



PORTUGAL



National Report

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INTRODUCTION

Regular recruitment opened to women in 1991 for the Army and the Air Force and in 1992 for the Navy.

Military service was mandatory for male citizens till 2004.

Between 2000 and 2004, we went through a transition period, and in 2004 the regime based on conscription ended and a new one began. It is based, in peacetime, on a voluntary basis for full career or contract personnel for all citizens. Nevertheless, in case of extreme necessity, citizens – both men and women – can be called up to serve as conscripts.

Since 19 November 2004, we have reached the goal of having fully professional Armed Forces.

In Portugal, the military personnel are ruled by special statutory legislation, but in specific subjects, as maternity and holidays, they follow the civilian law, although chiefs of staff rule specific maternity aspects concerning the military service.

POLICIES

The III Plan for Equality (2007-2010) was approved by the Government in 27 June 2007. In this Plan structuring measures were foreseen to the Public Administration. They included all ministries and all social agents. As intervention areas were elected the professional activity and familiar life, education, training and information, citizenship and social inclusion and co-operation with the CPLP countries. Its evaluation, in what concerns the Armed Forces, was rather positive.

In this Plan, it is important to emphasize the creation of a Gender Observatory in order to do the monitoring and evaluation of the integration of the gender equality (gender mainstreaming) in all areas of politic activity and social reality.

The Government Programme is based in a policy of gender equality that stands in the governmental principles of the Beijing Platform, and the Platform for Action, adopted in Beijing, in 1999. This Programme elects priority areas where a transversality of gender equality may make an important qualitative difference, the education, the qualification and employment, the health and science.

Another important measure, about gender equality, is the special statutory legislation that establishes the principle of conciliation, whenever possible, between personal and work conveniences, regarding transfers and posting, especially of military couples.

Finally, it's important to emphasize that in 2007, year designated as the European Year of Equal Opportunities for all, took place, among others, a Conference concerning the Equality of Opportunities in the Armed Forces, which had with the participation of national and foreign experts.

ORGANIZATION

There are three Services in the Portuguese Armed Forces: Navy, Army and Air Force.

Personnel on active duty are divided into two groups: career personnel and short-term personnel. Only career personnel can reach the higher ranks: OF-10 for officers, in some specialties, and OR-9 for non-officer personnel. As regards the short-term personnel, the higher rank is OF-1 (lieutenant) for officers and OR-6 for non-officer personnel.

The internal organization of the Services is similar. However, it is possible to find different rules (not based on gender) for example in the recruitment of short-term and career personnel.

The following chart provides the current percentages of military female in total force by service, in April 2008 (active duty, trainees excluded):

	Total % of Female soldiers	% of female flag officers	% of female senior officers	% of female junior officers	% of female NCO	% of female soldiers lower rank than NCO	0% of female soldiers participating in military operations
Navy	7,89	0,00	0,51	23,18	2,87	8,36	0,00
Army	15,72	0,00	0,64	17,24	8,66	20,65	3,00
Air Force	17,20	0,00	1,88	24,01	6,48	29,23	0,00
Total	13,70	0,00	0,88	21,12	6,64	17,84	3,00

EMPLOYMENT

Representation of women in career personnel remains proportionally lower than that of men, but taking in consideration that women only began to join the Armed Forces Academies in the late 80's, we see that the percentage is increasing for the new generation.

In short-term personnel, the percentage of women is now stabilized considering that all the existing have joined after the access to women was granted.

RECRUITMENT

In 1992, the Military Service Law allowed women in the military service, on a voluntary basis and in all functions, being recruitment a responsibility of each Service.

However some practical restrictions to the employment of women in the Marine Corps and combat divers still remain.

The most popular areas chosen by female applicants in military academies of all services are administration and medicine.

The recruitment campaigns usually include advertising on television and newspapers, direct mail to schools, and information on the World Wide Web, showing male and female officers and non-officer personnel in different roles. Actions of direct contact with the young population are also promoted, especially near schools and in places or during events where a high participation of young people is expected.

With the voluntary regime, new forms of service and a National Defense Day have been created. The major finality of this day is to bring young people to the issues of national defense and to raise awareness to the role of the Armed Forces. The divulgation actions are done by teams made up of female and male military personnel, what ends to be an important form of recruitment, still that indirect, to the career personnel.

Portugal has no special retention programs since the number of female applicants is generally high.

TRAINING

All the personnel in the Armed Forces must face identical requirements when they apply for engagement or to be selected for further training.

During the military life, female personnel have the same qualification opportunities as male personnel, except those related with special services, such as marines, submarines, and combat divers, in the Navy.

In the Army, women can apply to the specialty of Special Operations and commandos, but due to very exigent physical selecting tests, that are equal for men and women, still no woman has that specialty.

Physical fitness is yearly controlled and the standards depend on gender and age.

DEPLOYMENTS

Female personnel, having the right qualifications, can apply or be appointed to participate, without restrictions, in international military operations.

The Army is the service in the Portuguese Armed Forces that has the higher participation of women in international missions.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Within the various personnel groups, there are equal opportunities for female and male personnel with regard to career.

Concerning promotion, only professional qualifications, evaluation and service needs are considered, not the applicant's gender.

The complete evaluation concerning promotion has not been possible as yet. In fact, the highest rank held by female officers at all

services is OF-4, and for female NCOs is OR-6, also in all services. The Armed Forces have not yet developed gender related programmes for mentoring and leadership.

SPECIAL INTEREST ITEMS

Currently, the Air Force has three female career pilots, two female career navigators, and in short term contract one female as pilot, and one female as navigator.

The Navy has had a female helicopter pilot since 2004 and two women in uniform have the command of ships.

Regarding maternity law, the Portuguese military follow the common law without any limitation

In this area, the Air Force and Navy have created a set of rules regarding duty rosters and (in the Navy) also regarding service on-board for parents with children under 12.

CONCLUSION

Every year, the female participation in the Portuguese Armed Forces has been increasing in all career fields contributing in an effective way to its mission. To this fact have contributed the government policy and the actions adopted, that have as a goal the effective gender equality of opportunities for all military personnel.

Steps are being taken towards a full integration of women in the Portuguese Society and Armed Forces.

Women are still wishing to join the Armed Forces and year by year, getting more stable positions within the structure and a fair representation in power positions inside the military organization.

The woman assignments to almost all functions, based strictly on competence, are, slowly but surely, assuring a relevant mission role for women in the Armed Forces.