



**Vasil Levski National Military University
and the European initiative for the exchange
of young officers inspired by Erasmus
Veliko Tarnovo, BULGARIA**

**The 2nd Erasmus+ Staff Mobility (STT) Gender Seminar
held at Vasil Levski National Military University
9 to 11 October 2019
Draft minutes**

From 9 to 11 October 2019 Vasil Levski NMU hosted the 2nd Erasmus+ Gender Seminar on gender equality in the armed forces. The event was held within the framework of the European initiative for the exchange of young officers inspired by Erasmus and was the logical follow-up to the events and meetings organised by the initiative over the last 18 months.

As stated in the General Annual Report on lessons learned from the European Security and Defence College's activities, 'During the iMAF 2018 at NUPS in Budapest it was agreed to find possibilities to devote more attention to gender issues within European basic officer education. As a result, the first Erasmus-Staff Training Gender Seminar was organised by the Theresan Military Academy in Wiener Neustadt from 27 to 29 September 2018, with 17 participants coming from ten military institutions and the ESDC. The aim of the seminar was mainly to reflect on possible measures to increase the number of female cadets recruited for basic officer education and a "white paper" was issued listing the measures identified.' (GAREA 2018-19 Promoting the Common Security and Defence Culture, ESDC, 2019-
www.emilyo.eu/node/874)

The next step was to create new lines of development (LoD) during the Implementation Group (IG) meeting on 9 November 2018 in Athens where the ESDC Secretariat suggested setting up LoD 10 on Gender Mainstreaming. At the following IG meetings in Brussels the LoD 10 discussions took place as part of the working mechanism of the initiative.

One of the ideas of the LoD 10 subgroup members during the syndicate's work was to continue with arranging the gender seminar in order to concentrate efforts to implement the WPS agenda and discuss gender issues in basic military education in the EU military academies. Another reason discussed in the syndicate, which requires serious attention in the armed forces, is the gender stereotyping that still exists in European countries, and the need to raise awareness and consideration of this topic, especially in the armed forces. An indication of this is the small number of respondents to the questionnaire dealing with policies for gender equality training at European military academies, which was developed as one of the first activities of LoD 10.

The participants in the 2nd Erasmus+ Staff Mobility (STT) Gender Seminar were 19 military staff and civilians from six countries, as follows:

Institution	Country	Participants
TMA, EU Implementation Group	Austria	1
European Security and Defence College	Belgium	1
Romanian Police Academy	Romania	1
Nicolae Bălcescu Land Forces Academy	Romania	1
Estonian Military Academy	Estonia	3
Ministry of defence	Bulgaria	1
Naval Academy	Bulgaria	1
Vasil Levski NMU	Bulgaria	10

The seminar was officially opened by the Rector of Vasil Levski NMU, Col. Ivan Malamov, who welcomed the participants to the historical and spiritual capital of Bulgaria, and emphasised the fact that he was quite

impressed by the large number of events that are being proposed and carried out to harmonise European military education.

A welcome speech was given by IG Chairman Col. Assoc. Prof. Harold Gell, PhD, from TMA – Austria. He briefly went through the main aspects of the work of the European initiative for the exchange of young officers inspired by Erasmus, stressed the importance of the development and activities of each LoD, and also focused on the significant progress of the past few years that is due to the increasing number of institutions getting involved in the events offered by the initiative. Col. Gell emphasised that one of the goals and future recommendations based on the legal framework of the Security Council of EU decisions is connected to the increased need for women in the military. The EU strategic approach underlines the importance of systematic implementation of the gender perspective in all fields concerning peace and security. The EU's external actions have to include more women in missions and operations; however, these women first need to receive training.

On behalf of the ESDC, Symeon Zambas greeted the audience and also drew attention to the positive affect of female participation in EU missions and operations. Lt.Col. Zambas stated that the ESDC cooperates with different organisations in relation to the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda and due to this fact many specialised courses are being developed, including a comprehensive approach to gender in operation, a gender perspective in CSDP, and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence in conflict environments.

Guest speaker Assoc. Professor Elitsa Petrova, DSc. from Vasil Levski NMU was invited to present her research achievements under the title 'Motivational salience and satisfaction with training in the field of security and defence, following the example of higher education institutions in Europe'.

All participants in the seminar presented their material on policies related to gender training in their respective military academies, and shared practices and lessons learned from the increasing number of women in various positions in the armed forces.

- Colonel Assoc. Prof. Harald Gell, PhD - Gender equality implementation & education in my institution (Theresan Military Academy), Austria;
- First Lieutenant Elisaveta STANEVA - Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy, Varna, Bulgaria;
- Captain Anna ORAS - Gender equality in EDF and EMA, Estonia;
- Isabela-Anda DRAGOMIR - Gender perspectives and military effectiveness, Romania;
- Col. Assoc. Prof. Nicolae GROFU, PhD - Gender Equality in Alexandru Ioan Cuza Police Academy Bucharest, Romania;
- Colonel Assoc. Prof. Nevena Atanasova-Krasteva, PhD - Gender equality implementation in the European military universities, Bulgaria.

All presentations provoked questions and sharing of opinions which continued as an in-depth discussion and led to a certain number of conclusions and suggestions made.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING



Conclusion: All states and defence ministries should respond adequately to the demands of the modern environment in military academies and universities and offer trainees attractive and interesting educational modules.

The LoD 10 subgroup agreed on the following goal:

Each graduate of the basic military officer education institutions needs to know why women should serve in the Armed Forces.

Reasons:

- UNSC Resolution 1325 – Women, peace and security;
- EU Council conclusions.

To achieve the goal, the LoD 10 subgroup decided:

- To organise a *Train the Trainers* course;
- To create a common module '*Gender Mainstreaming*' with potential support from ESDC e-learning;
- To prepare a *Gender Equality Implementation Questionnaire* in order to research the cadet's opinion concerning gender issues in EU military academies.

The LoD 10 subgroup proposed:

- To organise the next LoD 10 meeting at Estonia's military academy – TBC;
- To organise Train the Trainers seminars - TBD at the next IG Meeting in Bucharest - December 2019;
- The group will meet four to six times a year (four IG Meetings, iMAF and LoD 10 seminar).

To support the conclusions of the LoD 10 subgroup, we also apply a statement from the Council conclusions adopted on 10 December 2018 on women, peace and security (WPS):

‘The Council reaffirms that the WPS Agenda aims to ensure that the rights, agency, and protection of women and girls are always observed and upheld before, during and after conflict. [...] It will also be achieved by implementing specific measures, including training of military and police forces, aimed at gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.’

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

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Subject: Women, Peace and Security

Council conclusions (10 December 2018)

LoD10 Chairperson Colonel Assoc. Prof. Nevena Atanasova-Krasteva, PhD from Vasil Levski NMU closed the meeting.

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