

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Article 1 – Objectives

1. Article 12.12 of the Civilian Personnel Regulations (CPRs) sets out NATO policy on the standards which members of the staff shall adopt in the conduct of their duties, regarding respect and courtesy for others and the avoidance of unfair discrimination. It is to apply those principles and against the background of the nations' desire to encourage the recruitment, retention and professional development of a diverse workforce that this policy has been set out.

Article 2 – Statement of Policy

2. It remains NATO's firm aim to maintain a work environment that is free from discrimination or harassment and provides equality of opportunity regardless of sex, race or ethnic origin, religion, nationality, disability, age or sexual orientation. Without setting quotas NATO tries to ensure that its workforce reflects the diversity of cultures and backgrounds of the nations it serves as well as an appropriate gender balance. The objective is to be an organisation that flourishes in the natural diversity of its international employees.

3. The basic approach to equal opportunity is to maintain a working environment free from discrimination, while pointing up the particular effort to achieve gender balance within the IS/IMS. Diversity is a wider concept that highlights the positive benefits and contributions of a mixed workforce.

Equal Opportunity

4. Against the background of the recruitment and employment rules set out in the CPRs, Chapter I, the Head of the NATO body shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that hiring and advancement are made on the basis of individual merit.

5. During their employment with the IS/IMS, international civilian staff shall be treated fairly, in an environment free from discrimination and which acknowledges the values of equality of treatment and diversity.

6. NATO IS/IMS shall be guided by the following principles

- Recruitment, selection and advancement shall take place without unfair discrimination;
- Women and men shall be treated fairly in a professional work environment that emphasises mutual respect;
- Staff performance will be assessed solely on the basis of objective and relevant criteria;
- Staff shall have equal access to career development and training.

7. The equal opportunities policy shall be applied by the use of measures, which may be grouped into Action Plans such as the initial Gender Balance and Diversity Action Plan (C-M(2003)055). The aim is to:

- Attract qualified women candidates for vacancies;
- Create more opportunities for career development for women and men on equal terms through Performance Management and other HR processes;
- Measure progress on improving the staff gender balance at all levels according to relevant indicators that are published on a regular basis and monitored on Senior Management level;
- Develop monitoring and feedback systems and appropriate practices to allow for continuous learning, adjustment and improvement on gender equality;
- Increase gender sensitivity awareness among IS/IMS staff, for example in the preparation of job descriptions and in competency assessments;
- Stimulate action on gender equality by employing management practices that promote workplace/related learning;
- Set up, maintain and periodically review guidelines for mainstreaming gender equality in NATO IS/IMS Human Resources processes;
- Strive towards a working environment that permits a balanced professional and private life;
- Implement an effective procedure for handling grievances.

DIVERSITY

8. Diversity is distinct from equal opportunities. The focus is on maximising employee potential rather than simply removing discrimination. It is relevant to all employees,

not to specific groups, by emphasising the benefits of accommodating people with different backgrounds and encouraging them to contribute as individuals.

9. The IS/IMS are committed to the ideal of a workforce that reflects the diversity of cultures and backgrounds and encouraging them to contribute as individuals.

10. Through diversity recognition and in understanding, respecting and valuing differences as individuals, the IS/IMS aim to achieve significant benefits, as follows:

- By focussing on individual talents, abilities and experiences to meet our objectives in a changing security environment, which now requires a much wider range of competencies and skills;
- By using the creativity and differing perspectives residing in a diverse workforce to enhance NATO's capabilities.

Article 3 – Implementation

11. The policy on equal opportunities and diversity provides a framework to inspire and guide NATO staff at all levels. Every IS/IMS employee shares the responsibility for contributing to a professional working environment that promotes equal treatment and is free from discrimination. Their dedication to the ideas will ensure success. It is particularly important that staff in managerial or supervisory roles create and maintain a supportive and encouraging working environment for all employees and take all reasonable actions necessary to prevent and address any form of behaviour that deviates from the equal opportunities and diversity policy. It is the responsibility of managers to see that staff is offered training which better allows them to appreciate how to avoid discrimination.

12. Specific policies and practices have already been established in NATO IS/IMS to give protection against discrimination and harassment at work. A formal grievance procedure has been agreed.

Article 4 – Monitoring

12. The head of the NATO body will be regularly informed of the effectiveness of the equal opportunities and diversity policy. The Executive Management Division is

responsible for monitoring selection decisions and HR practices and procedures to ensure adherence to this policy in the IS. The IMS Personnel Office will perform the same roles for the IMS. There will be a regular consultation with the Staff Association and periodic statistics and details will be issued to keep staff informed.

Article 5 – Definitions

14. Broad definitions are given at Appendix.

Definitions

A. Professional Working Environment

- An environment based on mutual respect and which is free from harassment or abusive behaviour of any kind.
- An environment in which each staff member has the right to request the immediate cessation of clearly inappropriate behaviour, with the expectation of a prompt and appropriate response to such a request and without fear of unfavourable personal or professional consequences.

B. Equal Opportunity

- Within the governance of the Civilian Personnel Regulations, a work environment where opportunities for professional success and advancement are available equally to all staff, regardless of any characteristics unrelated to the skills and abilities required for job performance.

C. Diversity

- Diversity refers to the key elements that make us individuals, and thus different: e.g. age, sex, race, religion and cultural background. Diversity recognition means respecting and appreciating those who are different from ourselves.
- The two drivers behind the IS/IMS goals of achieving greater diversity in our workforce are
 - ❖ A focus on employees: attracting and retaining the more diverse talent, skills and backgrounds we need for challenging roles and responsibilities and harnessing their creativity;
 - ❖ A focus on image: enhancing our reputation as a good employer.