

Beijing+20: The Platform for Action (BPfA) and the European Union

Area E: Women and Armed Conflict

Policy Context

Both women and men are affected by armed conflicts, as victims and as those suffering from economic consequences. Women constitute a large part of the civilian population and as such are particularly affected by conflicts, as their exposure to the risk of large-scale sexual abuse, trafficking, displacement and slavery is higher. Due to their greater social vulnerability, women and girls are often confronted with specific forms of violence, the consequences of which persist even after the war has ended (e.g. unwanted pregnancy as a result of rape, higher risks of contracting sexually transmitted diseases). Sexual violence in armed conflict often constitutes an instrument of war. Women contribute significantly to peace and reconstruction activities after armed conflicts and play an important role in conflict resolution.

Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development (2010-15)

- Highlights the necessity to provide long-term protection to women in armed conflict.
- Stresses the importance to support women's participation in peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction.
- Calls for the enhancement of women's political participation.

Council of the European Union: Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security

- Assesses the progress in protecting and empowering women in conflict and in post-conflict situations using specific indicators.

The European Parliament

- Recalls the importance of incorporating a gender perspective into all phases of CSDP operations (Resolution of 10 March 2010 on the implementation of the European Security Strategy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)).

- UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and 1889 (2009) on women, peace and security covers the training of deployed staff.
- Reaffirms the need to implement the resolution correctly (Resolution of 25 November 2010 on the 10th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security).
- Highlights women's participation in peace processes and military and civilian peace-keeping operations and the consequences of conflicts for women (Resolution of 2 February 2012 on women's situation in war).

The strategic objectives of the BPfA and the EU indicators

- E.1.** Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation.
- E.2.** Reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments.
- E.3.** Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations.
- E.4.** Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace.
- E.5.** Provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women.
- E.6.** Provide assistance to the women of the colonies and non-self-governing territories.

During the French Presidency of the Council of the EU, in 2008, four indicators to monitor the implementation of this area were proposed and accepted. The indicators measure the coverage of diplomatic, defence and peace-keeping staff and the level of human and financial resources devoted to understand-



ing and empowering women in armed conflict. The last indicator measures the proportion of women and men amongst asylum seekers.

The database, Women and men in the EU — facts and figures, developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality provides the latest data and information on these indicators, available at:

<http://eige.europa.eu/content/women-and-men-in-the-eu-facts-and-figures>

Findings from EU-wide data

Women are under-represented in the diplomatic and military sectors

The majority of the reports and data provided by the Member States point towards a serious absence of women among the diplomatic missions, EU delegations, UN peace-keeping operations and among the decision-making positions in diplomatic and military services. In 2011, among the staff taking part in UN peace-keeping operations only 6 % were women in 21 Member States, and seven Member States had no women in their UN peace-keeping operations.

In total, 17 Member States submitted information on the staff participating in Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions. The average proportion of women among mission staff was only 2 %. The sex-disaggregated data collected in 2012 on CSDP staff in civilian missions showed that women represent only 25 % of the total staff. Among the 18 Member States that provided information on the number of women heads of diplomatic mission, the average proportion was 17 %.

