# WOMEN IN MULTILATERAL PEACE OPERATIONS 2023: WHAT IS THE STATE OF PLAY? 

In the year 2000, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women and peace and security stressed the link between gender equality and international peace and security. The resolution underscored the importance of the full and equal participation of women in all efforts towards the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, including UN peace operations. Following the resolution, organizations and member states involved in multilateral peace operations affirmed their commitment to increase women's participation in these activities. Increasing the number of uniformed and civilian women at all levels has since become a priority of the UN Secretariat. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Secretariat and, more recently, the European External Action Service (EEAS) of the European Union (EU) have followed suit and developed strategies establishing specific targets and deadlines to enhance women's participation in their respective personnel. More than 20 years after the adoption of the resolution, some progress has been achieved in enhancing women's representation in multilateral peace operations, but much remains to be done.

This overview of women's representation in multilateral peace operations presents data on aggregate personnel trends, annual snapshots of data on women's representation in leadership, and annual averages of women in the personnel of peace operations and in member state contributions. It looks at UN peace operations (i.e. both UN peacekeeping operations and UN special political missions), EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations, and OSCE field operations. The objective is to support the efforts of multilateral organizations and their member states to increase the representation of women in multilateral peace operations.

The statistics presented here aim to inform and foster the debate on the future of the women and peace and security agenda within the context of multilateral peace operations. They illustrate to what extent the organizations deploying multilateral peace operations and their member states are making progress towards increasing women's representation. Having a better perspective about the status of women's participation in multilateral peace operations and keeping track of its progress contribute to refining strategies to target potential shortcomings. This overview also enhances the transparency of multilateral peace operations and provides insights into their recent trends and developments.

## WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN MULTILATERAL PEACE OPERATIONS: UN MILITARY

The UN's 2018 Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy established the goal of reaching 25 per cent women among military experts and staff officers and 15 per cent among troops in UN peace operations by 2028. Under the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) Declaration of Shared Commitments, the UN has advocated for broadening the role and participation of women in its operations, including uniformed women. Through the A4P implementation strategy for 2021-23, 154 UN member states committed to increasing the number of uniformed women personnel in UN peace operations. The proportion of women among military experts and staff officers is nearing the strategy's target, whereas the proportion of women among troops remains significantly below the 2028 goal.

## Women in UN military: Totals

In 2023, both the number and the proportion of women in the military personnel of UN peace operations increased. This trend has continued since the launch of the 2018 Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy. In June 2023, women constituted 7.3 per cent of the total military personnel deployed in UN peace operations ( 68333 ), which was an increase of 0.6 percentage points compared with the previous year. In the military, the proportion of women serving as experts and staff officers remained higher than for troop positions, at 21 per cent.

## Women in leadership

On 1 October 2023, 13 per cent of ( 1 out of 8 ) force commanders in UN peacekeeping operations were women. This was a decrease of 10 percentage points compared with the previous year. The decline can be attributed to the naming of a new force commander for MINURSO, a position held in the previous year by a woman serving as the deputy force commander.

Number of women in the military personnel of UN peace operations, Dec. 2014-June 2023



Proportion of women in the military personnel of UN peace operations, Dec. 2014-June 2023


## Women in UN military: Operations

UN peace operations with relatively high proportions of women in the military personnel tend to be relatively small in terms of deployment. The largest UN peace operations in terms of military deployment-UNMISS, MINUSCA, MONUSCO and MINUSMA, respectively-are among those with the lowest proportion of women in the military personnel. With the exception of MINURSO, UNAMI, UNISFA and UNMHA, the proportion of women in the military personnel has increased in all UN peace operations over the past year.

Proportion and number of women in the military personnel of UN peace operations, 2023 monthly averages

.. = not applicable.
Notes: The
year. 2023 mo

## Women in UN military: Contributors





 contributors by total number of military personnel to UN peace operations and the top $\mathbf{1 0}$ contributors by proportion of women to the military personnel of UN peace operations.

