



Office of NATO Secretary General's
Special Representative for Women,
Peace and Security



NATO Gender-Inclusive Language Manual

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for Women, Peace and Security

In cooperation with the International Staff Translation Service



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Foreword

***Language shapes the way we think, and determines what we can think about.
Language is not simply a reporting device for experience but a defining framework for it.***

Benjamin Lee Whorf, Linguist

Language structures thought and dictates culture. The words we speak shape our thinking in subtle, subconscious ways which, in turn, influence our actions. Language is inherently dynamic and ever-evolving.

Language is also gendered and therefore plays a central role in human cognition and behaviour as one of the most common mechanisms by which gender is constructed and reinforced. Some languages do not mark gender distinctions systematically, some use pronouns to distinguish between male and female, and some go even further, extending the gender distinction to inanimate nouns through a system of grammatical gender.

Gendered language is important as it frames the understanding of equality. Gendered language shapes our views of women's roles and directly impacts women's participation in all aspects of society. Research highlights that gendered language can contribute to the marginalization of women in the labour market, impede educational attainment, reinforce traditional gender roles, and support harmful traditional practices. It can also empower, advance and promote equality between women and men.

There are many areas where we need long-term commitment and significant resources to advance gender equality. But gender-inclusive language is not one of them. We can all start today, using just a few good examples. Adapting our language is an easy and rewarding step that each of us can take to make gender equality a reality.

The purpose of this manual is thus to present "gender-inclusive" communication as a basis for advancing gender equality in NATO. By addressing the often unconscious bias in language, we can unpack and reshape the way we think about equality between women and men. This manual complements [the NATO/Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council \(EAPC\) Policy and Action Plan](#) on Women, Peace and Security and assists in furthering gender equality in all of NATO's tasks.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all those who contributed to this manual, including my team, the International Staff Translation Service as well as colleagues across NATO Headquarters. I also highly value the feedback and suggestions received from nations and NATO staff during the working sessions held in July 2019 and January 2020.

Together, let's take that extra step to forge communication in which all feel included. Let's create language that reflects our way of looking at the world today and that helps shape the world for tomorrow.

Clare Hutchinson

NATO Secretary General's Special Representative
for Women, Peace and Security

Context

1. Introduction

In cooperation with relevant divisions and offices across NATO HQ, the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security (SGSR WPS) and the WPS team, with the support of the International Staff's Translation Service, have developed a manual on gender-inclusive language. The manual has been drafted as a tool for all civilian and military personnel across NATO, and includes practical guidelines and examples relevant for daily work. This manual aims to encourage and strengthen the use of inclusive language at NATO.

The manual is structured in three parts: a conceptual section which puts the topic of gender-inclusive language into context; a practical section which explains how to communicate in a gender-inclusive way; and finally a set of annexes with concrete examples, including a checklist for easy reference. Also included is an "In a nutshell" summary document that can serve as a quick reference.

NATO's two official languages, English and French, have different grammatical structures and consequently there are differing approaches to gender-inclusive language for each. This manual, and its French counterpart, provide a comprehensive and coherent overview of gender-inclusive alternatives to gendered language for use in NATO contexts.

This manual is a living document, as language is constantly evolving.

2. Why does gender-inclusive language matter?

Language is a reflection of the attitudes and norms within a society. It also shapes our worldview and, over time, people's attitudes as to what is "normal" and acceptable. The way language is used not only reflects social structures and biases but may also reinforce preconceptions and inequalities related to gendered roles in everyday life and in the work environment.

While women play an active role in all parts of society, language that ignores or minimizes their contributions is still often used, as shown for example by the dominance of and defaulting to masculine words for general reference.

Gender-inclusive language is about writing and speaking in a way that does not discriminate or marginalize on the basis of gender and does not promote or perpetuate gender stereotypes. Therefore, using gender-inclusive language proactively and consistently is imperative for furthering gender equality in the workplace and for creating an inclusive working environment for all staff members.

Using gender-inclusive language can:

- Challenge unconscious bias and assumptions about gender roles in society;
- Lay the foundation for greater gender equality;
- Raise awareness of how language affects our behaviours and attitudes.

Using gender-inclusive language does not diminish the need to distinguish or highlight the differences between women and men and their different needs, when and as appropriate (e.g. sex-disaggregated data), to achieve gender equality.

