

# IMS Office of the Gender Advisor: Counter Terrorism and the Gender Perspective

## What is it?

The NATO Strategic Concept recognises "terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, as the most direct asymmetric threat to the security of NATO citizens and to international peace and prosperity". Drivers to perpetrate violent extremist acts, the roles performed within terrorist groups, the impacts of violent extremism and state responses to them will vary between men, women, boys and girls. Thus there is a need to fully integrate the gender perspective into counter terrorism efforts.

## Women's Roles and Agency

Women have unique roles both within terrorist groups and in counter terrorism efforts. It is important to identify their roles beyond victimhood to that of: sympathizers, supporters, radicalizers, recruiters, combatants, etc. Different push and pull factors will drive or exploit women as actors in terrorism which is important for armed forces to identify. Women also make essential contributions in countering terrorism. For example, the influence of women in social networks in their communities can be leveraged and used to identify early warning signs of terrorism and radicalization in order to counter it in a timely manner.

## ARTICLE 5

**an attack on one member of NATO  
is an attack on all of its members**

**NATO has only invoked Article 5 once in its history—in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001**

## Integrating gender into CT at NATO

NATO integrates gender into its counter terrorism efforts through:

1. Raising awareness and understanding;
2. Including gender in counter terrorism training and education;
3. Engagement with Partners and other International Organisations;
4. Integrating gender into counter terrorism policies and programmes.

NATO - Counter Terrorism



## DID YOU KNOW:

**Compared to men who commit similar non-violent terrorist crimes, women are prosecuted at lower rates and on average receive 2.5 years less in sentencing**



Council of Europe, Counter Terrorism and Gender Perspective

## 5 Reasons to Integrate Gender Perspective in Counter-Terrorism

1. To uphold state obligations with respect to human rights.
2. To identify of potential perpetrators of violent extremism and terrorism.
3. To identify (potential) victims of violent extremism and terrorism and the type of gender-based or gender-related violence they may endure.
4. To support evidence-based and effective approaches to preventing violent extremism.
5. To avoid adverse gendered consequences of PVE and CT activities.

**NATO encourages its allies and partners to engage more systematically with the nexus between gender and counter terrorism to enhance the operational effectiveness.**