Top 10 contributors of women to the military personnel of UN peace operations, by highest number of women, 2023 monthly averages

Top 10 contributors of women to the military personnel of UN peace operations, by highest proportion of women, 2023 monthly averages



Notes: The 2023 monthly averages are based on the months from Jan. to June. The average numbers
year. Countries deploying fewer than 100 military personnel per month on average are not included.

# WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN MULTILATERAL PEACE OPERATIONS: UN POLICE 

The UN's 2018 Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy established the target of reaching 20 per cent women in formed police units and 30 per cent women among individual police officers by 2028. The A4P initiative reaffirmed the commitments of the UN and its member states. In 2021, the UN reached the 30 per cent goal for the proportion of women among individual police officers. In 2023, this proportion reached 31 per cent, which was a decline from 32 per cent in 2022. The proportion of women in formed police units increased in 2023 and it is closer to meeting the strategy's 2028 target.

## Women in UN police: Totals

The total number of women in the police personnel of UN peace operations increased in 2023 compared to the previous year. In June 2023, the proportion of women in the police personnel of UN peace operations remained stable at 19 per cent, showing no significant change since 2021. Both the number and the proportion of women in formed police units in UN peace operations increased in comparison with 2022. The proportion of women in formed police units reached 16 per cent in June 2023. In contrast, both the number and the proportion of individual women police officers decreased.

## Women in leadership

On 1 October 2023, 60 per cent (3 out of 5) of all chief police officers ( 4 police commissioners and 1 assistant police commissioner) were women. Of these, 2 held the position of police commissioner and 1 that of assistant police commissioner. This was a decrease of 7 percentage points compared with the previous year due to the closing of MINUSMA, which had a woman police commissioner.


## Women in UN police: Operations



 largest UN peace operation in terms of police personnel deployment.

Proportion and number of women in the police personnel of UN peace operations, 2023 monthly averages


## Women in UN police: Contributors



 police personnel. None of them is in the top 10 in terms of the number of personnel. Four of the top 10 contributors by proportion of women are African countries.

Top 10 contributors of women to the police personnel of UN peace operations, by highest number of women, 2023 monthly averages

Proportion of women O No. of women

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2
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- Rwanda
* Senegal Bangladesh
* Ghana * Burkina Faso

| Egurina Faso | $25 \%$ |
| :--- | :--- |
|  | $9.2 \%$ |

Egypt
Nigeria
́ㅡㄴogo

- Nepal

Indonesia

| $25 \%$ |
| :--- |
| $16 \%$ |
| $29 \%$ |
| $24 \%$ |
| $25 \%$ |
| $9.2 \%$ |
| $31 \%$ |
| $17 \%$ |
| $21 \%$ |
| $25 \%$ |

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281(+43)
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Top 10 contributors of women to the police personnel of UN peace operations, by highest proportion of women, 2023 monthly averages

## WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN MULTILATERAL PEACE OPERATIONS: UN CIVILIAN PERSONNEL

The UN's 2017 System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity set targets for the equal representation of women and men in several areas, including among civilian personnel in UN peace operations. The strategy allows for variation within a 47-53 per cent range as an indication of such parity. However, the goal of achieving gender parity in civilian personnel remains distant for most UN peace operations, and particularly for peacekeeping operations-among the latter, none has reached the target.

## Women in UN civilian personnel: Totals

The number of women in the civilian personnel of UN peace operations increased slightly in 2023. The proportion of women in civilian personnel was similar across both UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions. However, over the last ten years, the rate of increase for women in civilian positions in special political missions has outpaced that in peacekeeping operations. In June 2023, the proportion of women serving in civilian roles in UN special political missions stood at 34 per cent, while in UN peacekeeping operations it was slightly lower at 31 per cent.

## Women in leadership

On 1 October 2023, 33 per cent of (8 out of 24) ${ }^{1}$ heads of UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions were women. This was an increase of 5.3 percentage points compared with the previous year.

This number includes field offices that are not considered multiateral peace
operations according to SIPRI' definition, namely UNOAU, UNOCA, UNOWAS, UNSCO
operations acc
and UNSCOL.