3. Grammatical gender vs. gender as a social construct

It is important to distinguish between “grammatical gender” and gender as a social construct. The latter refers to roles and social attributes associated with being male or female. Gender roles determine what is expected and permitted in certain contexts and may vary depending on context and time. It is important to note that “gender” does not equate to “women” and is a separate concept from biological sex. For more information about the difference between “sex” and “gender”, please refer to the glossary at the end of this publication.

English has very few gender markers, and those that do exist are mostly pronouns and possessives (such as he/she and her/his) and gendered forms of address (Mr/Ms). Most English nouns are gender-neutral and only a few have specifically feminine or masculine forms (waiter/waitress). Therefore, the main challenge for gender-inclusive writing in English is the use of the generic masculine form by default. This manual will provide various alternatives to make your way of speaking and writing more inclusive.



How to make language more gender-inclusive

In the past, the use of the generic masculine was often considered as the general, inclusive form while the generic feminine was perceived as exclusively referring to women. Today, gender-inclusive language, as described below, is becoming the new norm.

Below you can find a set of techniques to avoid the generic masculine form in your writing and make your language more gender-inclusive.

1. Some useful techniques for gender inclusivity

a. Plural forms

Using plural forms can be an easy gender-neutral alternative to gendered pronouns. This technique is to be preferred as it is inclusive and avoids complicated sentence structures.

Avoid	Use instead
Every visitor must present his ID to obtain a temporary visitors' pass.	All visitors must present their IDs/passes to obtain a temporary visitor's pass.
The intern shall report back to her supervisor about weekly tasks.	Interns shall report back to their supervisors about weekly tasks.

b. Singular use of "they" and associated forms

According to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary, the **singular use of "they"** (with its associated forms "them", "their" and "themselves") is an acceptable alternative to masculine or feminine pronouns in English.

Avoid	Use instead
Each participant must make sure not to leave his classified documents behind when leaving the room.	Each participant must make sure not to leave their classified documents behind when leaving the room.
Every staff member must schedule her midterm review with her supervisor before May 30.	Every staff member must schedule their midterm review with their supervisor before May 30.
Each staff member must make sure not to wear his pass outside NATO HQ.	Each staff member must make sure not to wear their pass outside NATO HQ.
Each staff member should submit her timesheet himself.	Each staff member is responsible for submitting their own timesheet.

c. Omitting pronouns

Often a sentence can simply be rephrased in a way that does not require gendered pronouns. However, depending on the context, this technique may come across as somewhat impersonal and should therefore be used with caution.

Avoid	Use instead
A person must have resided continuously in the country for 5 years before he may apply for permanent residence.	A person must have resided continuously in the country for 5 years before applying for permanent residence.
If a contractor/member of an external company wishes to apply for Staff Centre membership, he must make sure his company is on the pre-approved list.	All contractors/members of external companies on the pre-approved list may apply for Staff Centre membership.

d. Multiple pronouns/forms

This technique explicitly uses **both the feminine and masculine form** to avoid the generic masculine. This technique should be used in moderation as constant repetition may affect the readability of the text. To increase inclusivity, the two forms can be used in **alphabetical order**.

Examples:

Each Head of Service should send **her or his** assistant.

When the Action Officer receives the request, **he or she** will process it within 5 working days.

Another technique to include both male and female forms is combining them, using s/he, hers/his, her/him, etc.

Examples:

The Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security implements NATO's WPS mandate. **S/he** serves as the high-level focal point on all aspects of NATO's gender and WPS-related work.

Each NATO Ambassador is invited to represent **her/his** national position on the issue.

Her/his main task will be to update the content of the database.

If you choose to combine pronouns, it is imperative that a standardized version be used **consistently throughout the document (e.g. her/his versus her or his)**.

Combined pronouns or nouns should **be avoided in documents** (as opposed to **forms, letters and other comparable administrative documents** that may lack space for the full alternative). These forms should also be avoided in any publications and web features; use both the feminine and masculine forms instead.

Special case of job descriptions and vacancy notices

In job descriptions and vacancy notices, Human Resources generally uses the female version first.

Examples:

S/he will be responsible for the coordination with international partners.

Her/his main responsibility will be administrative assistance to the staff.

