

## **UNSCR 1325 report 2010**

The Hague, April 2011

### **Introduction**

The participation of women began in 1944, when the Dutch Women's Corps was formed in the United Kingdom during the Second World War. The Corps initially comprised several hundred Dutch women who had fled the Netherlands during those years. Later, the Corps was divided into three separate Women's Corps, one for each branch of the Armed Forces: the MARVA (Navy), the MILVA (Army), and the LUVA (Air Force). In January 1979, the integration policy for women in the armed forces commenced when female personnel was assigned to the various arms and branches of the three Services (Army, Navy and Air Force). The integration policy was inspired by the UN Committee on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). There were no longer any solid reasons for maintaining several separate female Corps, and so by 1 January 1982, the Women's Corps were disbanded.

Since 1988, the Services have been implementing various measures as part of the "Positive Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into the Armed Forces and Equal Opportunities Memorandum". These measures include increasing female recruitment, adjusting (when possible) selection criteria, implementing career policies, providing physical training, making ergonomic adjustments, regulating part-time work, maternity leave, parental leave and child-care, and enforcing the rules for the prevention of undesirable conduct. The Defence Equal Policy Memorandum of 1997 is the last approved memorandum and is still valid.

This report will outline the status of the integration of women into the Dutch armed forces. Current activities, initiatives and gender issues will be covered.

### **Policy**

Many policy memorandums and measures in the domain of equal opportunities (and later gender policy) date from the nineteen-eighties and nineties. Although there were plenty of ideas and measures present in the Defence organisation, there were no success stories. As a consequence, a number of additional measures and initiatives were taken.

The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 on 'Women, Peace and Security' in October 2000. The resolution calls for the role of women to be increased in the planning, preparation, decision-making and execution with regard to peace missions, and for more attention to be paid to the effects on women of conflicts and peace operations. The resolution provides a general framework for the integration of gender aspects into policy surrounding international peace and security. The government's view to 'gender mainstreaming'<sup>1</sup> was established in 2001. Gender mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes in such a way that the perspective of gender equality is integrated into all policy.

Preconditions in this regard are as follows:

- commitment at the senior level;
- explicit gender policy with clear objectives and responsibilities;

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<sup>1</sup> Government Viewpoint on Gender Mainstreaming, a strategy of quality improvement, Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, June 2001.

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- availability of gender expertise, and
- availability of resources and instruments.

UN Resolution 1325 and the government's view on gender mainstreaming ensured that equal opportunities policy was given new impetus in the form of gender policy.

Commitment at the senior level was put into practise by the appointment of gender ambassadors at the second highest level in the Defence organisation in the autumn of 2002. Gender ambassadors are the deputy commanders-in-chief of the Services, and have the special task of keeping attention on the subject of gender in their Service. They act as point of contact for gender-related matters. Explicit gender policy with clear objectives (such as a target 30% female intake of the armed forces) and responsibilities for the gender ambassadors was drawn up in the autumn of 2004 in the gender action plan. To be able to reserve sufficient resources for the implementation of these policy objectives, the ministry of Defence applied for a grant from the European Social Fund (ESF-EQUAL). The grant would fund a three-year project on gender policy in the Defence organisation called Genderforce. The grant was approved at the end of 2004.

The Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence are responsible for the implementation of Resolution 1325. In 2002, A civil service working group assessed whether there was a need for new policy in order to properly implement the resolution. The working group concluded that there was attention for women and gender issues in many areas and that work was necessary at unit level, only with a view to the further embedding in Foreign and Defence policy. These conclusions were submitted to the House of Representatives in a joint report on 26 March 2003. The report identified the following issues for the Defence organisation:

1. gender needs to be embedded in training and instruction;
2. the gender perspective needs to be integrated into peace operations;
3. gender mainstreaming;
4. a well-balanced composition of male/female Defence employees needs to be achieved; this is to include deployments.

These issues led to a change of direction. First, focus shifted from the equal opportunities process in personnel policy to gender in operations. The four above mentioned points became the subprojects in our policies. Second, focus shifted from policy development to policy implementation.

These shifts in focus took form in project Genderforce. Genderforce connects gender with the core task of the Defence organisation: making a contribution to national and international peace and security. The Defence organisation is convinced that an effective gender policy contributes to an improved execution of its core tasks. The Defence organisation's gender policy aims to achieve a more balanced and more diverse workforce and the optimal use of individuals' different qualities. The enforcement of peace and security in an unstable environment sometimes requires aggressive and unequivocal action, but at other times requires lending a sympathetic ear to local groups. Experience has shown that mixed units are better at dealing with complex situations and possess greater mental strength. The Defence organisation needs to have a good gender balance for dealing with crisis management operations and, in a more general

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sense, to remain an attractive employer. Fifty percent of the labour market consists of female potential and the Defence organisation would be foolish not to try to utilise that potential talent. Finally, the various international agreements on the subject of gender, particularly UN Security Council resolution 1325, make Genderforce important.

In April 2008, Genderforce officially ended, but the effort for gender activities has not.

