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**Strategy and Action Plan
to Enhance Women’s Participation in Civilian CSDP Missions
2021-2024**

Contents

Foreword.....	3
Background and introduction.....	4
Vision	6
Expected outcomes	6
Targets for women’s representation	7
Baseline – women’s participation in civilian CSDP missions	8
Four areas of strategic engagement.....	19
Monitoring and evaluation	26

‘Gender equality is a political priority of the European Union and a universally recognised human right. It is essential for our well-being, for our economic growth, for prosperity, good governance and, indeed, for peace and security.’

HR/VP Josep Borrell on the launch of GAP III

Foreword

As long ago as 2004, the EU made a strong commitment, set out in Council Conclusions, to increase women’s participation in EU CSDP missions. This commitment has been reinforced repeatedly, most recently in the Civilian CSDP Compact, which included a specific commitment to increase the representation of women in civilian CSDP missions. To date, progress in this area has been very slow, making us lag far behind our goal. The average percentage of mission personnel made up by women – currently 24 % – has not increased since 2017. I am convinced that we must do more to overcome the current stagnation, through new, ambitious joint measures. We cannot afford to wait for it to happen by itself, because the credibility of the EU as a global proponent of equal rights for men and women worldwide is at stake. Diversity and the participation of women is not simply a nice extra, but a central value within our institution. We all know that improving gender balance contributes to diversity, and thus to the effectiveness of our missions. A key challenge that lies ahead is that of reshaping the image of EU CSDP missions in order to recruit the diverse types of experts needed to run them. Though they fall under the umbrella of the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy, civilian CSDP missions require a broad range of civilian capabilities in addition to diverse police expertise. Lawyers, political advisers and experts in civil administration, the rule of law, human rights, gender equality, planning, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting are all key for the missions. In addition, missions cannot operate securely and efficiently without many support roles being performed, for which experts in areas such as logistics, finance, medicine, security and human resources are needed.

To increase the representation of women and enhance gender balance it is time we set clear targets, accompanied by measures and that we monitor our progress towards these targets. We also need to ensure equal access and opportunities for all candidates throughout the recruitment and selection process. In order for gender balance to be maintained, missions also need to retain women staff. The key emphasis, therefore, will be on creating an inclusive working environment and a management culture that respects diversity and fully supports gender equality efforts.

The ambitions and actions laid out in this framework as regards enhancing the representation and meaningful participation of women will help the EU to set a true example for our colleagues, local staff, counterparts and partners, and we will implement this strategy and action plan with the full support of the highest leadership of the European Union.

Francisco Esteban Perez, Civilian Operations Commander

Background and introduction

Over the past two decades, the EU has developed an ambitious framework for the promotion of gender equality, women's empowerment and the implementation of the UNSCRs on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), including in its external actions. Promoting the role of women and improving the gender balance in CSDP missions is a clear objective, underpinned by the broader EU legal¹ and policy framework².

Between 2007 and 2017, women's representation among international personnel in civilian CSDP missions increased from 12 to 24 %³. However, this relative increase was not because of an increase in the number of women. Rather, it was due to some larger missions' being downsized, and a comparatively large decrease in the number of men⁴. The overall percentage of international staff in civilian CSDP missions that are women has not increased since 2017 and seems to have stagnated at around 24 %. When local staff are included, the percentage of staff that are women increases to 30 %.

Ensuring equal gender representation in CSDP missions is essential to ensuring their efficiency. It also contributes to the image of the EU and its credibility as a global promoter of gender equality. As evidenced by research, there are operational, organisational and performance benefits to be reaped from having gender-balanced and diverse teams.

A CSDP policy, adopted in 2012, on the implementation of UNSCRs on WPS states that the gender balance in CSDP missions and operations should be improved, 'particularly in the components that have direct contact with the local population'⁵.

The ambitious Civilian CSDP Compact, adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council at its meeting held on 19 November 2018, included 22 commitments to make missions 'more capable, more effective, and more joined up'⁶. Member States committed to increase their contributions to civilian CSDP missions, and commitment 16 included actively promoting an increase in the representation of women. Halfway through the implementation period (2019-2023), the Compact has yielded little progress regarding women's representation.

The EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security for 2019-2024 includes an action point for Member States to set a target for improved gender balance in CSDP missions. While no such overall target has been set, some Member States have adopted national targets in their National Implementation Plans (NIPs) for the Civilian Compact or their National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325.

¹ Equality between women and men is one of the Union's founding values and core aims under Article 2 and Article 3(3) TEU. In accordance with Article 8 TFEU, the Union shall aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality, between men and women in all its activities.

² Notably through the EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security and the EU Gender Action Plan III.

³ CPCC personnel figures

⁴ 'Towards a more gender-balanced European Union civilian CSDP', SIPRI policy brief, November 2019.

⁵ 'Implementation of UNSCRs on Women, Peace and Security in the context of CSDP missions and operations', of 6 March 2012, doc. 7109/12.

⁶ Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the establishment of a Civilian CSDP Compact, 19 November 2018, ST-14305-2018-INIT

EEAS(2021)1325

The EEAS first put in place a comprehensive strategy to improve its gender balance in 2018⁷. The strategy was complemented by an action plan in 2021, which laid down a specific target of ensuring that 40 % of managerial positions would be held by women by 2024⁸. The EEAS strategy does not include CSDP missions since mission personnel are not EEAS staff members. Nevertheless, for reasons of synergy it is of interest to have similar objectives for both staff and missions. Other international organisations, including the UN and the OSCE, have put ambitious gender parity strategies in place that include targets for their international missions.

These renewed commitments and the slow progress towards improving gender balance highlighted the need to develop a specific gender parity strategy for civilian CSDP missions, as pointed out by several external actors⁹.

Against this background, the Civilian Operations Commander (CivOpsCdr) / Director of the CPCC decided, in 2020, to establish a CPCC working group to assess the state of play and to come up with recommendations for a more systematic and targeted approach to enhancing women's participation. Member States endorsed the idea of developing a strategy and action plan at the Annual Review Conference on the Civilian CSDP Compact, held on 14 November 2020, and included it among the waypoints for the implementation of the Civilian Compact in 2021¹⁰, alongside a waypoint on creating a better working environment, that is conducive to women's participation. The CPCC drafted this strategy and action plan to enhance women's participation in civilian CSDP missions after broad consultations with the missions and within the EEAS.

While the CPCC and missions will be the main implementers of this strategy and action plan, progress towards the desired results and targets will only be possible if coordinated and complementary efforts are made, notably by Member States, contributing third states, seconding authorities and other strategic partners such as the European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management (CoE) in Berlin.

A cluster group on gender equality and women's participation in civilian CSDP was set up in 2020 as a forum for Member States to exchange experiences and good practices in the context of the Civilian CSDP Compact. The workshops organised by the cluster group in 2021 yielded ideas for this strategy and action plan, and the cluster group will also be an important forum to discuss and regularly monitor its implementation. A workshop organised by the CoE on 16 September 2020 also inspired the strategy and action plan¹¹.

Improving gender balance is not only about increasing the number of women. This strategy and action plan take a more holistic approach and aims to prompt institutional change to address the structural barriers that impede women's full participation in civilian CSDP missions.

⁷ EEAS Gender and Equal Opportunities Strategy 2018-2023

⁸ EEAS Equal opportunities action plan 2021-2024.