Note: *Highlighting both genders can be useful to make a sentence more inclusive when common preconceptions or stereotypes could otherwise distort the intended meaning.*

Examples:

Armed conflict affects women and men differently.

All soldiers – **men and women alike** – responded negatively to question 5 about parental leave.

e. Passive voice

Using the passive voice is another alternative to the generic masculine. Be aware, however, that the passive voice may make the text sound less dynamic. Nevertheless, this technique may be preferable in some documents.

Avoid	Use instead
Each representative must submit her comments by Monday COB.	Comments must be submitted by each representative by Monday COB.
Each action officer must send his document to the registry for distribution.	Documents must be sent to the registry for distribution.
Every new staff member must complete her arrival sheet by the end of the month.	The arrival sheet for newcomers must be completed by every new staff member by the end of the month.

f. Alternative pronoun “who”

The gender-neutral pronoun “who” can function as a substitute for gendered pronouns and thereby make a sentence more inclusive.

Avoid	Use instead
If a staff member is not satisfied with the board’s decision, he can ask for a rehearing.	Any staff member who is not satisfied with the board’s decision can ask for a rehearing.
If a member of staff has any issue with her office furniture, she can use the internet portal to make a service request to resolve it.	Any member of staff who has an issue with their office furniture can use the internet portal to make a service request.

g. Imperative

Using the imperative not only helps to rephrase a sentence in a more inclusive way but also makes it sound more dynamic. This technique is especially useful when making a request.

Avoid	Use instead
Each staff member is requested to submit his information for registration.	Please submit all information for registration.
Every participant should confirm her registration by 18 December.	Please confirm your participation by 18 December.



2. Functions and job titles

Avoid generic male forms when referring to both men and women and try using gender-neutral alternatives. Avoid gendered job titles for women such as manageress or lady doctor. In English, most job titles are gender-neutral (e.g. lawyer, officer) and there are usually gender-inclusive alternatives for explicitly gendered titles.

Note: *There is no need to gender already inclusive terms. Avoid using forms such as female/male doctor or female/male nurse.*

Exclusive terms	Inclusive/neutral terms
Chairman	Chair (or Chairperson)
Chairmanship	Chairpersonship
Businessman	Businessperson
Policeman	Police officer
Cleaning lady	Cleaner
Spokesman	Spokesperson
Fireman	Firefighter
Statesman	Political leader/Head of state/Diplomat/Political figure
Handyman	Technician/Repairer
Cameraman	Videographer
Removal man	Mover
Waiter/Waitress	Server

3. Military ranks

Military ranks are generally gender neutral in English. However, some challenges remain with ranks in the navy and air force such as [Ordinary Seaman](#), [Able Seaman](#) and [Master Seaman](#).

Depending on the context, gender-inclusive alternatives can be used for more general terms. The ranks themselves do not change.

Example:

Airmen → pilots, air force personnel, air corps

Guardsmen → guard

Servicemen → serviceperson, member of the armed forces, soldier, sailor (depending on context)

Note: *if the gender of the person needs to be specified, then write service woman (not female soldier, woman soldier, etc.)*

4. Personal titles

a. Ms, Mrs or Miss?

- As a general rule, refer to all women as **Ms**
- Only use **Mrs** if someone explicitly wishes to be referred to as such
- Avoid the form **Miss**

In most cases, a simple “Hello” or “Good morning”, etc. is an acceptable way of starting off an email (but not a letter).

When addressing a letter to someone unknown, “Dear Sir or Madam” or “Dear Madam or Sir” are perfectly acceptable forms. Note, however, that it is good practice to find out who you are addressing.

b. Professional titles

Ensure that titles and ranks are used consistently for men and women in any text. If the title and full name are mentioned for men, they must be included for women as well.

Avoid	Use instead
Mr and Mrs John Diech	Mr. John Diech and Ms. Anna Diech
Captain Frank Smith and Abby Brown will attend the event.	Lieutenant Colonel Abby Brown and Captain Frank Smith will attend the event. <i>(Here, the person with the higher rank is placed first.)</i>
General Reinhart and Mrs Reinhart.	General Reinhart and Doctor Lammond. <i>(If the woman has chosen to keep her birth name, for instance.)</i>

c. Transgender

When writing about or referring to a transgender person, make sure to use the appropriate title and pronouns for the person’s gender identity.

