to the civil subjects taught.

These are as follows:

- ✓ 1140 hrs Military education and training;
- ✓ 2800 hrs Civil university education;
- ✓ 1560 hrs minimum obligatory optional courses and electives.

The whole course of education and training is designed according to a common State Requirements prescribe. Civil and military educations are running in parallel. In the first year all cadets are being educated and trained according to a common for all basic programs. After the first year commences the service and speciality oriented Upgrading civil subjects' education continues in parallel.

**The Naval Academy:**

This year the Naval Academy will promote 4 women officers.

**The Defense and Staff College** (the Command and Staff Faculty):

This year the Defense and Staff College will graduate 2 women officers.

## Training

There is no difference between man and women training standards and procedures in the Bulgarian Armed Forces.

The training traditions are well established. It has trained moral and command discipline. The psychological criterions for selection and control of all cadets are widely used. The discipline is one of main criteria for the final score that is calculated by means of the evaluation system.

## Deployment

Bulgarian Armed Forces currently takes part in "peace" and "coalition" operations in Iraq, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Afghanistan. Up to now **144 women** in uniform have taken part in missions abroad: Officers – 10, Sergeants – 20, Soldiers – 114. The ratio between women's and the men's soldiers in peacekeeping operations is 2 %. Out of the total number of women in uniform 10 have taken part in missions abroad twice and one to three times.

The participation of women in Bulgarian Armed Forces in peace support operations is as follows:

1. Operation "Stability and rehabilitation" in Iraq: Officers - 3, Sergeants - 12, Soldiers - 10.
2. Operation "ALTEA" - European Forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina:
  - 2.1. Guard Company in operation of European Forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina "ALTEA": Officers – 5, Sergeants – 6, Soldiers – 44.
  - 2.2. Operation (NATO – SFOR) - Mechanized platoon in Stabilization Forces: Officers – 0, Sergeants – 1, Soldiers – 12.
3. Operation (ISAF) - International Security Assistance Forces for security assistance to the Afghan government as a part of the contingent of the Germany. Mechanized platoon: Officers – 2, Sergeants – 1, Soldiers – 8.

## Conclusions

The evolution of the right to admission of women to practice the military profession develops into the context of the confirmation of equality between the sexes in contemporary society.

The trend is: The women in uniform will be present at all services in Bulgarian Armed Forces like result of the modernization of military activities.