

**NATIONAL REPORT FROM TURKEY
ON WOMEN IN THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES
OTTAWA/CANADA-2003**

1. POLICY CHANGES/NEW POLICIES:

The personnel policy of Turkish Armed Forces about women as to keep up with the technological developments is based on the principle that “female officers of suitable rank, service and status are needed.”

To provide the continuity of services being in the uniform during the time of war and peace, female or male civilian personnel are being employed to headquarters, technical fields, and social organizations, according to the characterization of jobs without any sexual discrimination.

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

At this scope the following improvements are done:

A. Legal amendments related to maternity were taken into effect in 1998. According to the new implementation, a total of nine weeks of paid leave is authorized, three weeks of which is prior to, and six weeks after giving birth. In case of request, six months of unpaid leave may also be given. Furthermore, female officers are entitled to 1,5 hours of breast-feeding leave each day for 6 months.

B. By the changes accomplished on related regulations of the Navy, the female officers documented to be pregnant by health report are immediately taken from active on-board duty and they are 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 24th week. After giving birth, female officers may commence their flight duties with health report, or may use their leaves in case the flight doctor finds suitable.

D. In parallel with these implementations, spouses are taken into consideration for the assignments of female officers married to colleagues, so utmost care given to the co-location of families.

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

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

2. ORGANISATION:

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

In the scope of related studies, the employment of contracted woman NCOs is going to start as of 30 August 2003.

As of the year 2003, the number of female officers in the Turkish Armed Forces is 1046. The distributions of these officers according to their fields of duty and forces are as follows:

FIELDS OF DUTIES	ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE	GENDARMERIE	TOTAL
COMBAT UNITS	31	58	77	7	173
ASSISTANT FORCES	542	157	144	30	873
TOTAL	573	215	221	37	1.046

The rank distribution of female officers is as follows:

RANKS	ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE	GENDARMERIE	TOTAL
GENERAL/ADMIRAL	-	-	-	-	-
COLONEL	3	3	-	-	6
LT COLONEL	5	3	2	-	10
MAJOR	28	15	11	-	54
CAPTAIN	212	57	47	6	322
1 st LIEUTENANT	255	104	98	22	479
2 nd LIEUTENANT	70	33	63	9	175
NCO RANKS	-	-	-	-	-
CORPORAL/PRIVATE	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	573	215	221	37	1.046

3. EMPLOYMENT:

Turkish female officers serve in all branches except Armour, infantry and submarine 69 women are currently being trained as jet and helicopter pilot. Assignment, promotions and training are considered on an equal basis with no gender bias.

4. RECRUITMENT:

Currently, the percentage of female cadets admitted to the military schools is limited to 4% of the total number of cadets. Women enter the Turkish Military on a voluntary basis. There is no conscription for female personnel. No formal planning has been made in terms of commencing to recruit women as NCOs or corporal-privates, because Turkey's manpower structure does not have any scarcity of resource regarding male population.

5. TRAINING:

Equal opportunity applies to women and men in terms of training also. Training is provided in military academies and other institutions of military education. While all entrance tests, except the physical proficiency test, are conducted under equal conditions with male candidates, basic training and leadership are provided to both genders.

There are basically three sources for commissioning; The Military Academies, Gülhane Military Faculty of Medicine, and civil source.

In 2002-2003 education year, the number of women cadets educated in military schools is 205. University graduate female officers joining the military from the civil source undergo a 3-months basic training course together with the male candidates. Both men and women receive the same training regimen and train 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 training within the scope of their respective force commands. Having completed all these training with success, our female officers commence their duties.

6. DEPLOYMENTS:

Turkish service women have been deployed in support of IFOR, KFOR and SFOR as nurses in a special medical unit, in peacekeeping operations.

Gender difference is not an issue for assignments in such peacekeeping operations. All of the 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 and they are not needed, either. Female officers are oriented to their duties, when they commence the duties. Female officers, like their male colleagues, are subject to various courses and training programs regarding their respective duties from time to time. Leadership programs are among these.

8. SPECIAL SUBJECT / EVENTS OF INTEREST (RECENT AND PROJECTED DEVELOPMENTS):

Turkish Armed Forces is continuing the works emphasizing on changes and improvements for advantage of women in the female officers policy in accordance with necessities.

9. CONCLUSION:

We gladly see that opportunities and conditions available to Turkish female officers are continuously improving. As Turkish female officers, we are continuing 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 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.