



6th Erasmus+ Gender Studies Seminar

"Good Practices and Role Models – Military Gender Challenges"

"Reflections on Gender Equality in the Armed Forces"

03 April 2025



"GOOD PRACTICES AND ROLE MODELS: MILITARY GENDER CHALLENGES"



"Reflections on Gender Equality in the Armed Forces"

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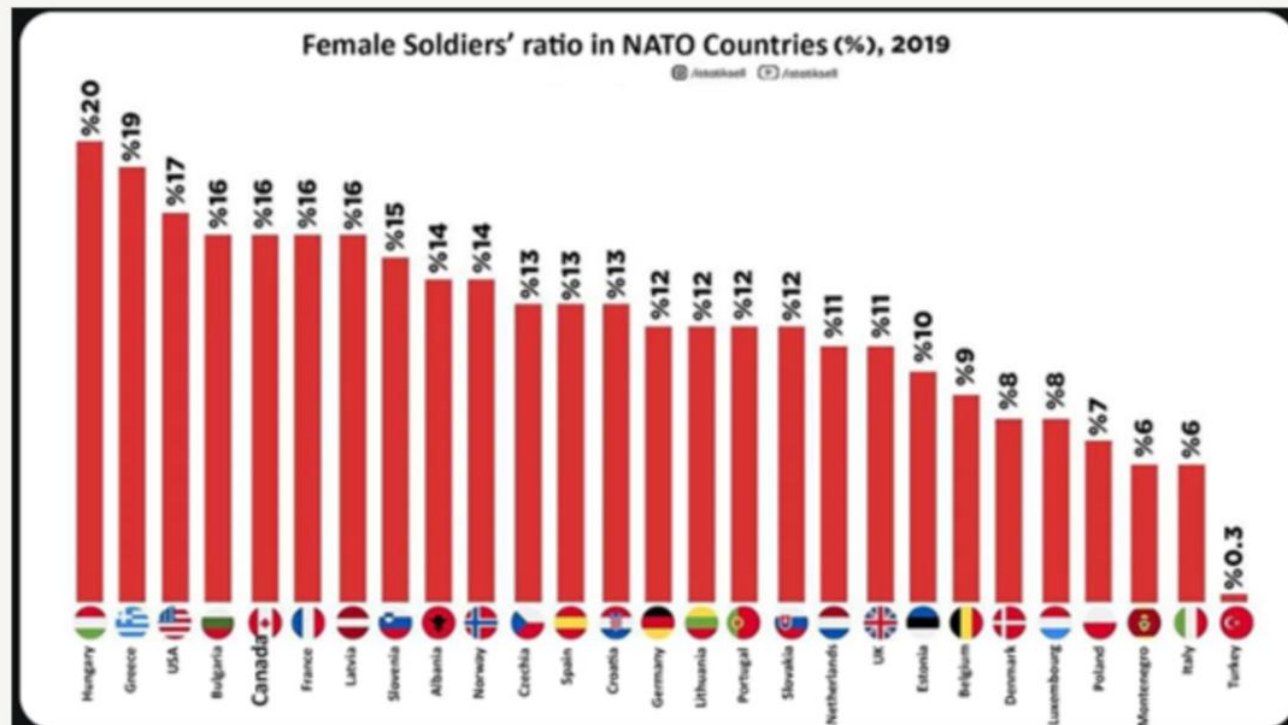
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"In recent decades, the presence of women in the Armed Forces has expanded, rebalancing the distribution between support and combat functions, thus favouring the dilution of boundaries that are currently still invoked to limit women's access to a vast set of specialties and tasks." (Carreiras, 1999)



source: https://www.reddit.com/r/Military/comments/puaffv/female_soldiers_ratio_in_nato_countries/





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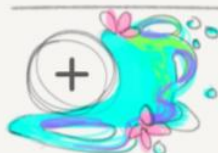


RESEARCH



Yo Thomson et al. (2021): "Highlights ongoing barriers for women in military leadership roles."

o McNay (2015): "Discusses freedom and women's rights advancements in military sectors."



o Zimmermann, S. (2002): "Explores global perspectives on gender equality in the armed forces."