Number of women in the civilian personnel of UN peace operations, Dec. 2014-June 2023



Proportion of women in the civilian personnel of UN peace operations, Dec. 2014-June 2023


## Women in UN civilian personnel: Operations

 more civilian personnel on average. However, a greater proportion of women are found in the civilian personnel of special political missions. In 2023, UNFICYP had the highest proportion of women in its civilian staff among UN peacekeeping operations, with 43 per cent. For special political missions, UNSCOL had the highest proportion of women in its civilian personnel, with 54 per cent. UNSCOL therefore overshot the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity goal of having between 47 and 53 per cent women in its civilian personnel. UNOWAS and UNSCO managed to reach the goal, with 53 and 47 per cent respectively.

Proportion and number of women in the civilian personnel of UN peacekeeping operations, 2023 monthly averages


Proportion and number of women in the civilian personnel of UN special political missions, 2023 monthly averages

Proportion of women No. of women


## WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN MULTILATERAL PEACE OPERATIONS: OSCE FIELD OPERATIONS

The OSCE Secretariat's Gender Parity Strategy for 2019-26 set the goal of gender parity across all levels of personnel in its field operations by 2026, allowing for variation within a 45-55 per cent range. Three out of 13 field operations reached at least 45 per cent women in their personnel in 2023.

## Women in OSCE field operations: <br> Totals

Up until its termination in March 2022, the SMM had been both the largest OSCE field operation and the one with the most women in its deployed personnel. It had shaped both the number and the proportion of women in OSCE operations. Excluding the SMM, the number of women in OSCE field operations has remained relatively constant, registering at 97 in June 2023. Additionally, the proportion of women in OSCE field operations other than the SMM has been fairly stable over the past decade. In 2023, the proportion rose to 38 per cent, a modest increase of 0.2 percentage points from the previous year.

## Women in leadership

On 1 October 2023, 23 per cent of ( 3 out of 13$)^{2}$ heads of mission of OSCE field operations were women. This was an increase of 1.6 percentage points compared with the previous year. The increase was a result of the discontinuation of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine in 2022, which was led by a man.
This number includes field operations that are not considered multilateral peace
operations accoed
 operaions.
Ashsabat.
Dushanbe.

Number of women in the personnel of OSCE field operations, Dec. 2014-June 2023


Proportion of women in the personnel of OSCE field operations, Dec. 2014-June 2023



Notes: Values in parentheses indicate the
SMM was discontinued on 31 Mar. 2022 .

## Women in OSCE field operations: Operations



 proportion of women personnel deployed.

Proportion and number of women in the personnel of OSCE field operations, June 2023
Proportion of women No. of women


## Women in OSCE field operations: Contributors



 their personnel 100 per cent women, the overall number of personnel from these countries is quite small, ranging from 1 to 2 individuals.

## Top 10 contributors of women to the personnel of OSCE field operations, by highest

 number of women, June 2023Proportion of women No. of women

II United States
I France
N North Macedonia
Italy
: Georgia
Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Germany

Horway
$\pi$ Spain
莱 United Kingdom


Top 10 contributors of women to the personnel of OSCE field operations, by highest proportion of women, June 2023


# WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN MULTILATERAL PEACE OPERATIONS: EU CSDP MISSIONS AND OPERATIONS 

In 2023, the EU renewed the Civilian CSDP Compact to bolster its civilian CSDP missions, committing among other things to increasing women's representation in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1325. By 2025, member states aim to enlarge the candidate pool of women for these roles, striving for 40 per cent in women's participation and gender parity at all Ievels, especially in leadership. While the previous compact committed to increasing women's representation in EU CSDP missions and operations, the new compact has established a concrete target for doing so. To support these aims, the EEAS plans to update its 2021 Strategy and Action Plan to Enhance Women's Participation in Civilian CSDP Missions.