⁹ SEDE Study on Women in CSDP Missions, 2017; 'Towards a more gender-balanced European Union civilian CSDP', SIPRI Policy Brief, November 2019; European Parliament resolution of 23 October 2020 on Gender Equality in EU's foreign and security policy (2019/2167(INI)).

¹⁰ These waypoints were later endorsed by Member States in Council Conclusions adopted on 7 December 2020

¹¹ Workshop report 'How to Increase Women's Participation in Civilian Crisis Management Missions', from workshop held in a hybrid format on 16 September 2020 by the European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management (CoE).

Vision

The vision of this strategy and action plan is for women and men to be equally represented in civilian CSDP missions, and for gender balance to be achieved in all roles and at all levels, in particular management level. For women and men, in all their diversity, to enjoy equal rights, obligations and opportunities and contribute equally and meaningfully to executing the missions' mandates. For gender equality to be a clear priority, enabled and demonstrated by a gender-responsive leadership and a visible 'leading by example' approach. For civilian CSDP missions to be an inclusive workplace in which the mission leadership is committed to creating an environment in which all individuals, in all their diversity, feel safe and comfortable. For the CPCC and missions to have ensured that suitable structures and systems are in place to create and maintain this inclusive organisational culture.

Expected outcomes

This strategy aims to enhance women's meaningful participation and improve gender balance in civilian CSDP missions. It aims to attract more women candidates to the missions and boost recruitment, selection and retention of women, as well as to create a workplace culture within missions that is equally attractive to women and men. This strategy also aims to create workplaces free from all practices that intentionally or unconsciously maintain and propagate gender-based discrimination and bias.

Furthermore, this strategy aims to contribute to an institutional paradigm shift that will bring gender equality and women's empowerment to the forefront. Leaders and managers carry a particular responsibility to demonstrate EU values, including gender equality, by leading by example, in line with the objectives set out in the EU Gender Action Plan III 2021-2025 (GAP III). This includes emphasising the importance of promoting gender equality, and driving forward the necessary changes to the organisational culture in order to address inequalities. Managers at all levels are responsible for ensuring that these messages trickle down through the whole organisation, and that men and women are given equal opportunities and receive equal treatment regardless of their sex, age, nationality, deployment status or any other grounds for discrimination.

The expected outcome of this strategy is that, at the end of 2024, all missions will have significantly increased the number of women in their personnel and improved their gender balance, moving them closer to the long-term gender parity objective. Missions will have improved gender balance at every level and in all roles, among international seconded, contracted and local staff alike.

This will be made possible through a combination of efforts, including, in particular, through positive action provisions in the recruitment process and special measures such as a women's mentoring program. Positive and affirmative actions are permitted under the EU Treaties¹² and acknowledged as temporary special measures to accelerate gender equality between men and women in the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against

¹² Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union - Part Three: UNION POLICIES AND INTERNAL ACTIONS - TITLE X: SOCIAL POLICY - Article 157 (ex Article 141 TEC)

EEAS(2021)1325

Women¹³. The drive for improved gender balance goes hand in hand with broader diversity objectives, including national balance.

Targets for women's representation

The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) Josep Borrell has committed to full gender parity, and has set a short-term goal of achieving 40 % representation of women in management within the EEAS and the European Commission. The EU's commitment to gender parity is declared in the EU GAP III, in the EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security and in a series of internal documents and strategies. None of these, however, set out short- or medium-term targets for civilian CSDP missions.

Some Member States have adopted national targets for gender balance among seconded experts in their National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325 or their National Implementation Plans (NIPs) for the Civilian Compact.

While gender parity remains the end goal, Table 1 below sets out the short- and medium-term targets for CSDP missions for this strategy period, with the aim of reaching 40 % representation across all missions and staff categories by 2024. These targets will help missions to take stock and measure progress over time.

	Baseline (Dec 2020)	Targets 2022	Targets 2023	Targets 2024
% of women among all staff	29.5 %	35 %	37.5 %	40 %
% of women among international seconded staff	23 %	30 %	35 %	40 %
% of women among international contracted staff	26 %	30 %	35 %	40 %
% of women in management positions	22 %	30 %	35 %	40 %
% of women in operational positions	20 %	30 %	35 %	40 %

Table 1. Baseline and targets for women's representation in civilian CSDP missions 2022-2024

Some missions and specific categories of personnel, such as local staff, have already reached – or nearly reached – the 40 % target. Actions set out in this strategy and action plan will help maintain that level within these missions or staff categories, while striving for overall gender parity.

As progress is made towards the targets at all levels, the increased number of women should not create imbalances within the missions – for example, more women should not be recruited to units where women are already overrepresented. Statistics and scorecards will help managers keep track of the current gender balance.

¹³ CEDAW (1979), Article 4.1.

Baseline – women’s participation in civilian CSDP missions

Figure 1 shows that women’s representation among international personnel in civilian CSDP missions increased from 12 to 24 % between 2007 and 2017¹⁴. However, this was due to some larger missions’ being downsized, and a comparatively large decrease in the number of men. The absolute number of women did not increase¹⁵. The overall percentage of international staff in civilian CSDP missions that are women has not increased since 2017 and seems to have stagnated at around 24 %. When local staff are included, that percentage increases to 30 %.

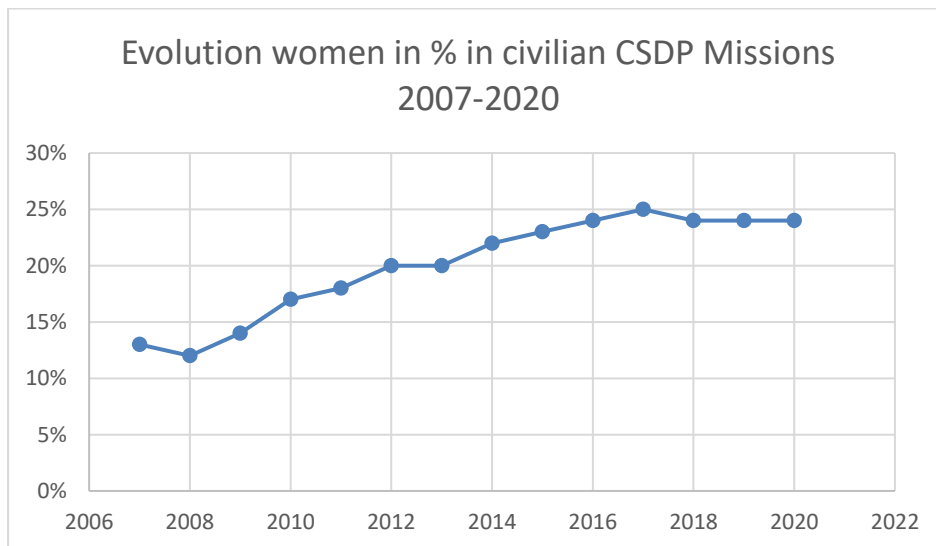


Figure 1. Evolution of percentage of women among international personnel per year, CPCC personnel figures for the years 2007-2020

Current recruitment and selection procedures and practices

Civilian CSDP missions are staffed with international experts that are either seconded by EU Member States and third states, or contracted from an open market. In addition, all missions also contract local staff.

Mission staff are recruited through calls for contributions. In line with a specific CSDP policy on implementation of UNSCRs on Women, Peace and Security in the context of CSDP missions and operations, all calls for contributions include the sentence:

‘The EU strives for an improved gender balance in CSDP missions and operations, in conformity with UNSCR 1325. The European External Action Service (Head of Mission/Operation Commander) asks Contributing States and European Institutions to take this into account when offering contributions.’