Sources:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/breaking-barriers-female-leadership-change-management-adebowale-pmkee/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1Q6jgSZAM>

<https://euromilborq/gender-equality-and-diversity-in-the-armed-forces/>



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Real Stories from Women in the Military

Unequal Opportunities

Sexual Harassment and Assault

Lack of Support



Lack of Representation

Stereotypes and Prejudices

"Research highlight progress in gender equality, but challenges persist regarding access to some specialties." (Thomson et al., 2021; McNay, 2015)

source: https://www.reddit.com/r/Military/comments/pugffv/female_soldiers_ratio_in_nato_countries/



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EQUALITY POLICIES



"Equality policies challenge social practices and institutional structures that perpetuate gender imbalances. It is essential to redefine processes, creating space for the equitable involvement of men and women." (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2019)



Decision

Negotiation

Fight

Communicate

Team Work



Sources:

<https://bootcampmilitaryfitnessinstitute.com/2024/12/10/mental-and-physical-synergy-in-military-training/>

<https://www.npr.org/2015/03/25/395279171/can-female-marines-carry-the-load-and-kill-the-enemy>

https://www.army.mil/article/95489/departments_of_defense_opens_ground_combat_roles_to_female_servicemembers



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GENDER DYNAMICS

"Military institutions are microcosms of broader gender dynamics, with rules and values rooted in a traditionally masculine culture." (Carreiras, 2004)





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ROLE OF MILITARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Training Cadets



Training cadets is crucial for promoting gender integration in future military generations



source: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits>





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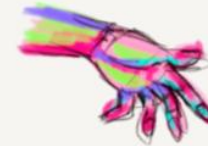
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ROLE OF MILITARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Steps for Training



Monitoring the application of equality policies is fundamental for progress

source: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits>





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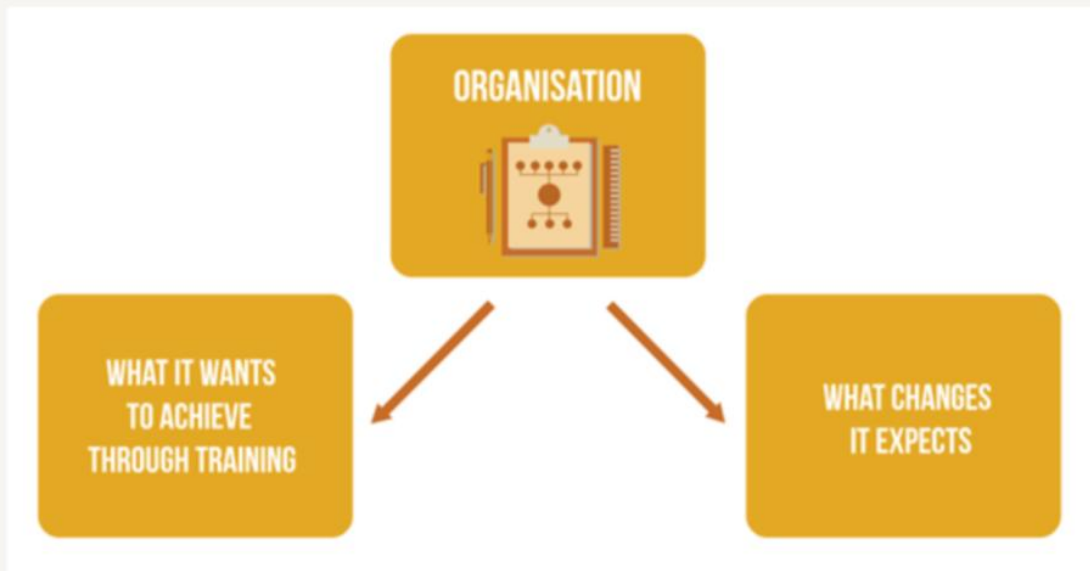
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ROLE OF MILITARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

changing Process



source: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits>



Cadet Training influences
Gender Integration



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MGS PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND IMPACT

"The Military Gender Studies (MGS) Project aims to increase knowledge about gender in European military institutions, addressing diverse realities."



MGS PROJECT TEAM



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PARTNERS

The MGS Project was coordinated by Portugal, and the partners are Bulgaria, Italy and Romania.



Portugal (Coordinator)



Academia Militar



Bulgaria (Partner)



Vasil Levski Military University



Italy (Partner)



Università Degli Studi Di Torino



Romania (Partner)



Nicolae Balcescu Land Forces Academy





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RELEVANCE OF CONTINUOUS STUDIES...