Inadequate gender training in conflict and fragile states

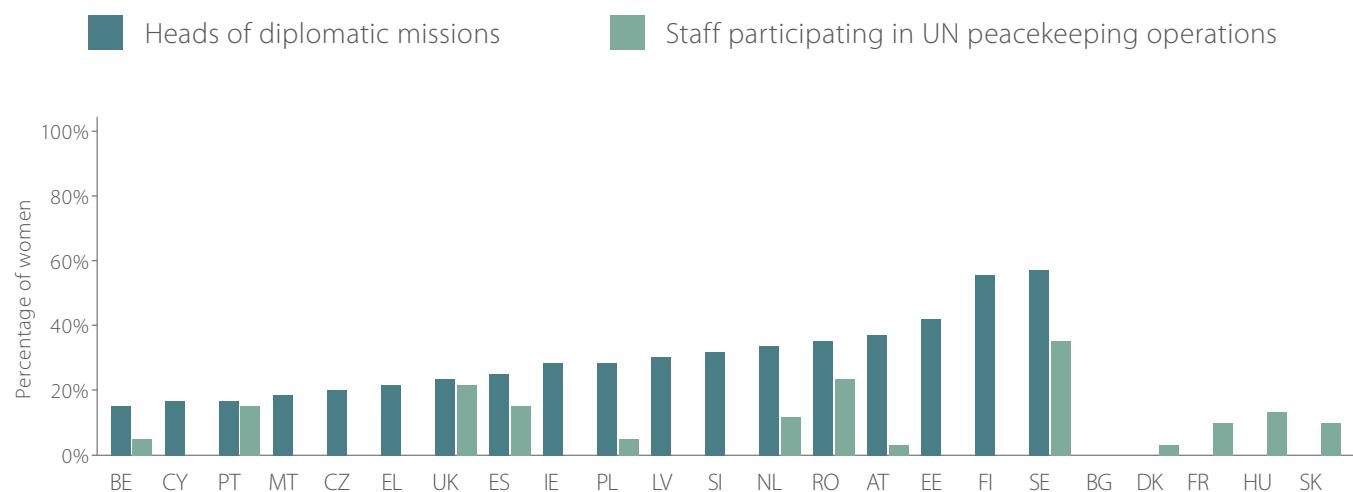
In the framework of the promotion of the UNSCR 1325 and 1820 Resolutions, several presidencies of the Council of the EU considered the importance of and need for training amongst CSDP staff. The latest available data, provided in 2008/2009, on diplomatic, civilian and military staff employed by the EU Member States and military and police staff participating in UN peace-keeping operations and CSDP missions showed that gender equality training was not implemented to a sufficient extent. Specific training in gender equality to diplomatic staff was implemented only in eight Member States, but there was no clear information about the proportion of women and men attending.

Low share of aid to address gender equality issues in fragile states

In 2009 and early 2010, EU Member States spent about EUR 200 million on issues related to women, peace and security. EUR 1 billion was spent on issues globally related to gender. Regarding the contribution of EU institutions, EU Delegations contributed to funding projects with a direct impact on gender and women's rights with a value of EUR 165 million. Almost a third of this funding was directed to activities aiming at implementing the UNSCR 1325 Resolution. Data showed that about 28 % of the total of the EUR 67 million spent on Security Sector Reform and Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration were related to activities that specifically target women.

The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) provides information on aid allocated to gender equality in fragile and conflict-affected situations for the period 2007 - 08. The report, Aid in support of gender equality in fragile and conflict-affected states, shows that almost one-third of DAC

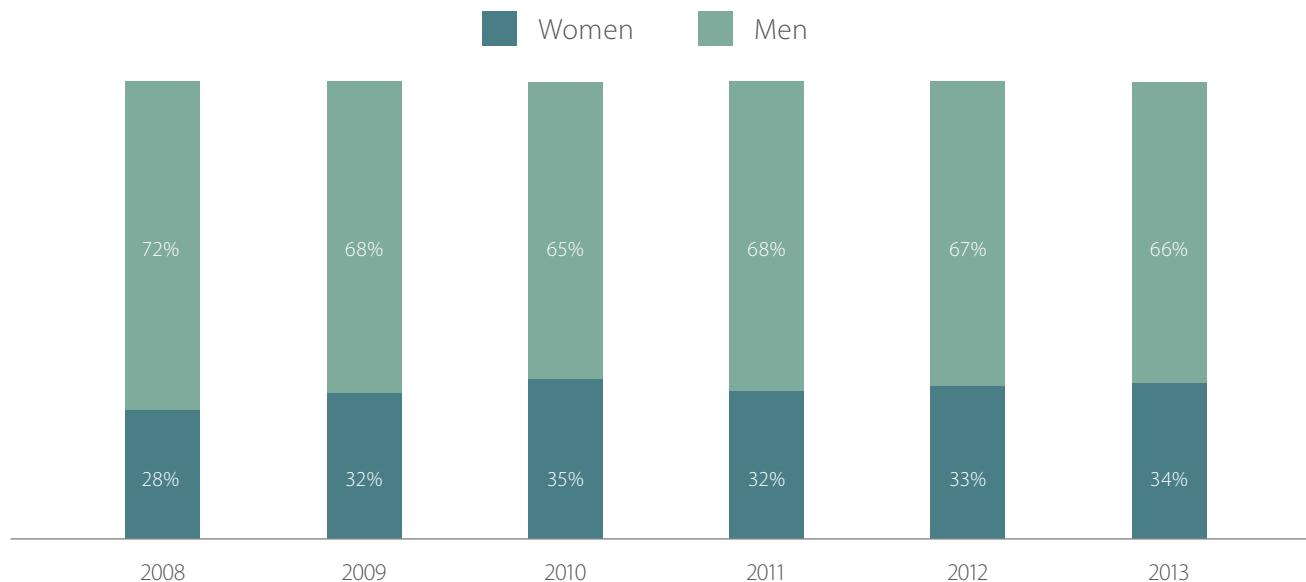
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AMONG THE HEADS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS AND STAFF PARTICIPATING IN UN PEACE-KEEPING MISSIONS, 2011