Selection procedures common to all international positions in civilian CSDP missions ensure fairness, transparency, non-discrimination and accountability in the recruitment process. Preference is to be given to seconded applicants, and gender balance is to be considered.

¹⁴ CPCC personnel figures for December of each year between 2007 and 2020.

¹⁵ ‘Towards a more gender-balanced European Union civilian CSDP’, SIPRI Policy Brief, November 2019.

The procedures from 2017 notably include a positive action measure that can be applied in the event that two equally qualified candidates, a man and a woman, apply for a post. Thus, the candidate of a less represented sex can be selected. Selection panels are made up of both women and men to the extent possible. Panel members are given some training, including to help them identify and address unconscious bias.

Since 2019, the CPCC has been collecting sex-disaggregated **personnel data** to systematically enable an in-depth analysis of gender balance at different levels, including at the management level and in various positions. Using this broadened dataset, it is possible to see the considerable variations in gender balance between different staff regimes, missions and specific roles. The following sections provide an overview of the data on gender balance¹⁶.

Gender balance in CSDP missions – global figure

At the end of December 2020, 2 140 local and international mission members served in the 11 civilian CSDP missions and the Kosovo Specialist Chambers (KSC) and Special Prosecutors Office (SPO), of which nearly 30 % were women (see Figure 2 – Overall gender balance).

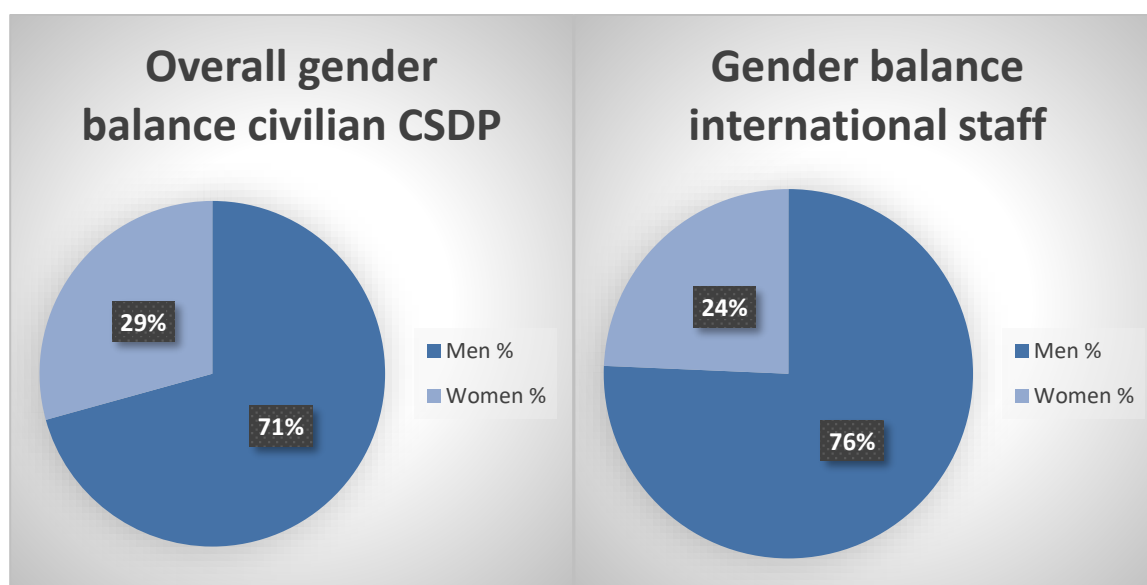


Figure 2. Gender balance among all personnel in the civilian CSDP missions (n=2140) and among international mission personnel (n=1472), CPCC personnel figures from 31 December 2020.

Among the 1 472 international seconded and contracted mission members, 1 114 (76 %) were men and 358 (24 %) were women (see Figure 2 – Gender balance among international staff). The representation of women was slightly higher among contracted staff (186, i.e. 26% women) compared to the seconded personnel (175, i.e. 23% women). The gap between internationally contracted and seconded women in percentage terms was biggest in 2007 and has decreased over time. Since the launch of the Civilian CSDP Compact, the gender balance

¹⁶ Additional figures and analysis of this sex-disaggregated data are included in the CPCC Human Resources Statistics Report for 2020.

EEAS(2021)1325

among contracted staff has improved slightly, going from 24 to 26 % women, while the gender balance among seconded personnel has remained almost the same, with women representing 23-24 % (see Figure 3).

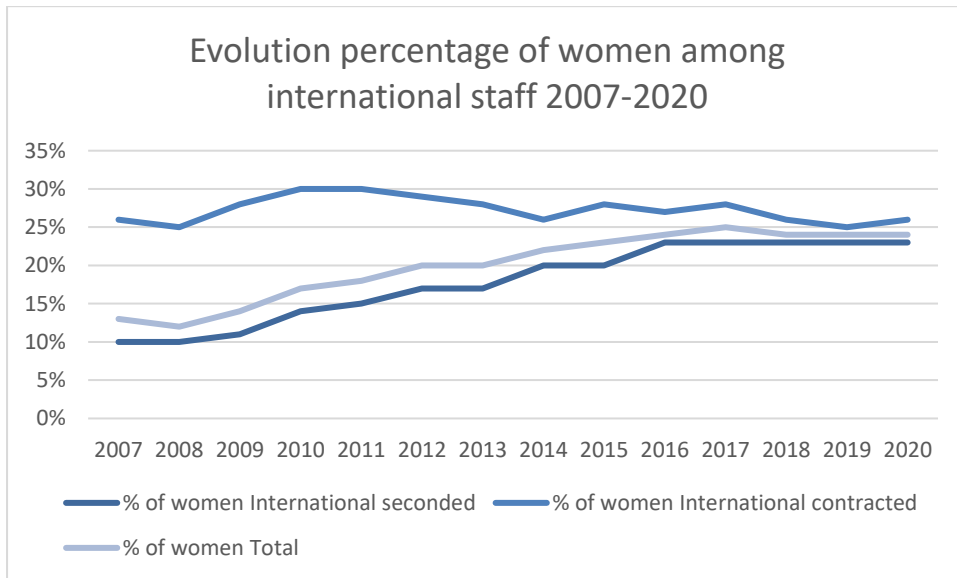


Figure 3. Evolution percentage of women (seconded and contracted) among international personnel 2007-2020

The numbers of international contracted and seconded women were approximately the same at the end of 2020 (175 seconded, 183 contracted). Since the adoption of the Civilian CSDP Compact, the number of seconded women has risen only marginally, from 169 to 175, while the number of contracted women has increased from 137 to 183 during the same period. A comparison over time shows that the number of contracted women was higher in 2020 than in any other previous year (see Figure 4).