In December 2008 the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence organised a symposium about gender in operations on the first anniversary of the Dutch National Action Plan 1325. One outcome of the symposium is that gender should become an integral part of missions (preparation, deployment and evaluation). Other outcomes were:

1. Additional Gender Expertise is needed
2. Gender experts need to be sent on missions more often
3. More female interpreters are needed (especially in Afghanistan)
4. A follow up-meeting will be held in December 2009

In the Defence organisation a shift in focus started from specific gender policy to a more general diversity policy. The Gender ambassadors became not only responsible for Gender but they are responsible for the full integration of ethnic minorities and the acceptance of homosexuality within the Dutch Armed Forces.

Since this first symposium on gender in operations, the ministry of defence and foreign affairs combined their efforts and a yearly symposium has been organised. Besides these symposia the two ministries work together on specific gender training for their key leaders.

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**Organisation**

The Dutch armed forces are a voluntary professional organisation. Dutch servicewomen are integrated into the units and serve under the same rules and regulations as men. Requirements on training standards, performance levels and discipline are equal. Servicemen and women have the same obligation to serve in the event of mobilisation.

	Goals 2012	Realisation <i>December 2008</i>	<i>Realisation</i> <i>December 2009</i>	Realisation <i>July 2009</i>
Female military	12%	9%	9%	9%
LTZ1/major	8%	6%	6%	7%
Colonel	3%	2%	2%	3%
Female civilian	30%	24%	23%	24%
schale 10	20%	17%	18%	19%
schale 14	9%	8%	8%	10%
Total Female on entry level	30%	13% military 38% civilian	12% military 36% civilian	9% military 30% civilian

**Current PERCENTAGES (DATA from December 2010) of total force by service:**

	Total % of female military personnel	% of female flag officers	% of female senior officers	% of female junior officers	% of female NCO	% female of soldiers lower rank than NCO
<b>Army</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Air Force</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Navy</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Marechaussee (Military Police)</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

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**Current PERCENTAGES (DATA from December 2010) of female soldiers in operations:**

	Total % of female military personnel	% of female flag officers	% of female senior officers	% of female junior officers	% of female NCO	% female of soldiers lower rank than NCO
<b>Army</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Air Force</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Navy</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Marechaussee (Military Police)</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18</b>

**Recruitment**

The Defence organisation has vast recruiting requirements. In order to fulfil those requirements, a number of additional measures were necessary. One measure is to ensure that job requirements correspond with the selection requirements. At present, the selection requirements are often higher than job requirements. Improving the connection between these requirements is expected to lead to more candidates found suitable for the Defence organisation.

The recruitment objective is achieved by specific recruitment in target groups that do not traditionally apply for a job with the armed forces. Consequently, special recruitment campaigns are being set up specifically to recruit young women. At the same time, at the ministry of Defence looks at designing campaigns that appeal to both men and women. The recruitment target for females is set at 30% for the armed forces in total.

- Entrance criteria to Military Academies, Colleges

**Army/Airforce/Military Police**

- Have the Netherlands citizenship
- At least 17 years old
- Height men 155 cm, women 150 cm
- Weight men 55 kilo, women 50 kilo
- Healthy body and mind
- Athletic, teamplayer, flexible,
- Finished pre university education or senior general secondary education
- Be prepared to be deployed

**Naval Academy**

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- have the Netherlands citizenship
- at least 17 years old
- height: between 160 and 200 cm
- weight: at least 50 Maximum men: height – 100 + 5 % of the total, women: height – 100 + 10 % of the total
- medical and psychological demands
- Finished pre university education or senior general secondary education

- **New Gender Policy**

Women with children under the age of 5 are not obliged to be deployed, unless there is an operational necessity (for males the age is set for children under the age of 1); financial compensation for the day nursery during deployment; women will be part of all selection and advisory committees.

- **New recruitment initiatives**

Women sailing and survival days; special female officers for recruitment; providing of information and recruitment on career events especially for women and events visited by influentials of young women.

### **Retention programs**

The retention of women is one of the main issues for a more balanced proportion of male/female Defence personnel. To make sure that women stay in the organisation, a number of projects are developed, for example the mentor-mentee programme. Providing more female role models in visible and influential positions is aimed at improving the retention of women. Examples of influential positions are those of instructor, senior staff NCO or head of a division. With this programme young women will be able to identify with women in the senior NCOs' and officers' ranks.

The Dutch armed forces have chosen to pursue an integrated career policy for men and women. However, individual needs of female military personnel, especially with regard to their careers, is being taken into consideration, trying to promote the careers of females and limit the outflow of women. In 2005 the first female general was appointed, and in 2007 the second. This can be viewed as a success of our gender policies.

To increase the upward mobility, the target figures for 2010 for servicewomen in higher ranks have been revised to 6% from the rank of major and to 3% from the rank of colonel.

- **New gender policy**

Every year at least two female officers will start with the Higher Defence Career Development Course (HDV). Placement and deployment when both partners work for the military will be more aligned. When possible females will be placed in pairs in military units. In 2009 a pilot has started to offer part time career development courses. In 2010 the first 19 officers graduated from the part-time middle career development course.