5. Stereotypes

Some expressions may convey sexist stereotypes, and reflect outdated ideas of the characteristics and roles of men and women.

Avoid	Use instead
The organizers invite all conference participants and their wives to a reception.	The organizers invite all conference participants and their partners/spouses to a reception.
I will have my girl make the necessary arrangements.	I will ask my assistant to make the necessary arrangements.
Sorry to hear the equipment is not working. I will send my guys to see what needs to be done.	Sorry to hear the equipment is not working. I will send my team to see what needs to be done.
Maria is a career woman .	Maria is a professional/executive . <i>(Men are not referred to as “career men”.)</i>
Susan is a lady doctor .	Susan is a doctor .

Sometimes language practices generate gendered terms that could be replaced with more inclusive/neutral language.

Alternative phrases for commonly used terms:

Exclusive terms	Inclusive/Neutral terms
manpower	workforce/staff/labour force
man-machine interface	human-machine interface
mankind	humankind/humanity
man-hours	work hours/individual hours/full-time equivalent
two-man office	two-person office
manning	staffing

6. Quotes

Quotes made by individuals cannot be altered, even if they appear gender-biased. Depending on the context, there are several ways to incorporate them in a more inclusive way.

- Keep quotes between “**quotation marks**” to make it clear that the words are not your own.
- **Paraphrase** the direct quote in a more inclusive manner.
- Avoid **gender-biased** quotes when they are not essential to the text.



In a nutshell

TECHNIQUES FOR GENDER INCLUSIVITY

- **Plural forms**
All visitors must collect their passes at the guard house
- **Singular use of they/their**
*Each staff member must avoid wearing **their** pass outside NATO HQ*
- **Omitting pronouns**
*A person must have worked for 5 years before **applying**...*
- **Multiple pronouns/forms**
*When the Action Officer receives the request, **he or she** will process it...*
- **Passive voice**
*Comments **must be submitted by** each representative...*
- **Alternative pronoun “who”**
*Any staff member **who** is not satisfied*
- **Imperative**
***Please confirm** your participation*

CONSISTENCY

- **When using both the feminine and the masculine form, use them in alphabetical order**
He/she, her/his,
- **When using a double form (feminine/masculine), use the same one throughout the text**
He/she, he or she, s/he

HR DOCUMENTS

- **The feminine form always comes before the masculine.**
***S/he** must be able to draft policy papers on a wide range of issues*

FUNCTIONS AND JOB TITLES

- **Avoid generic male forms when referring to both men and women**
Chairmen → Chairs
- **Avoid superfluous gender distinctions in job titles**
Manageress, lady doctor → Manager, doctor
- **There is no need to gender already inclusive terms**
Female/male nurse → nurse

AVOID STEREOTYPES

- **Avoid sexist stereotypes**
*Maria is a career woman
→ Maria is a professional/executive
John is a male nurse
→ John is a nurse*

NEUTRAL LANGUAGE

- **Replace unnecessarily gendered terms with neutral alternatives**
Two-man office → two-person office

FORMS OF ADDRESS

- **As a general rule, refer to all women as Ms**
- **Only use Mrs if someone explicitly wishes to be referred to as such**
- **Avoid the form Miss**



Annexes

1. Programmes, policies, offices and agreed/fixed terminology

Existing programme, organization, committee and project titles cannot be changed unless the respective organization agrees to do so. In the future, gendered and exclusive programme titles should be avoided.

Note on NATO agreed terminology:

NATO agreed terminology can only be changed upon request to the NATO Standardization Office and is subject to approval by the member states. Changing NATO agreed terminology can influence the meaning of your documents and may be prejudicial to interoperability.

Example:

Unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) ≠ remotely piloted vehicle (RPV)

Even though RPV may seem like a gender-neutral synonym to UAV and does not contain the word “man”, it does not refer to the same concept.

All NATO terminology is available online via NATO Term <https://nso.nato.int/natoterm>.

2. Checklist

Before submitting your document or sending an email to your colleagues, check if you have paid attention to inclusive writing using this quick checklist.