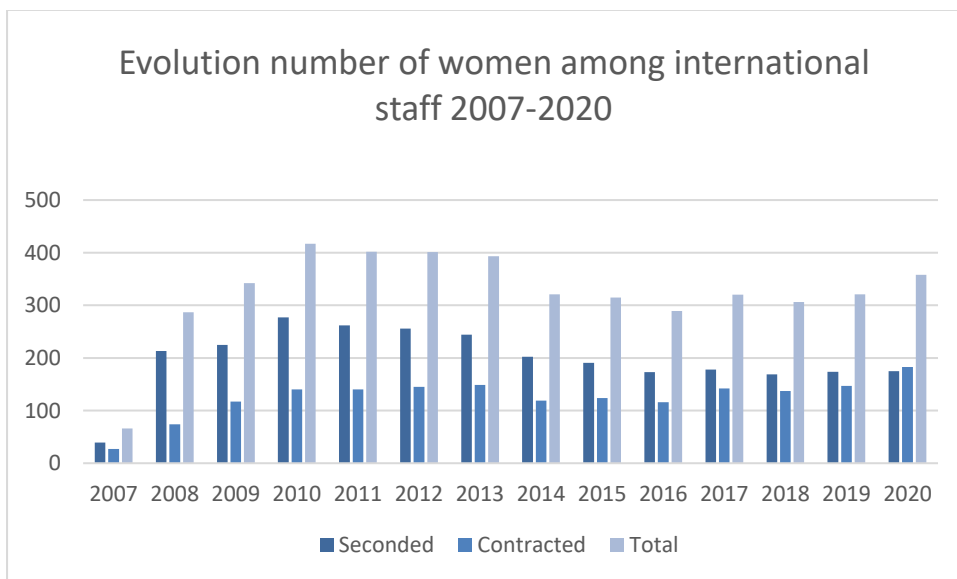


Figure 4: Evolution number of women (seconded and contracted) among international personnel 2007-2020, CPCC personnel figures

Member States seconded the highest number of women to civilian CSDP missions in 2010, with a peak of a total of 277 women – more than 100 more women than in 2020. This number declined gradually after 2010 and has stayed below 200 since 2015. The total number of women also reached its peak in 2010, at 417. It has stayed below 400 since 2013, and in 2020 it reached only 358.

Gender balance per mission

Representation of women varies widely between missions (see Figure 5). In December 2020, the missions with the highest percentage of women among international personnel were EUPOL COPPS (34 %) and EUBAM Libya (35 %). The KSC/SPO had an even higher percentage, with nearly 40 % women. The missions with the lowest representation of women were EULEX Kosovo and EUCAP Sahel Mali (both 15 %) while several other missions, notably those in Africa and Iraq, remained at around 20 %.

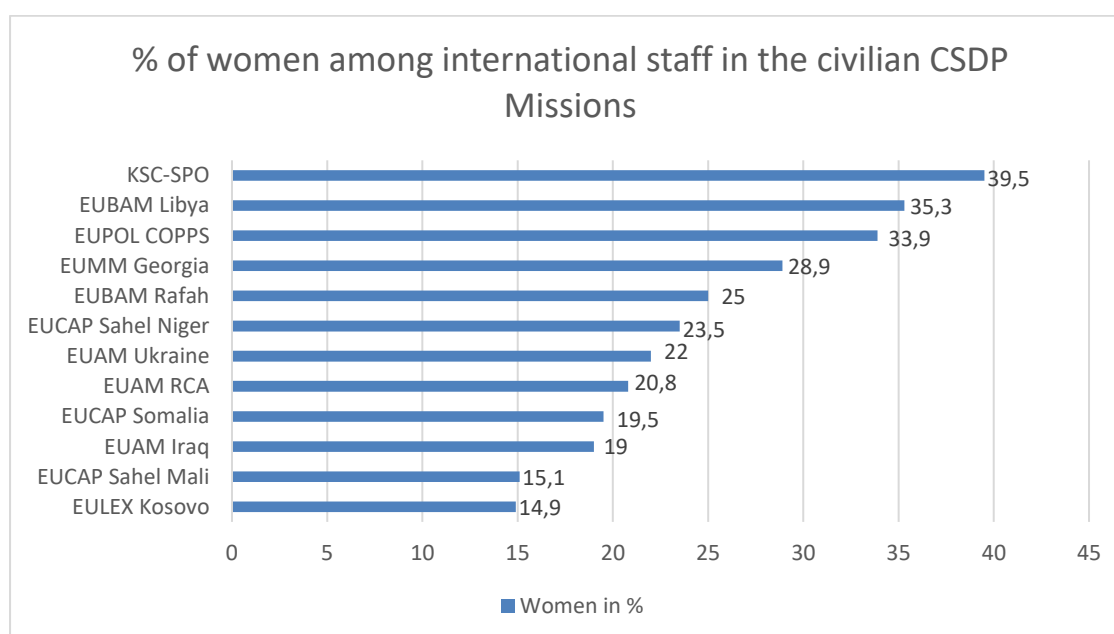


Figure 5. Overview of the representation of women in % in the civilian CSDP missions (CPCC personnel figures of 31 December, 2020).

Comparing missions without considering their size, their specific mandate and the expertise they require can be misleading. In EULEX Kosovo, for instance, the 100-person strong Formed Police Unit, which counts only one woman in its number, contributes to that mission's comparatively low representation of women. In a small mission, an increase of just a few women results in a relatively large change in the gender balance.

Gender balance in different posts

Large variations in gender balance appear when the sex-disaggregated data relating to different staff posts (see Figure 6) is analysed. The Head of Mission office – which includes, for example, press and public information officers, planning and evaluation officers and advisers on political, legal, human rights and gender matters – was the most balanced, with 38 % women. In mission support functions, including human resources, logistics, finance,

EEAS(2021)1325

procurement and IT support, the percentage of women was also higher than the average, at 32 %.

Despite there being a policy in place aiming to increase the number of women in roles involving direct contact with the local population, the representation of women in operations departments is lower than the average, at 20 % (2019 – 17 %).

In some missions, women constitute only 10 % of operational staff (e.g. EULEX Kosovo and EUBAM Libya), whereas EUPOL COPPS, for example, with its broader rule of law mandate, has 27 % women in operational positions (see Figure 7). The main challenge is to improve gender balance among specialised and senior police expert positions and security officers. The overall size of each operations department should be kept in mind when drawing a comparison between them. In most missions, only a handful of operational experts are women, except in the three biggest missions (EUMM Georgia, EUAM Ukraine and EULEX Kosovo).

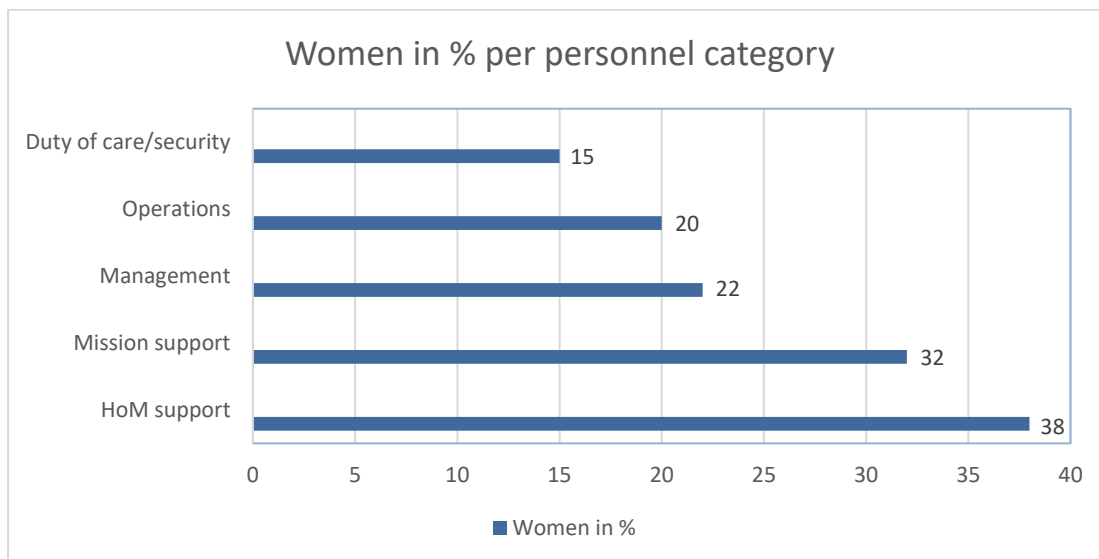


Figure 6. Overview of the representation of women in % per staff category, CPCC Personnel Figures of 31 December, 2020

