

HUNGARIAN NATIONAL REPORT
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE NATO FORCES
CANADA (OTTAWA) – 2003

1. Introduction

The currently prevailing provisions of law being in harmony with the Constitution – relevant for the Hungarian Defence Forces – lay down and guarantee in every aspect the equality before the law by forming a guaranty system and drafted in the spirit of the international contracts and charters approved and enacted by the Republic of Hungary.

Our Constitution states that the Republic of Hungary assures equal rights of men and women in the aspect of every civilian, political, economical, social and cultural laws as well as human and civil rights for every persons being within its territory without any discrimination such as: race, skin color, gender, language, religion, political or without making any difference because of opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other.

Concerning the Hungarian Defence Forces the above stated prohibition against the discrimination is supplemented in accordance with the Defence Law as follows: The armed organization guarantees the promotion opportunities of the professional personnel without discrimination on the basis of professional skill, experience and performance, as well as service time, taking into account the payment related to the rank and posts.

In this context it can be laid down that the legal base for any kind of freedom from discrimination is guaranteed by law in relation with the Republic of Hungary as well as the Hungarian Defence Forces.

2. General Policies

In accordance with the resolution of the Hungarian National Assembly the transformation process of the Hungarian Defence Forces has to encompass all areas of life in the military, thus the battle order, the organizational structure, the system of command and principles of deployment, combat readiness and mobilization, augmentation, the replacement and modernization of the equipment, the system of planning, the economy, the composition of forces, the living and working conditions, the public relations of the Hungarian Defence Forces and the complete human resource management and development of the military.

The different phases of the transformation of the Hungarian Defence Forces should see the transition to the new organizational structures, the new stationing and the justifiable new personnel composition, measures introduced to reduce the costs of operation and maintenance, improvement of the circumstances of life and work, measures taken in the interest of NATO interoperability and compability.

The transformation set forth several requirements from a human policy point of view. The transformation has extended to all areas of life within the forces, including the personnel compositions, the living and working conditions, the social and welfare situation of the force, the public relations of the military, the complete institutional system of human resource management and development.

The system of augmentation and recruitment has been adapting to the new requirements and the necessary supply of new recruits is being provided through efficient operation.

Tasks related to providing the necessary supply of personnel, their retention, training, promotion and their discharge from the forces has started to be planned and done on the basis of the new concept.

The new service law regarding the officers, NCOs and contracted personnel serving in the Hungarian Defence Forces introduced last year contains the new system of promotion – based on performance analysis -, the conditions of training and further education, increased system of remuneration and the legislative framework of central human resource management.

The above-mentioned law assures the same rights and obligations for male and female military people and guarantees in every aspect the equality before the law.

3. Employment

Female personnel are integrated at all levels with limited positions at command levels. Although women can serve in almost all career fields, including combat, the majority of them perform their duties in administrative, personnel and medical positions. However we can also find female soldiers serving in the signal corps, radio-reconnaissance and as anti-tank missile operators.

4. Rate of military women from the officer and NCO personnel in the Hungarian Defence Forces.

Officers

Women	9%
Men	91%

NCOs

Women	23%
Men	77%

Contracted personnel

Women	12%
Men	88%

Total

Women	16%
Men	84%

The highest rank of women is colonel, there are 7 colonel-ranking females (actively serving and retired) in the Hungarian Defence Forces.

5. Recruitment

The Hungarian Defence Forces implement this kind of activity with no respect of sexes. In the case of persons applying for the contracted service the basic pillar of the informatory activity minimally is the completion of the 8-year long primary school and the age limit of 18-30.

The Hungarian Defence Forces would like to increase numbers of contracted personnel. For this reason several Recruiting Offices were installed in 2001.

During the recruitment women applying for contracted service were offered posts which comply with the particularities of their sex, however it's a regular case that themselves ask for so called manful posts in order to prove that they are able to come up challenges raised by the post.

The so-called "Open days" organized regularly for 5 years are of high importance from the point of view of career orientation and increasing of applicants for joining the Hungarian Defence Forces, and this program of events gives opportunity to the military educational institutes, military organizations to introduce themselves, as well as to introduce their job, activities and operation, as well as to make popular and more attractive the Hungarian Defence Forces for the civilian population.

The interest of the youth and the adults towards national defence has been inspired not only by the activity of recruitment offices but by the observation of military traditions, war games, cultural programs, summer camps and extraordinary history classes in schools.

6. Training, military education

In the preparation of women for the military career and prevailing provisions of laws and inner regulations don't make any difference regarding women and men. Women can apply for any of the military faculties and they can be admitted in the same way like men if they are

physically fit and healthy after successfully passing the entrance exams organized by the military educational institute.

Officer training is concentrated to the Bolyai-faculty of the National Defence University. The university also conducts basic, advance and staff level training.

Non-commissioned officer training is concentrated to the Central NCO Training School. This institution deals with the training of those who enter the system of contracted soldiers and advance to the NCO ranks.

Troops – professional and contracted – serving in the ranks of the reaction forces are trained with a view to providing for the armed defence of the country, allied obligations and participation in non-combat international operations. The individual preparation of the professional and contracted force concentrates on autonomy, physical fitness and pays special attention to specific professional, linguistic and computer skills.

In terms of formation training, the emphasis, besides training smaller sub-units, is on the training of bataillons alone or in national and international coalition. The fundamental element of formation training is the adoption of skills of acting in accordance with allied doctrines and the skill of safe cooperation.

7. Deployments

Hungarian service women have deployed in support of IFOT, SFOR, KFOR, UNFICYP missions since 1996. They continue to serve as doctors, medical technicians, personnel, in administrative posts as well as in signal corps. Recruitment policy for these types of missions is the same for women and men – screening process including a physical and mental examination and military peacekeeping training.

8. Recent and Projected Developments

From the point of view of increasing the number of contracted personnel it is very important to make even more efficient the activity of Recruiting Offices.

Officer and NCO career models are being updated to make it attractive, safe and predictable, allowing the introduction of the “up or out” principle. An objective, realistic system of promotion and evaluation is being in place, providing a harmony between requirements and needs.

A new policy is being elaborated at government level regarding the equal opportunities between genders. The planned policy has as purpose to highlight the equal opportunities in every area of life, to assure equality in every segment of the labour market, to provide as much information as possible in order to facilitate mental changing and to facilitate the crisis management. The installation of the Gender Equality Council is being planned at the same level.

9. Conclusion

The Hungarian Defence Forces have realised the importance of fully integrating women, and are working military women's issues, concerns, such as career development, professional training.

The Committee on Equal Opportunities of the Hungarian Defence Forces is charged with reporting to the Chief of Defence and providing information and exchanging ideas with leadership and personnel in subordinate units regarding the situation of women carrying out professional and contracted military service.

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