

TURKEY - NATIONAL REPORT

ON WOMEN IN THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES OSLO/NORWAY-2005

1. POLICY CHANGES/NEW POLICIES:

The personnel policy of the Turkish Armed Forces about women as to keep up developments is based on the principle that "female officers and NSOs of suitable rank, sex status are needed."

In the Turkish Armed Forces to provide the continuity of activities conducted during peace time, female or male civilian personnel are employed at the units, headquarters and organizations in technical fields according to the requirements of the jobs without any discrimination.

With the purpose of the employment of female officers and NSOs under better conditions legal regulations and policies are continuously reviewed and studies aimed at improvements carried out in view of the acquired experiences and researches.

At this scope the following improvements are taken into effect:

A. Legal amendments related to maternity were taken into effect in 1998. According to new implementation, a total of nine weeks of paid leave is authorized, three weeks of which before giving birth, and six weeks after giving birth. In case of request, six months of unpaid leave may be given. Furthermore, female officers are entitled to 1,5 hours of breast-feeding leave each month.

B. By the changes accomplished on the related regulations of the Navy, the female officers documented to be pregnant by health report are immediately taken from active on-board duty and assigned to the headquarters of their respective units until the end of the breast feeding leave.

C. In the Air Forces, female officers are taken from flight duty starting from the 2nd month of pregnancy. After giving birth, female officers may commence their flight duties with health report, or their leaves in case the flight doctor finds suitable.

D. In parallel with these implementations, the spouses are taken into consideration in the assignments of female officers and NSOs married to their colleagues, so utmost care is given to the integrity of families.

E. Woman officers whose spouses are appointed to a permanent post abroad requested, provided with leave without payment for up to 4 years.

F. The services of woman officers whose spouses are serving in different services changed in order to protect the integrity of their family.

2. **ORGANISATION:**

Today, women are assigned only as officers and NCOs in the Turkish Armed Forces there are no enlisted personnel.

As of the year 2005, the number of the female officers and NCOs in the Turkish Armed Forces is 1245. The distributions of the female officers and NCOs according to the branches and the fields of duty are as follows:

FIELDS OF DUTIES	ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE	GENDARME	COAST GUARD
COMBAT UNITS	33	65	85	67	1
ASSISTANT FORCES	589	164	185	53	3
TOTAL	622	229	270	120	4

The rank distribution of female officers is as follows:

RANKS	ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE	GENDARME	COAST GUARD
GENERAL/ADMIRAL	-	-	-	-	-
COLONEL	3	5	-	-	-
LT COLONEL	16	1	5	-	-
MAJOR	63	42	19	3	-
CAPTAIN	255	35	52	8	2
1 st LIEUTENANT	224	112	122	28	2
2 nd LIEUTENANT	61	34	72	18	-
NCO RANKS	-	-	-	63	-
CORPORAL/PRIVATE	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	622	229	270	120	4

3. EMPLOYMENT:

Turkish women officers in the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) serve in all branches of the armed units, infantry and submarine. In the appointments, promotions and training is not taken into consideration and an equal practice is carried out.

We may present as an example of these practices that woman officers were employed in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) achieved by the NATO.

The International Security Assistance Force Operation II conducted by the Turkish Forces between 20 June 2002 and 10 February 2003 gave the opportunity of drawing lessons for the employment of the woman soldiers serving in the TAF and the future peacekeeping duties.

Woman soldiers were assigned both at the TAF units and the other national units. After the woman soldiers achieved success after their first assignments, the participation of them expanded in every rotational mission by the nations. Woman soldiers became key personnel in accomplishing the basic targets and principles in certain fields.

Woman soldiers contributed to the ISAF operations as the other soldiers and performed certain administrative and support missions that necessitated the participation of women considering the cultural structure of the geography in which the operation was conducted.

The woman soldiers in the Turkish unit primarily worked in the field of health and as technical personnel in communications branch to maintain the strategic communication.

The woman soldiers from other nations achieved various missions mainly of administrative and support, health and medical services, public relations, press and Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and security at units and headquarters.

The woman soldiers drew the image of modern woman walking on the same way as male colleagues in the eye of the Afghan people when they were assigned in the ISAF II Operation.

The presence of the woman soldiers created an affirmative atmosphere among the women in the eye of the local people as well relating to ISAF II. The presence of the women made contact with the Afghan women face to face. Woman soldiers were the only ones who could approach to the Afghan women. In this way they were prevented to be used for explosive weapon trafficking.

The same conditions were applied in the field of health as well. The Afghan women do not hesitate to go to woman doctors, and in this way their children were easily reached.

4. RECRUITMENT:

Women enter the Turkish Military on a voluntary basis. There is no conscription for personnel. No formal planning has been made in terms of commencing to recruit women or corporal-privates, because Turkey's manpower structure does not have any scarcity of regarding male population.

5. TRAINING:

Equal opportunity applies to women and men in terms of training as well. Training is in military academies and other military education institutions. All entrance tests, except physical proficiency tests, are conducted under equal conditions with the male candidates, genders receive basic training and leadership training.

University graduate female officers joining the military from the civil sources undergo a one-month basic training course together with the male candidates. Both men and women receive the same training programs and are trained at the same schools and training centers.

Upon graduation from the military schools, female officers acquire the necessary skills to command a platoon level unit. After graduation, they are subject to branch and orientation within the scope of their respective force commands. Having completed all these training successfully, our female officers commence their duties.

6. DEPLOYMENTS:

Turkish service women have been deployed in support of IFOR, KFOR and SFOR in a special medical unit, in peacekeeping operations. At present there are two nurses in KFOR and SFOR.

Gender difference is not an issue for assignments in such peacekeeping operations. military personnel are supplied from the sources determined in the training section above.

7. CAREER DEVELOPMENT:

Currently, mentoring programs are not employed in the Turkish Armed Forces, as they are needed. Female officers are oriented to their duties, when they commence their duty orientation stems from the feeling of helping and supporting any officer newly stated his rather than applying a mentoring service. Female officers, like their male colleagues, are given various courses and training programs regarding their respective duties from time Leadership programs are among these.

There are encouraging practices in the Turkish Armed Forces that aim to encourage personnel to receive postgraduate training to improve their professional career without discrimination of gender.

8. SPECIAL EVENTS / AREAS OF INTEREST (RECENT AND PROGRESS DEVELOPMENTS):

In the policy of the Turkish Armed Forces on woman officers and the NCOs, they are providing changes and improvements in favor of women in line with the requirements continuing to improve.

9. CONCLUSION:

We gladly see that the opportunities and conditions available to the Turkish female officers and NSOs are continuously improving. As Turkish female officers and NSOs, we are continuing to perform our duties within exact harmony and integration together with our male colleagues. We deem ourselves very lucky and we believe that we shall undertake more effective and functional tasks in the future.

As the female officers and NSOs of the Turkish Armed Forces, we owe special thanks to the distinguished committee, who has assumed a constructive and counseling role in the performance of our honored duties with contributions and recommendations.

I thank you all, with my respects.