<p>Generic masculine</p> <p>Does the text include generic masculine/feminine forms? → Have you substituted generic forms for more inclusive forms? Check the techniques on pages 9-12.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Consistency</p> <p>Does the text use professional titles/personal titles/ranks consistently for men and women?</p> <p>Have you used double feminine/masculine forms consistently throughout your text? E.g. <i>s/he, she/he, she</i> or <i>he</i>, etc.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>No need for gender</p> <p>Are you mentioning somebody's gender, without it being necessary? Check page 14 for more information.</p> <p>Are gendered quotes/reference rephrased or clearly referenced as such? Check page 17 for more information.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Inclusivity</p> <p>Are you using the words "man" or "men" when referring to groups made up of men and women?</p> <p>Does the text include exclusionary job titles/descriptions? → Consult the list on page 14 for alternatives.</p> <p>Does the text include the same kind of information when referring to people of different genders?</p> <p>When writing about or referring to a transgender person, have you used the appropriate pronouns for the person's gender identity?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Readability</p> <p>If your text is a document (as opposed to a form, a letter or another comparable administrative document), have you made sure to use the full forms of pronouns and nouns? E.g. <i>he</i> or <i>she</i> instead of <i>s/he</i>.</p> <p>Have you made sure your text does not sound too impersonal? Do not overuse the passive form.</p> <p>Does your gender-inclusive text read smoothly?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Forms of address</p> <p>Have you used the appropriate form of address (Mrs/Ms)?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Time to practise

The following section gives an overview of several types of documents that you might encounter in your work. Each example has been crafted for the purpose of this exercise and is designed to draw your attention to wording that could be improved for better inclusivity or that can help you take account of gender in your writing.

a. Emails

Can you spot the elements that are not gender-inclusive?

Dear Sirs,

Please find attached an invitation to the reception in honour of Colonel John Hammel and Captain Touring, who is leaving after three years of distinguished service to join her husband in the US.

The reception will take place on Friday 6 December 2019 from 6pm onwards at the residence of the Ambassador, Mrs Morton.

Your wives are, of course, most welcome to attend the event.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Annie or Lucinda. Our ladies are doing a marvellous job and will gladly help.

Please let us know if you are able to attend by returning the attached form by 1 December 2019.

Kind regards,

Gender-inclusive version

Dear ~~Sirs~~ colleagues,

Please find attached an invitation to the reception in honour of Colonel John Hammel, ~~who is retiring~~, and Captain Sue Touring, who is leaving after three years of distinguished service to join her husband in the US.

The reception will take place on Friday 6 December 2019 from 6pm onwards at the residence of ~~the Ambassador Mrs Morton~~.

Your ~~wives~~ spouses are, of course, most welcome to attend the event.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Annie Tuck or Lucinda Wolff. ~~Our ladies are doing a marvellous job and will gladly help.~~

Please let us know if you are able to attend by returning the attached form by 1 December 2019.

Kind regards,

b. Personnel Regulations

Can you spot the elements that are not gender-inclusive?

Paid parental leave

87.2.2 Paid parental leave shall consist of six weeks with full emoluments.

1.1 The family allowance shall be granted to staff members whose wife, within the meaning of the Personnel Regulations, has an overall income (gross income less compulsory social and/or pension contributions) lower than 50% of the basic monthly salary of the scale of the duty station of a Z1/1 grade staff member, plus the basic amount of the family allowance.

1.2 Eligibility shall commence when the staff member and his wife have established a family unit at the duty station. It shall end when the family unit is dissolved or when the wife ceases to actually and habitually live with the staff member at the duty station.

12.1.2 The decisions of the Tribunal in a case shall be taken by a panel consisting of the President and two other members designated by him. If the President recuses himself or is otherwise unable to hear a case, he shall name a third member to serve on the panel.