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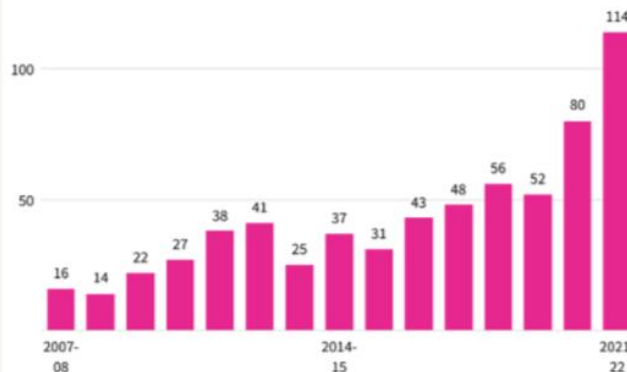
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RELEVANCE OF CONTINUOUS STUDIES...

- "Research on harassment, feminism, and post-traumatic stress is essential to improving the military experience for women."
(Carreiras, 2004)

Military academies received a record 114 restricted reports of sexual assault in the 2021–22 school year.

Restricted reports of sexual assault received by the military service academies, school years 2007–08 to 2021–22

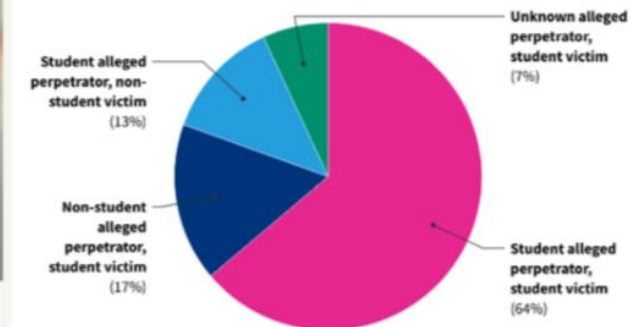


Source: Department of Defense

USA FACTS

Most restricted reports involved military academy students as victims and alleged perpetrators.

Share of restricted sexual assault reports received by the military services academies by victim and perpetrator status, academic years 2019–20 to 2021–22



Source: Department of Defense

USA FACTS





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RELEVANCE OF CONTINUOUS STUDIES...

Can we Prevent Sexual Harassment in the Military?

- **YES!** By implementing repercussions for sexual harassment
- **YES!** By investigating every report
- **YES!** By providing a clear definition for sexual harassment
- **YES!** With the right policies and procedures for all staff



Sexual harassment in the military

“Sexual harassment is more common in military than civilian life.”

British army (2015). "Sexual harassment report 2015". gov.uk.

Canada, 2018: 28%

France, 2021: 37% W / 18% M

Germany, 2014: 55% W / 12% M

United Kingdom, 2021: 35% W

United States, 2018: 24.2% W

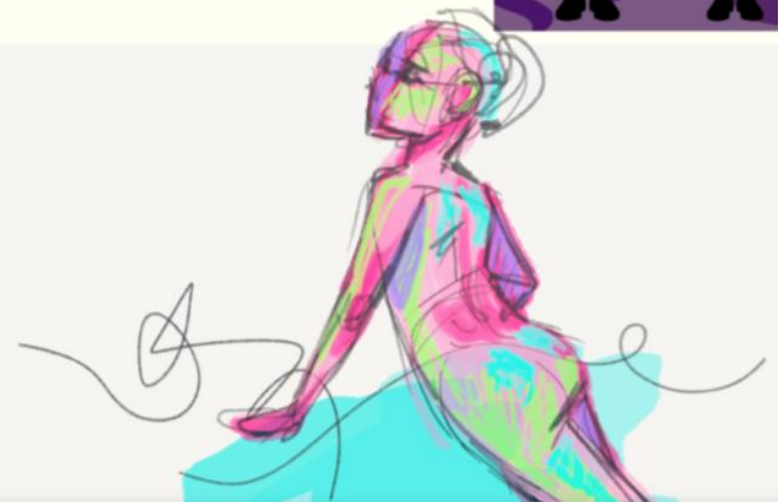


Knowing what sexual harassment in the military is...
is half way to avoiding it

Studies show that incidences go unreported because of the masculine culture at work and fear of retaliation.



The effects of sexual harassment include trauma, anxiety, and embarrassment, making it difficult to speak about.





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2020 - 2023



WAY
AHEAD

2025 - 2028

Combating GBV (SUBMITTED)
and
Discrimination

Promoting
Inclusion
and Equity

Enhancing
Training

MGA

(Military
Gender
Awareness)

Addressing
Transnational
Challenges

Enhancing
Community
Impact

Teaching Staff

Military Cadets

Communities



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CONCLUSIONS



"It is essential to continue promoting gender equality in the Armed Forces, valuing research and best practices."

Questions to reflect ...

- How can we create more inclusive spaces in military institutions?"
- What are the most effective ways to promote gender equality in the military?"





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THANK YOU!
QUESTIONS?

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