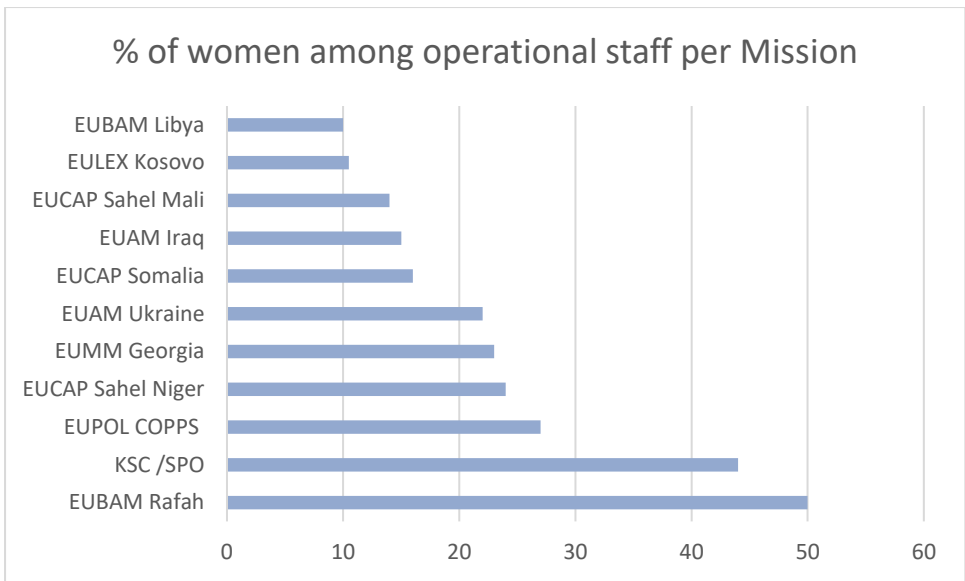


Figure 7. Overview of % of women in operational positions per mission, CPCC personnel figures from 31 December 2020

Women at management level

EU policy sets high targets for enhancing women’s participation in senior management. In civilian CSDP missions, these positions are mostly filled by seconded personnel from Member States. At the end of 2020, women held 28 % of senior management positions (Head of Mission, Deputy Head of Mission or Chief of Staff – see Figure 8) while only 22 % (up from 20 % in 2019) of management positions in general were held by women (see Figure 6). Only one out of the 11 Heads of Mission was a woman, while six women held Deputy Head of Mission or Chief of Staff positions (see Figure 9), some of them double-hatted as both. Two Head of Mission positions were vacant at the end of 2020 and were filled by women at the beginning of 2021.

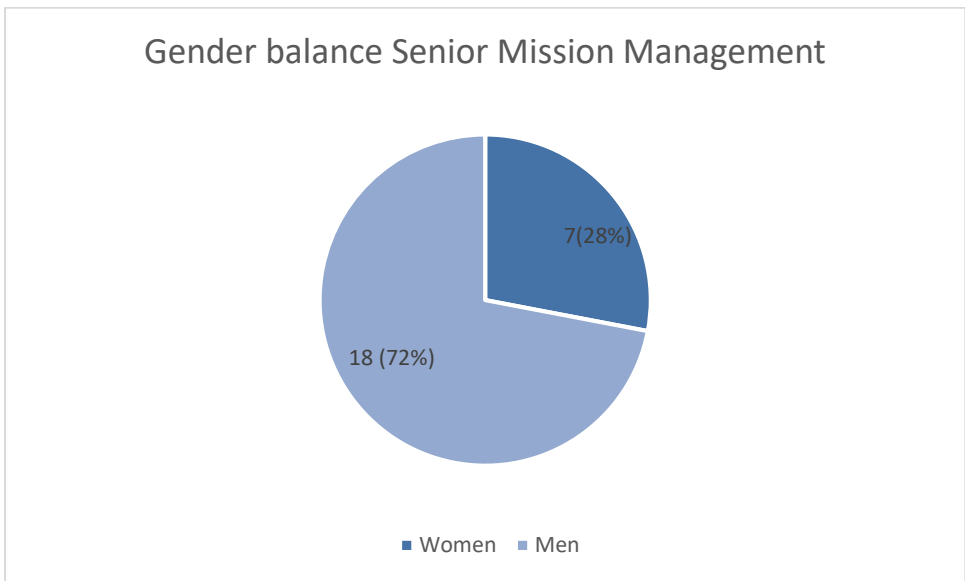


Figure 8. Gender balance in senior management positions in civilian CSDP missions, CPCC personnel figures from 31 December 2020

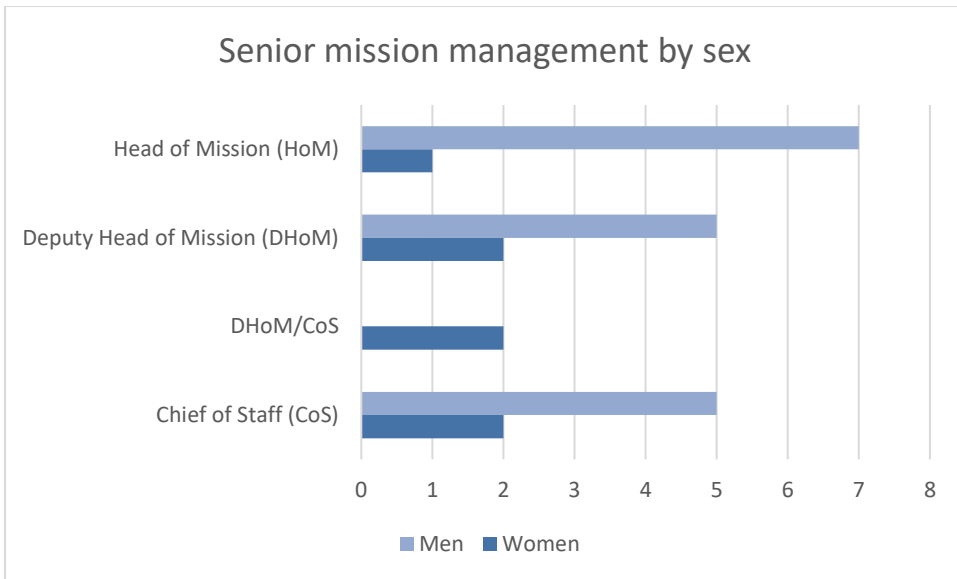


Figure 9. Senior management positions in civilian CSDP missions by sex, CPCC personnel figures from 31 December 2020

Candidates by sex

In 2020, out of 7 363 candidates for international seconded and contracted positions in civilian CSDP missions, only 18 %, or 1 359, were women (see Figure 10). Member States and contributing third states put forward a slightly higher percentage of women candidates for seconded positions (20 % – 269 women out of 1309 candidates) than for contracted positions, for 806 vacancies. However, in terms of actual numbers, a much higher number of women applied for contracted positions (1 090) than for seconded positions.

