



6th Edition of the

MILITARY GENDER STUDIES SEMINAR

Good Practices and Role Models - Military Gender Challenges

3-4 April, 2025



Colonel Assoc. Prof. Nevena Atanasova – Krasteva, PhD

LoD 10 Gender Mainstreaming Chairperson,

European initiative for the exchange of young officers inspired by Erasmus,



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Introduction

“At the current rate of progress, it will take another **131** years to achieve gender equality in the world, **67** if we look at Europe.

An acceleration is therefore needed, working on policies that incentivise women working and breaking down gender stereotypes also through the promotion of female role models.”



*Paola Profeta,
'Changed by Women'*



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So what does the data actually tells us?

Less than a quarter of countries are making 'fast' progress towards gender equality. One in every three countries is either making no progress at all or is moving in the wrong direction.



Source: Equal Measures 2030

Only 4.6% of aid funding goes to programs where gender equality is the main objective.

Source: UN Women



Despite progress, only 26% of countries have a comprehensive system to track gender budget allocations.

Source: UN Stats



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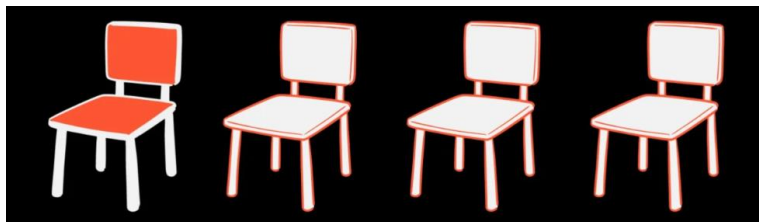
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So what does the data actually tells us?

Globally, more than **1 in every 10 women and girls** aged between 15-49 have been subjected to sexual and/or physical violence by an intimate partner in 2021.

Source: [UN Stats](#)



Worldwide, women hold just **27%** of parliamentary seats.

Source: [UN Women](#)



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The good news.....

The global gender gap has been closed by **68.4%**. More than half of countries worldwide are moving in the **right direction** on gender equality.

In 2023, **9 countries** had closed at least 80% of their gender gaps:

Iceland (91.2%)

Norway (87.9%)

Finland (86.3%)

New Zealand (85.6%)

Sweden (81.5%)

Germany (81.5%)

Nicaragua (81.1%)

Namibia (80.2%)

Lithuania (80%)



Source: World Economic Forum



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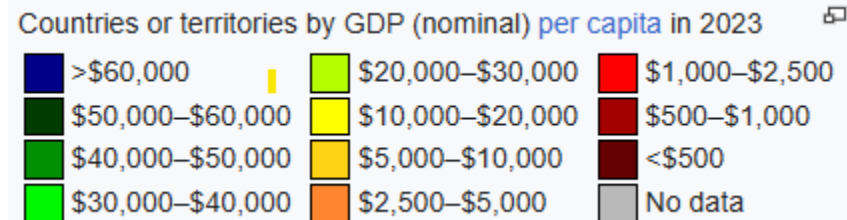
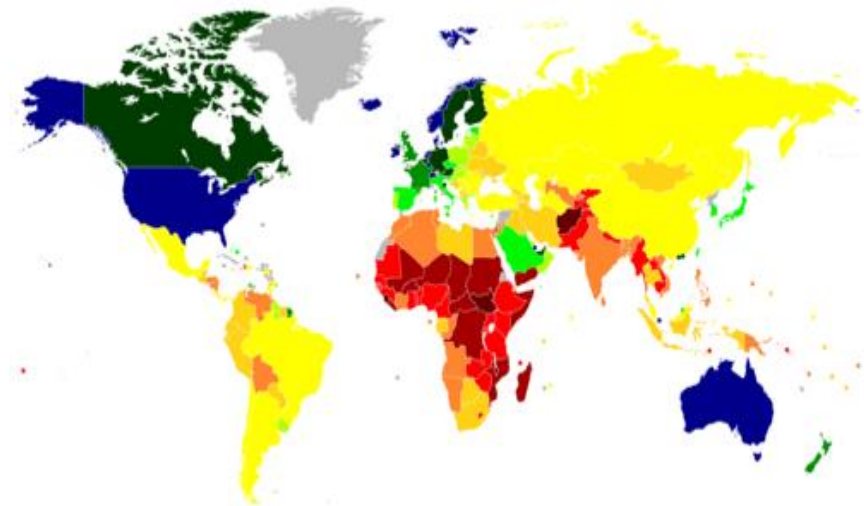
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Goal 5 of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda is to "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls."