## Women in EU CSDP missions and operations: Totals

The number of women in military EU CSDP missions has been increasing over the past few years, reaching 232 in December 2022. The proportion of women in military EU CSDP missions has also increased in comparison to the previous year, reaching 7.7 per cent in December 2022. Similarly, the number of women in civilian EU CSDP missions has been trending upwards, totalling 309 by June 2023. However, this increase was primarily due to an increase in the number of EU CSDP missions and operations. The proportion of women in these civilian missions has remained relatively stable, registering at 24 per cent in June 2023.

## Women in leadership

On 1 October 2023, 14 per cent of (3 out of 22) ${ }^{3}$ heads of EU CSDP missions and operations were women. This was a decrease of 3 percentage points compared with the previous year. Although the number of women leading EU CSDP missions and operations has remained unchanged, the number of these operations increased.
This number includes field operations that are not considered multilateral peace operations according to SiPRI's definition, namely EUCAP Somalia, EU.
EUMPM Niger, EUNAFFOR MED IRINI and EUNAVFOR SOM ATALANTA.


Number of women in the personnel of EU CSDP missions and operations, Dec. 2014-June 2023
 missions and operations, Dec. 2014-June 2023


## Women in EU CSDP missions and operations: Operations

 general uptrend in the proportion of women across most EU CSDP missions and operations.

Proportion and number of women in the personnel of EU CSDP missions and operations, 2023 monthly averages

otes: The 2023 monthly averages are based on the months from Jan. to June. For military EU CSDP operations, the averages are based on the year 2022 since the last available data is from Dec. 2022. The average numbers of women personnel are rounded to the $n$.

## Women in EU CSDP missions and operations: Contributors

Eight of the top 10 contributors of seconded personnel to civilian EU CSDP missions and operations are also among the top 10 contributors of seconded women personnel. Six of the top 10 contributors by number of women personnel also feature among the top $\mathbf{1 0}$ contributors by proportion of women in the seconded personnel.

Top 10 contributors of women to the personnel of civilian EU CSDP missions and operations, by highest number of women, 2023 monthly averages


Top 10 contributors of women to the personnel of civilian EU CSDP missions and operations, by highest proportion of women, 2023 monthly averages

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Since the UN Security Council passed its landmark resolution on women and peace and security, organizations and member states have pledged to improve the representation of women in multilateral peace operations. Although there has been a measure of progress, it remains incremental and falls short of achieving gender parity. Overall, women have continued to be under-represented in the field.

In terms of women serving as UN military personnel, strides are being made towards the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy's 2028 targets. Specifically, with 21 per cent women among military experts and staff officers, the organization is nearing its aim of 25 per cent women in this area. However, with 6.6 per cent women among troops, it is still falling short of the 15 per cent target for this category.

More substantive progress regarding women's representation is evident in terms of UN police personnel. Noteworthy initiatives include priority deployment to formed police units that include women. In 2021, the organization successfully met its 2028 target of 30 per cent women among individual police officers. In 2023, the proportion of women in this category reached 31 per cent, which was a minor decline compared with the previous year. At 16 per cent, the proportion of women in formed police units is increasing and closer to the 2028 target of reaching at least 20 per cent.

The participation of women in the civilian personnel of UN peace operations, however, has remained relatively stagnant. At 32 per cent in 2023, this area is falling substantially short of achieving the 2017 UN System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity's goal, which calls for a proportion of between 47 and 53 per cent.

For the OSCE, the proportion of women in its field operations has remained relatively stable in recent years, reaching 38 per cent in 2023. The SMM had a significant impact on the overall figures until it was discontinued in March 2022. This was due to its larger size and its lower proportion of women in comparison to most other missions. Currently, 3 out of 13 operations have reached the $45-55$ per cent target set by the OSCE Secretariat's Gender Parity Strategy for 2019-26.

The landscape is quite similar for EU CSDP missions. In its 2021-24 strategy, the EEAS acknowledged a stagnation in terms of women's participation in civilian CSDP missionswhich reached 24 per cent in 2023-and set a target of 40 per cent participation by 2024. The EEAS plans to revisit this strategy given that member states are expected to increase the roster of women candidates in 2025. However, it is important to note that term-limited appointments of women can create a short-term illusion of progress, diverting focus from the sustainable, long-term changes needed across various peace operations.