Source: Council of EU, Report on the EU-indicators for the Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the UN Security Council UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security, 2011



PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AMONG THE ASYLUM SEEKERS IN THE EU, 2008 – 13



Source: Eurostat, Decisions on applications and resettlement

members' aid to fragile states defines gender equality as a principal or significant objective. However, only 19 % of aid provided to fragile States coming from EU institutions focussed on gender equality. Only 20 % of the aid allocated to the peace and security sector has a gender-equality dimension and only 38 % of all DAC members included a gender-equality objective for aid allocated to governance sector of fragile states.

Increased number of women among asylum seekers

According to Eurostat, between 2008 and 2012, the proportion of women applying for refugee status increased (from 28 % in 2008 to 34 % in 2013). There has also been an increase in the number of

new asylum applications by women (when the first asylum application is registered), from 30 % in 2008 to 35 % in 2012. In spite of these increases, men still represent almost two thirds of asylum seekers in the European Union.

There has been an increase in the number of decisions on refugee status in line with the growing number of asylum seekers who lodged an application. Between 2008 and 2012, the number of decisions targeting women's applications almost doubled (from 59 730 to 95 875). Proportionally, positive decisions on women's applications have increased more than positive decisions on men's applications, although the proportion of women who acquire the refugee status has decreased in the last couple of years: in 2010, women represented 40 % of the positive share; in 2012, they represented 34 %.

Useful initiatives:

To **increase women's participation in peace-keeping missions**, Austria deployed a gender expert in a peace-keeping mission in Kosovo to provide advice to the commander and since 2010, six officials from the Ministry of Defence have been trained as Gender Field Advisors. In Belgium, the inclusion of this objective in the second NAP represents a step forward in increased representation of women in international organisations and missions carried out by the Belgian diplomacy and military.

The **promotion of women's contribution** to fostering a culture of peace was boosted by the organisation of the strategic Regional Conference, Women in Peace-building: access to justice for women in post-conflict countries, in Croatia. Cyprus built a Women's Multicultural Centre to bring together women from all communities and to promote gender equality, reconciliation and peace. Finland currently funds a three-year project, The UN High-Level Seminar on Gender and Inclusive Mediation Processes, which aims to generate more consultative peace processes by promoting women's effective participation in peace agreements. The Netherlands supported the work of thousands of women's organisations through the implementation of the programme Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women (FLOW) in the framework of the second Action Plan 1325. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) implemented specific programmes in Burundi, Columbia, Guatemala and Nepal to integrate women in all phases of conflict prevention and conflict management, as well as to protect women and girls against sexual violence and rape in armed conflicts.



ADVANCEMENTS AND OBSTACLES IN AREA E: WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT

ADVANCEMENTS	OBSTACLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The policy commitment to training on gender equality and women's rights for staff intervening in conflict-affected areas has been reinforced.Participation of women in peace-keeping has increased.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gender equality training commitments remain poorly implemented and in small scale.Diplomatic missions and delegations remain male-dominated.Only a low proportion of EU aid to Fragile States specifically targets women.Men are more likely to be asylum seekers and to obtain refugee status than women in the EU.

The way forward for the EU

- Improve the current level of gender-sensitivity among personnel and raise the gender balance in diplomatic and military sectors.
- Integrate a gender perspective into procedures and practices and raise gender capacity among frontline staff in administrations of the EU and Member States dealing with military and diplomatic staff.
- Strengthen efforts concerning gender-balanced participation in diplomatic and military sectors.
- Improve the quality and allocation of foreign aid by enhancing visibility and knowledge of the needs and specific vulnerability of women in conflict (e.g. gender-based violence).
- Incorporate a gender and women's human rights perspective as crucial components in the process of handling and processing asylum claims.

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is the EU knowledge centre on gender equality. EIGE supports policy-makers and all relevant institutions in their efforts to make equality between women and men a reality for all Europeans and beyond by providing them with specific expertise and comparable and reliable data on gender equality in Europe.

More information: <http://eige.europa.eu>

The Resource and Documentation Centre (RDC) of the European Institute for Gender Equality is an innovative and practical tool developed to assist in locating key resources on gender equality, to facilitate the exchange of knowledge among those with an interest in gender equality policies and practices and to offer an online space for discussion and debate.

More information: <http://eige.europa.eu/content/rdc>



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