Investing in gender equality therefore means not only achieving higher levels of GDP (Gross domestic product), but also the wellbeing and prosperity of current and future generations in a context of increasingly scarce resources.





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What are the key steps to achieving this goal?



Gender education is a necessary part curricula at all levels of the education system, which would enable both girls and boys, women and men to understand how constructions of masculinities and femininities and models for assigning social roles – which shape our societies – influence their lives, relationships, life choices, career trajectories, etc.

Academic sector

• Universities

- subject „Gender studies” on **bachelor degree** at Masaryk University in Brno (Faculty of Social Sciences), on **master degree** at Charles University in Prague (Department of Gender Studies at Faculty of Humanities)
- **formal education**





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What are the key steps to achieving this goal?



The benefits of **gender-balanced leadership** are well known: selection is better (including of men), performance can increase, the decision-making agenda changes and becomes not only more effective but often more inclusive, creating space for policies and measures that can in turn promote gender equality.



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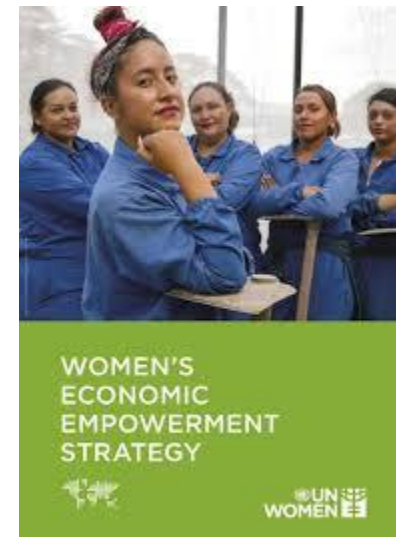
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What are the key steps to achieving this goal?

It's not about changing women but about leveraging what women bring to the table.

As far as leadership, **role models** play an even more important role: women at the top of companies, politics, institutions and universities represent not only a possibility, but an achievement, an incentive for young women and all women, a change in the culture of families, companies and institutions, a challenge and a victory over gender stereotypes in every context.





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Why role models in gender diversity work?

Role models are an incredibly effective way to encourage women to make different choices - their effect is based on the concept '**Seeing is believing**', and interestingly this works at multiple levels.



Women get inspired

Men see women can do it

Peers and parents see different possibilities



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How to get role models in gender diversity right

- Choose a role model that is close
 - men can be role models for women too;
- Make the 'way to get there' visible;
- Make the 'way women work' visible;
- Show a variety of role models;
- Ensure there is something in it for the role model





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Gender Equality and Diversity in the Armed Forces

The Armed Forces has been considered for a long time as an only male profession, despite that women are joining more and more the military, stereotypes still prevail. Consequently, substantial change in the Armed Forces cannot be achieved.

According to an opinion provided by the FEMM Committee of the European Parliament to the annual CSDP report **only 5% of women** participate in CSDP military missions, while there are no female commanders of CSDP military missions





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Gender Challenges in the Armed Forces



Women in the European militaries face cases of bullying, sexual assault and/or harassment, equipment and uniforms not suitable for female soldiers, while female military personnel do not reach as often high-ranking positions, as their male counterparts.

EUROMIL survey



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Gender education, good practices and role models



People joining the Armed Forces should also receive **specialized education** on the issues of gender equality and diversity in militaries.

By having more women joining the military, the **Armed Forces will become more robust**, will gain more high skilled and educated personnel—especially in conflict resolution and peace building, while changing the military culture that remains a patriarchal one.



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CONCLUSION

Providing **equal opportunities to military personnel** – regardless of gender – to reach higher ranking positions, adequate equipment and uniforms to female personnel, and drastically tackling issues of harassment and sexual assault in the military should become a priority.



More work is needed and **cooperation between different actors** to achieve substantial results and significantly change the deep-rooted stereotypes and mentality around women in the Armed Forces.



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Thank you for your attention!