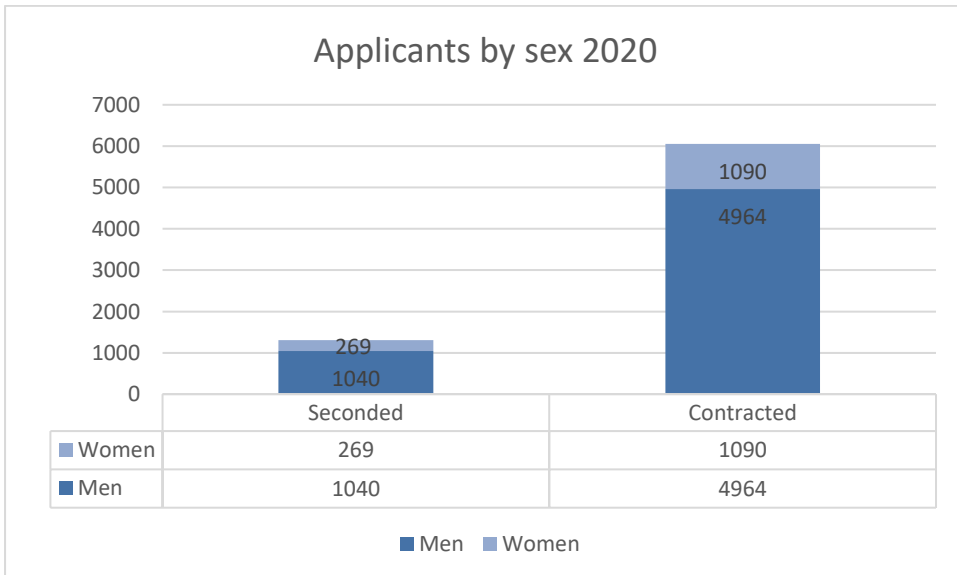


Figure 10. Candidates for international positions in civilian CSDP missions per staff regime and gender in 2020 (n=7363), Civilian CSDP Missions Human Resources Statistics Report 2020

EEAS(2021)1325

A more detailed analysis of applications in the period January to June 2021¹⁷ revealed that seven missions received a much smaller percentage of women candidates, between 10 and 15 %, whereas almost 40 % of applicants for the KSC/SPO were women (see Figure 11)¹⁸. However, in terms of numbers counted, women candidates for seconded positions were much fewer than for contracted positions (see Figure 12).

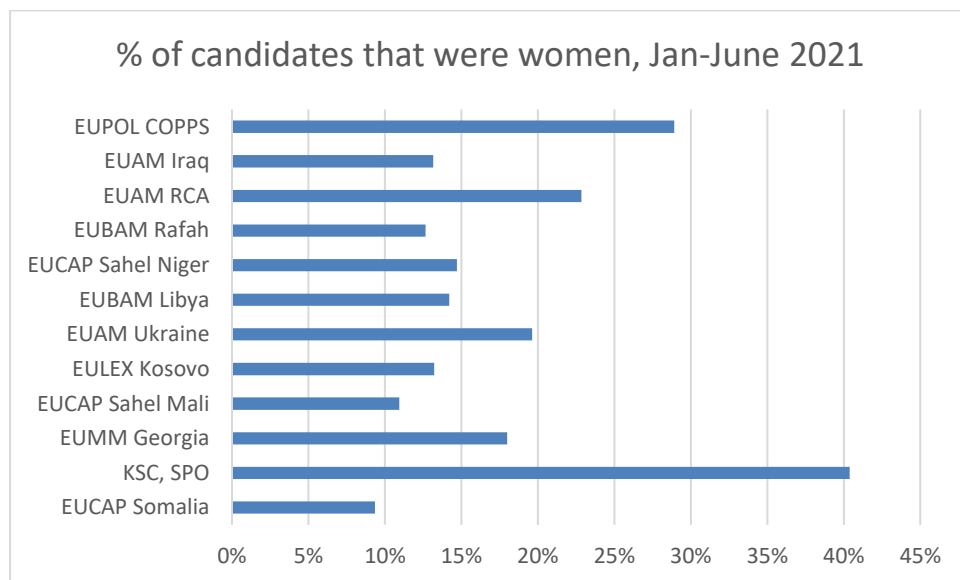


Figure 11. Overview of women candidates in % per mission for the period 1 January to 30 June 2021 (Figures from CPCC Personnel Division, 1 July 2021).



Figure 12. Overview of the candidates per mission (CPCC Personnel Division, 1 July 2021).

¹⁷ Detailed data on candidates was not available for 2020 at the time this document was drafted.

¹⁸ CPCC Personnel Division figures on candidates for January to June 2021.

Selections by sex

In 2020, of 486 selections, around 30 % – or 142 – of the selected candidates were women, while 70 % – or 344 – were men. The highest number of women were selected in the KSC/SPO, followed by EUMM Georgia.



Figure 11. Overview of selections for seconded positions per mission by sex in 2020 (n=486), Civilian CSDP Missions Human Resources Statistics Report 2020

Barriers and challenges to women's participation

Gender-segregated patterns in the workforce exist in part due to gender stereotypes embedded in our societies. There are social expectations on individuals to conform to these stereotypes, and this can influence, for example, which field of study or career they choose. As these patterns extend to the distribution of leadership positions and career advancement possibilities¹⁹, this may explain why fewer women than men are found in decision-making and senior management positions.

Civilian CSDP missions draw on expertise found in various different sectors, including within very specialised departments in **law enforcement services and criminal justice administrations in EU Member States**. Many Member States are struggling to achieve better representation of women, particularly in the security sector (e.g. law enforcement agencies) but also in other areas such as IT, logistics and security²⁰. Statistics about security sector personnel in the EU show that only one in six police officers in Europe is a woman²¹, while

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ EIGE, 'Work in the EU: women and men at opposite ends', 2017, available at: https://eurogender.eige.europa.eu/system/files/events-files/gender_segregation_in_the_labour_market_eige.pdf

²¹ Eurostat, 'Police, court and prison personnel statistics, average 2017-2019', available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php/Police,_court_and_prison_personnel_statistics#One_in_six_police_officers_is_a_woman

EEAS(2021)1325

most EU Member States have more than 50 % women judges. These patterns are also reflected in the variations in gender balance found in the different staff categories in the civilian CSDP missions.

Interestingly, Member States seconded a much higher number of women in 2010 than in 2021, indicating that it is not a lack of women in the national systems that is the cause of the poor gender balance in civilian CSDP missions.

Evidence-based research provides an overview of the barriers faced by women in recruitment and selection procedures:

- gender-coded wording in job advertisements may discourage women from applying for some jobs and may reinforce stereotypes about which genders are better suited to certain roles;
- the ‘confidence gap’ between women and men means that women do not apply for a job unless they meet all of the criteria, while men typically apply if they meet only 60 % of the requirements²²;
- women and men are held to different standards in recruitment processes, with women more likely to face tougher evaluation standards or to have their achievements and qualifications more closely scrutinised;
- gender biases affect the way applicants are perceived in job interviews, and whether they are deemed to be likeable and competent;
- when only one out of four candidates is a woman, the odds of her being selected are very low, probably because she is seen as ‘the token woman’ rather than a serious option²³;
- it is well known that people tend to be biased in favour of preserving the status quo and that change is uncomfortable²⁴;
- according to the ‘glass ceiling’ metaphor, women can be well-established within an organisation but still be blocked from the upper levels of management.