Overall, organizations are still falling short of their own strategic targets for women's participation in peace operations, signalling a clear need to redouble efforts to achieve these goals. Gender equality remains particularly elusive within leadership roles across all organizations. The UN's military personnel have the lowest proportion of women leaders at 13 per cent, while its police personnel fare better at 60 per cent. Tackling women's underrepresentation in senior and intermediary positions calls for sustained commitment and targeted strategies. However, merely increasing the numbers without fostering institutional change would fail to address the issue of women's meaningful participation in peace operations. Such a narrow focus could lead to a scenario where women are present but not enjoying equal status. Under-representation at various tiers of leadership not only contravenes the commitments of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, but it could also limit the scope and success of peace operations. Given these disparities, a focus on leadership should be a critical component of any strategy aimed at enhancing women's participation in multilateral peace operations.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A4P
BINUH
CSDP
EEAS
EU
EUAM Iraq
EUAM RCA
EUAM Ukraine
EUBAM Libya
EUBAM Rafah
EUCAP Sahel Mali
EUCAP Sahel Niger
EUCAP Somalia
EUFOR ALTHEA
EULEX Kosovo
EUMAM Ukraine
EUMM Georgia
EUNAVFOR MED IRINI
EUNAVFOR SOM ATALANTA
EUPM Moldova
EUPOL COPPS
EUTM Mali
EUTM Mozambique
EUTM RCA
EUTM Somalia
MINURSO
MINUSCA
MINUSMA
MONUSCO
OM Moldova
OM Montenegro
OM Serbia
OM Skopje
OMBIH
OMIK
OPA
OSCE
OSCE PRCIO
OSCE Astana
PO Bishkek
PO Dushanbe
SMM
UN
UNAMA
UNAMI
UNDOF
UNFICYP
UNIFIL
UNISFA
UNITAMS
UNMHA
UNMIK
UNMISS
UNMOGIP
UNOAU
UNOCA
UNOWAS
UNSCO
UNSCOL
UNSCR
UNSMIL
UNSOM
UNTSO
UNVMC

Action for Peacekeeping (of the UN)
UN Integrated Office in Haiti
Common Security and Defence Policy (of the EU)
European External Action Service
European Union
EU Advisory Mission in Iraq
EU Advisory Mission in the Central African Republic
EU Advisory Mission Ukraine
EU Border Assistance Mission in Libya
EU Border Assistance Mission to Rafah
EU Capacity Building Mission in Mali
EU Capacity Building Mission in Niger
EU Capacity Building Mission in Somalia
EU Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina
EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo
EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine
EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia
EU Naval Force Mediterranean
EU Naval Force Somalia
EU Partnership Mission in the Republic of Moldova
EU Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories
EU Training Mission in Mali
EU Training Mission in Mozambique
EU Training Mission in the Central African Republic
EU Training Mission in Somalia
UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
OSCE Mission to Moldova
OSCE Mission to Montenegro
OSCE Mission to Serbia
OSCE Mission to Skopje
OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina
OSCE Mission in Kosovo
OSCE Presence in Albania
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSCE Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office
OSCE Programme Office in Astana
OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek
OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe
OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine
United Nations
UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UN Assistance Mission for Iraq
UN Disengagement Observer Force
UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
UN Interim Force in Lebanon
UN Interim Security Force for Abyei
UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan
UN Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement
UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
UN Mission in South Sudan
UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan
UN Office to the African Union
UN Regional Office for Central Africa
UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel
Office of the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process
Office of the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon
UN Security Council Resolution
UN Support Mission in Libya
UN Assistance Mission in Somalia
UN Truce Supervision Organization
UN Verification Mission in Colombia

Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, accessed Oct. 2023.
The SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database is the only database on multilateral peace operations in the world that combines sex-disaggregated data on UN and non-UN peace operations. It allows users to track progress on efforts to increase women's representation and achieve gender parity in these operations.