- **Areas forbidden for female soldiers**

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With the exception of the Marine Corps and the Submarine Service, all posts are available to women. These two Services have remained closed to women for reasons of combat effectiveness and practicality.

- The most popular programs or disciplines chosen by female applicants in military academies

Most military women serve in the medical or logistic units.

### **Training**

Female military personnel receive the same physical training as their male counterparts. The armed forces have additional physical training programmes for men and women who have difficulty in this area. Young people in the pre-recruitment phase are given the opportunity to upgrade their physical status at local sports facilities. These courses seem to have had a positive result on the recruitment of women.

Training is related to functional requirements. Therefore, women and men must meet the same physical standards. Several studies are being conducted to find a better solution to optimise training efforts in relation to functional requirements. One major step taken in this area is the introduction of new ergonomic designs of tasks and equipment to reduce physical requirements without diminishing operational readiness.

### **Deployments (i.e. peacebuilding operations, peacekeeping operations etc.)**

Female military personnel have the same opportunities to develop their career as male military personnel (except in the Marine Corps and the Submarine Service). Dutch servicewomen have participated in various mission areas all over the world. The rotations mostly last 4 to 6 months. According to regulations, "the military personnel of the armed forces, both men and women, serve under the obligation to be fit for duty abroad. Deployment is not on a voluntary basis. Women with one or more children under the age of five are not deployed abroad, unless operational reasons make it absolutely necessary."

When assessing the objective of deployments, the gender perspective is emphatically included in the considerations. This means that attention is paid to the effects of a Dutch deployment on women and men in the unit to be deployed, as well as on local women and men. Attention is also paid to involving women in the process of peace-promoting activities and reconstruction, and to ensuring that women and girls are protected from sexual violence and acts of war.

In order to properly harmonise policy and the practical situation, various working conferences have been held, involving military personnel from the operational staffs of all armed forces units, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. One of the aims was to implement Resolution 1325 in the deployment to Iraq by consciously employing female military personnel in, for example, house-to-house searches and roadblocks. In practice, this appeared to have an extremely favourable influence on relations with the local population.

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During the reconnaissance mission for the operation in Afghanistan, gender aspects were included as an item, and a specific briefing on gender was given during the formation and activation orders. The conclusions of the above findings must be disseminated in the organisation. There is a need for a (standard) checklist that can be used during reconnaissance missions and preparations for an operation.

To shape this checklist, Genderforce proposed to set up a pilot project in which a gender-expert looks at the issue of crisis management operations, by joining such an operation on a temporary basis. The gender expert gave advice indicating how the integration of gender aspects can improve the quality and effectiveness of an operation. By the end of 2007 the gender checklist was approved and is now in use.

In the other Services women serve in various positions in headquarters staffs, combat units and support units. However, there is still a disproportionate number of women in certain branches, which could be considered traditionally female, such as the medical services, military administration units, logistics and communications units. There are hardly any women in branches which might be considered traditionally male, such as combat units, technical services and maintenance units.

### **Gender Advisor**

In October 2009 NATO started with a post for (the first official) a gender advisor at ISAF Joint Command (IJC). The Dutch armed forces volunteered to fill this post and sent their first gender advisor in October 2009. This has generated field experience and knowledge we can build on. In 2010 The Netherlands deployed two officers to EUFOR ALTHEA in Bosnia Herzegovina who were assigned as Gender Focal Points. This completely different mission also adds valuable field experience.

### **Career Development**

- Mentoring programmes

Under the mentor-programme for women, women are matched with a more senior, often male colleague in a management position, and the two undergo a career-supporting programme as a 'pair'. An evaluation shows that the mentor programme has a positive effect on women. Their network is expanded and they have the opportunity to reflect with commanders in the organisation. The effect on commanders who act as mentors is that the women in the organisation become more visible to them, and they gain greater insight into working in the Defence organisation from a minority position. In October 2009 a new mentor-mentee programme started for female non-commissioned officers.

- Education and awareness programs available

In 2007 the development of gender training packages started. These packages are implemented in the training courses for the military personnel at all levels. The aim is to enhance expertise on gender aspects amongst military personnel. During the project, programmes are drawn up in cooperation with the training centres of the several units of the Dutch armed forces. In addition to the programme, the training environment is of great importance. Therefore, 380 trainers and instructors have followed a train-the-trainer programme.

### **Special Interest Items/Events**



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At international women's day 2010 a special magazine was released, which describes the past, current and future of women in the Dutch military services, our gender policy, as well as personal stories and anecdotes of female military employees. The magazine is sent to all the women of the Dutch Armed Forces.

**Conclusion**

The Dutch Defence organisation remains actively involved in embedding the subject of gender in different – cultural and structural – ways, both inside and outside the Defence organisation. The commitment to gender by the top officials in the Defence organisation as ambassadors will remain and allows a structural and permanent embedding of gender policy. There is a willingness to propagate the benefits and necessity of gender policy and to direct management decisions towards it. This commitment and the arrangement of regular meetings can broaden support and shape international cooperation on gender issues.