In addition to the barriers women face in attempting to join national security institutions, a UN baseline study identified additional barriers preventing uniformed women from being deployed to peacekeeping operations²⁵. Further studies could help reveal and collect evidence of barriers experienced by women in CSDP missions. Thus far, the topic has only occasionally been discussed or brought up in workshops, policy briefs and during consultations with the missions²⁶. In broad terms, the following barriers are among the most commonly cited:

²² Kay, Katty and Shipman Claire, ‘The Confidence Gap’, *The Atlantic*, May 2014 issue

²³ Johnson, Stefanie K., Hekman, David R. and Chan, Elsa T., ‘If There’s Only One Woman in Your Candidate Pool, There’s Statistically No Chance She’ll Be Hired’, *Harvard Business Review*, 26 April 2016.

²⁴ Samuelson, W., Zeckhauser, R. ‘Status quo bias in decision making’, *J Risk Uncertainty* 1, 7–59 (1988), available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00055564>

²⁵ ELSIE Initiative for Women in Peace Operations: Baseline Study, Geneva, July 2018.

²⁶ See for example: Elsie Initiative for women in peace operations, Baseline study, Geneva, July 2018 SEDE Study on Women in CSDP Missions, 2017, Towards a more gender-balanced European Union civilian CSDP, SIPRI Policy Brief, November 2019,

EEAS(2021)1325

- a lack of career advancement opportunities at national level, which hampers recruitment as well as retention of women in the missions, in particular in managerial positions;
- an image of missions as military and masculine, with a non-inclusive workplace culture, may prevent women from applying to or staying in the missions;
- a lack of role models in missions with a very small number of women in general or in management positions specifically may also prevent women from seeking job opportunities in civilian CSDP missions;
- the infrastructure and non-family policy of civilian CSDP missions may be another factor that discourages women from applying; however, the non-family policy has also been cited as a barrier for men with families.

This strategy and action plan aims to address and remove these challenges and barriers, and to further improve the ways in which we recruit and retain women and ensure equal opportunities for all. Women need encouragement and support to combat the unconscious biases that affect the way they are perceived.

The CPCC and missions also have a responsibility to invest in a professional and gender-responsive management culture and a working environment that is conducive to women's participation in the missions. The ways in which this can be achieved are outlined in the four areas of strategic engagement below.

The implementation of this strategy and action plan should foster an approach that is in line with the broader EU/EEAS frameworks, including the European Commission's Gender Equality Strategy and the EEAS's Gender and Equal Opportunities Strategy for 2018-2023, both of which guided the development of this document.

Report by EUISS of joint EU-UN workshop held on 21 November 2019, on promoting women's meaningful participation in peace operations, crisis management and peace processes: enabling factors and good practices, Workshop summary report: How to Increase Women's Participation in Civilian Crisis Management Missions, 16 September 2020, European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management (CoE). Written consultation process on the draft strategy and action plan with all civilian CSDP Missions during the months July and August 2021.

Four areas of strategic engagement

The strategy consists of four areas of strategic engagement to enhance the participation of women in civilian CSDP missions and to move towards the long- and short-term gender balance targets mentioned at the start of this document. Each area of engagement is briefly presented below and then explained in more detail in the subsequent action plan. The action plan primarily consists of actions to be taken by the CPCC and missions.

1. Equal opportunities in candidacy, recruitment, retention and career development

- Review and adapt candidacy, recruitment and selection procedures to create more equitable recruitment and promotion systems.
- To this end, **develop positive action provisions in the recruitment and selection process, and monitor the implementation of these measures**
- Enhance talent-spotting to provide opportunities and support for women to advance to more senior and/or managerial positions.
- Keep gender balance as a priority at every stage of recruitment procedures, while making those procedures faster and smoother.

2. Inclusive and harassment-free work environment for all

- Conduct a mission-wide staff survey to create a baseline to assess mission members' perception of their working environment.
- Invest in training for those responsible for the prevention of all acts of psychological abuse and harassment, or for handling complaints regarding alleged gender-related breaches of the Generic Standards of Behaviour, such as sex-based discrimination and (sexual) harassment, in line with the procedures set out in the Code of Conduct and Discipline.
- Establish confidential and survivor-centred support and complaint mechanisms for persons exposed to (gender-related) breaches of the Generic Standards of Behaviour.

3. Leadership engagement for institutional change

- Prompt senior leaders to 'lead by example' in demonstrating EU values and driving forward the necessary changes to the organisational culture in order to address inequalities.
- Establish gender-responsive leadership as the new norm and a requirement at all levels through e.g. training.

4. Strategic communication and networking

- Increase efforts and broaden outreach to attract more women candidates.
- Publish feature stories about women and men in a balanced way, without reinforcing gender stereotypes, showing that there are many forms of femininity as well as masculinity.
- Make female role models and high-profile women from different backgrounds visible to further normalise the idea of women in leadership roles and to encourage more women to apply for those roles.
- Strengthen outreach through networks at Member State level, such as through conferences, training and networking events.

EEAS(2021)1030

Action Plan to enhance women's participation in civilian CSDP missions 2021-2024

<i>Strategic Area 1: Equal opportunities in candidacy, recruitment, retention and career development</i>	
Actions (short term 2021-2022, long term 2023-2024)	By whom
Short term actions	
1.1 Review the selection procedures for international seconded and contracted personnel in the civilian CSDP missions and, and clarify the positive action provisions that can be taken at different stages of the recruitment, including in shortlisting and selection phases.	CPCC
1.2 Monitor the application of positive action provisions and keep track of progress at all levels.	CPCC
1.3 Continue and further develop the collection of sex-disaggregated personnel data, including data on candidates to be included in the annual CPCC human resources statistics reports.	CPCC, missions
1.4 Continue, through calls for contributions, to encourage women to apply and more clearly highlight the specific gender balance needs for each position and its team in the mission.	CPCC, missions
1.5 (Selection panels) Strive for gender-balanced candidate shortlists and, as a general rule, shortlist at least one man and one woman as candidates.	CPCC, missions
1.6 Develop a scorecard that will help managers and selection panel members keep track of the gender composition in the teams for which they are recruiting new personnel.	CPCC, missions
1.7 Give selection panel members training on the selection procedures, including on the application of the temporary special measure to enhance gender balance.	CPCC, missions
1.8 Enhance the capacity of all selection panel members to mitigate biases through unconscious bias training.	CPCC, missions
1.9 Adapt language in job descriptions, as part of the Force Generation Handbook review, to remove possible gender bias and include, where appropriate, gender capacities among the requirements.	CPCC, missions
1.10 Consider extending application deadlines for Heads of Mission and other senior posts when no women candidates have applied.	CPCC, missions
1.11 (Heads of Mission) Take gender balance into special consideration when approving the selection of candidates for each call for contribution.	CPCC, missions
1.12 Review gender balance after each call for contribution and assess the application of the temporary special measure to enhance gender balance as part of the evaluation reports produced by CPCC Human Resources.	CPCC, missions
1.13 (Selection panels) Systematically include gender-related questions in interviews.	CPCC, missions

EEAS(2021)1030

1.14	Produce a list of sample questions that can be used when interviewing candidates to assess gender competency.	CPCC, missions
1.15	Assess mission work and living environments with gender and other special needs in mind, and ensure that safe and separate accommodation, toilets, bathrooms, and washing facilities are offered for men and women.	CPCC, missions
1.16	Assess and improve mission members' work-life balance and enhance results-based work systems which will give more time flexibility to, for example, new parents.	CPCC, missions
1.17	Identify talented women personnel (seconded and contracted mission members) and encourage them to apply for more senior positions.	CPCC, missions
1.18	Introduce a centralised exit survey for mission members that includes questions about equal treatment, inclusion and reasons for leaving the mission.	CPCC, missions
1.19	Set up a recurring CSDP women's mentoring programme, building on the pilot programme set up by the CoE and CPCC in 2021.	CPCC, together with CoE
Long-term actions		
1.20	Define actions to maintain gender balance improvements, and ensure that gender balance is maintained when missions are downsized.	CPCC, missions
1.21	Define measurable targets for achieving the objectives of this strategy and action plan.	CPCC, missions
1.22	Assess in depth the situation in missions that have the lowest percentage of women and consider what additional efforts can be made.	CPCC, missions
1.23	Consider relaunching calls for contributions for positions for which there were no women candidates.	CPCC, missions
1.24	Consider removing candidates' name and gender from applications before distribution to selection panel members for shortlisting.	CPCC, missions
1.25	Review international and local contracted staff's employment conditions and benefits, including gender considerations, with a view to understanding how to recruit suitable personnel and retain talent and know-how.	CPCC, missions
1.26	Consider adopting guidelines for flexible working arrangements to allow personnel to balance personal, family and professional commitments.	CPCC, missions

EEAS(2021)1030

<i>Strategic Area 2: Inclusive and harassment-free work environment for all</i>		
Short term actions		
2.1	Conduct an anonymous, mission-wide staff survey to get a baseline from which to assess mission working environments and identify areas for further improvement.	CPCC
2.2	Draw up a follow-up action plan to the staff survey.	CPCC, missions
2.3	Review and identify ways to enhance the support available to victims/persons affected by a breach of the Code of Conduct and Discipline.	CPCC, missions
2.4	Ensure mission members receive regular training on the Generic Standards of Behaviour and the Code of Conduct and Discipline, with emphasis on the zero-tolerance policy on gender-based discrimination, harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).	CPCC, missions
2.5	Make a staff counsellor available for mission members.	CPCC
2.6	Set up and maintain a network of confidential counsellors accessible for all mission members.	CPCC
2.7	Strive to ensure gender-balanced investigation teams for disciplinary investigations and proactively seek team members with gender competency when cases have a clear gender dimension.	CPCC, missions
2.8	Develop and provide regular in-mission training for mission managers on handling sensitive issues related to the Generic Standards of Behaviour and the Code of Conduct and Discipline.	CPCC
Long term actions		
2.9	Produce centralised information and awareness-raising materials to be used in mission-wide campaigns about the zero-tolerance policy on harassment and SEA, reporting mechanisms and procedures, and the support mechanisms available to persons affected by or witness to a breach.	CPCC
2.10	Improve the system used to collect and analyse data related to disciplinary cases, in order to better follow up on and track the consequences of gender-related breaches.	CPCC
2.11	Conduct a mission-wide follow-up survey to the initial staff survey.	CPCC
2.12	Provide additional support to creating a more conducive working environment to diversity and women's participation, including training and coaching for managers.	CPCC
<i>Strategic Area 3: Leadership engagement for institutional change</i>		
Short term actions		
3.1	Systematically include gender equality/WPS topics in HoM seminars and other high-level meetings, through mainstreaming or specific sessions.	CPCC
3.2	Include gender-responsive leadership requirements in the job descriptions of senior and middle-level management posts.	CPCC
3.3	Include briefings on gender equality in induction training for HoMs and other senior mission managers.	CPCC

EEAS(2021)1030

3.4	Integrate a gender perspective into existing leadership training for managers at all levels.	CPCC, missions
3.5	(CivOpsCdr, HoMs and other senior staff members) Regularly raise gender policies and priorities as points for discussion in high-level meetings and panels and in dialogues with local counterparts.	CPCC, missions
3.6	When a mission organises or supports panel discussions, seminars and conferences, ensure – to the extent possible – an equal representation of women and men, or encourage the participation of both women and men.	CPCC, missions
3.7	Convey periodic messages to staff, such as in all-staff meetings or on mission intranet pages, about gender equality and stressing the zero-tolerance policy on inappropriate behaviour, i.e. gender-based jokes or sexual harassment.	Missions
3.8	Conduct a feasibility study on redefining the current non-family status of low- to medium-risk civilian CSDP missions.	CPCC
3.9	Include gender mainstreaming as an element of the Standard Performance Evaluation for all managers.	CPCC, missions
Long term actions		
3.10	Systematically offer leadership training for managers at all levels that integrates a gender perspective and promotes gender-responsive leadership.	CPCC, missions
3.11	Develop and deliver a mandatory pre-posting training/briefing module to all newly recruited senior managers (HoMs, DHoMs, COS, HoOPS) on the general gender policies and priorities and the main gender issues relevant to their mission and area of operations.	CPCC, missions
3.12	Encourage HoMs and other senior mission managers to join networks (including networks for men) with high-level leaders to promote women's rights and gender equality.	CPCC, missions
3.13	Ensure CSDP mission managers participate in the EEAS-led initiatives offering training for managers at all levels on gender-responsive leadership, in line with the GAP III.	CPCC
Strategic Area 4: Strategic communication and networking		
Short term actions		
4.1	Set up a standalone 'gender equality in CSDP' section in the new EEAS Security and Defence website with subsequent audio-visual promotional material on this theme. Strive to regularly publish people-oriented stories about diverse women (and men) serving in different roles to raise awareness about work and life in CSDP missions. Continue to feature stories of women in operational positions, including in uniform, to showcase role models.	CPCC
4.2	Within the existing channels and using the resources available, strive to regularly publish messages about the policy objectives relating to promoting the equal and meaningful participation of women, and highlight the enhanced effectiveness of gender-balanced teams, both among local counterparts and within the missions.	CPCC, missions

EEAS(2021)1030

4.3	Coordinate joint media initiatives/key messages in internal and external communications, including social media.	CPCC, missions
4.4	Ensure that all external communications content is gender-balanced (to the extent possible), ensuring that both women and men are featured in press releases, web features, social media posts, high-level visits, etc.	CPCC, missions
4.5	Explore further networking possibilities and facilitate that women who are serving in missions can attend workshops/information fairs/events at the Member State level to share their experiences.	CPCC
Long term actions		
4.6	Seek resources to launch more comprehensive and/or targeted campaigns and outreach activities to raise awareness and interest of women (and men) to seek job opportunities in CSDP Missions	CPCC, missions

Monitoring and evaluation

This action plan shall be considered a living document and be regularly updated by CPCC. Yearly priorities will be agreed and included in the CPCC Annual work plan. The implementation of the actions will be monitored and regularly evaluated against targets including through:

- a yearly assessment of Mission personnel data progress against targets;
- a yearly assessment of actions implemented by CPCC and Missions;
- a follow-up staff survey with Mission personnel half way through the strategy;
- regular dialogue, including with Member States, on progress and gaps, lessons and good practice facilitated through the NIP Cluster 5.