Compare the two versions

<p>1.1 The family allowance shall be granted to staff members whose wife, within the meaning of the Personnel Regulations, has an overall income (gross income less compulsory social and/or pension contributions) lower than 50% of the basic monthly salary of the scale of the duty station of a Z1/1 grade staff member, plus the basic amount of the allowance.</p> <p>1.2 Eligibility shall commence when the staff member and his wife have established a family unit at the duty station. It shall end when the family unit is dissolved or when the wife ceases to actually and habitually live with the staff member at the duty station.</p>	<p>1.1 The family allowance shall be granted to staff members whose spouse, within the meaning of the Personnel Regulations, has an overall income (gross income less compulsory social and/or pension contributions) lower than 50% of the basic monthly salary of the scale of the duty station of a Z1/1 grade staff member, plus the basic amount of the allowance.</p> <p>1.2 Eligibility shall commence when the staff member and their [or his/her] spouse have established a family unit at the duty station. It shall end when the family unit is dissolved or when the spouse ceases to actually and habitually live with the staff member at the duty station.</p>
<p>12.1.2 The decisions of the Tribunal in a case shall be taken by a panel consisting of the President and two other members designated by him. If the President recuses himself or is otherwise unable to hear a case, he shall name a third member to serve on the panel.</p>	<p>12.1.2 The decisions of the Tribunal in a case shall be taken by a panel consisting of the President and two other members designated by the President [or him/her]. If the President recuses him/herself or is otherwise unable to hear a case, they [or he/she] shall name a third member to serve on the panel.</p>

c. Job advertisements

POST DESCRIPTION NATO INTERNATIONAL STAFF

DIVISION DEFENCE POLICY AND PLANNING DIVISION
TITLE Officer, DP
GRADE A4
JOB FAMILY Core - Policy and Programme Implementation

It is more inclusive to spell out acronyms.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

ESSENTIAL

Suggestion: "The incumbent"

He must:

- have attended a NATO or national military staff college;
- have a very good knowledge of the NDPP;
- have at least five years of national or international experience (preferably both) in the field of defence planning, evidenced through previous posts which he has held;
- have experience in the preparation of military (land, maritime, or air force) force plans and associated financial, manpower and procurement planning;
- be aware of the political, economic and financial considerations underlying national and NATO defence plans and policies, and also understand the relevant military and technical aspects;
- have a good general knowledge of NATO affairs, including the organisation, basic rules and processes, and major topics of the day;
- possess the following minimum levels of NATO's official languages (English/French): V ("Advanced") in one; I ("Beginner") in the other;
- be able to communicate clear, logical, persuasive and succinct arguments in oral and especially written form;
- be prepared to travel extensively and to work unsocial hours.

Trying to enlarge the type of colleges required and to give an opportunity to other backgrounds than purely military may encourage other groups of candidate, including more women, to apply.

Suggestion: "Staff"

Suggestion: "be willing to travel and to work outside core business hours".

"be willing" may sound more positive and inclusive than "be prepared", which may deter some candidates.

DESIRABLE

The following would be considered an advantage:

knowledge and experience in the field of PFP, especially with regard to the PARP.

This part could simply be deleted since it would deter some people from applying. Positive language can help attract a wider pool of candidates.

INTERRELATIONSHIPS

The incumbent reports to the Director of Defence Planning for the performance of all areas of responsibility set out above. He shares responsibilities and works closely with the other officers of the Directorate. He will maintain a good working relationship with the other Directorate of DPP and with members of other Divisions of the International Staff and International Military Staff. He will work closely with staff of the two NATO Strategic Commands and with national defence transformation experts both at NATO HQ and in capitals.

Suggestion: S/he

He must demonstrate:

- Achievement: Creates own measures of excellence and improves performance;
- Analytical Thinking: Sees multiple relationships;

POST DESCRIPTION
NATO INTERNATIONAL STAFF

DIVISION

DEFENCE POLICY AND PLANNING DIVISION
DASG FOR POLICY AND PLANNING
DEFENCE POLICY AND CAPABILITIES/DEFENCE POLICY AND PARTNERSHIP

As a general rule, it is more inclusive to spell out all acronyms so that the uninitiated can understand them.

TITLE

Officer

GRADE

A4

JOB FAMILY

Core - Policy Development

SUMMARY

The Defence Policy and Planning (DPP) Division has the lead role on the defence-related aspects of NATO's fundamental security tasks at the political-military level.

For better inclusivity, it is best to explain what the roles of the Division, the Directorate and the section are.

As part of the Defence Policy and Capabilities Directorate (DPCD), the Defence Policy Section deals with a wide range of issues related to Alliance defence policies and strategies. In particular, it is responsible for the implementation of the Alliance's strengthened deterrence and defence posture as well as for ensuring its overall coherence. In addition, it is in charge of the substantive preparation of the defence aspects of Summits, of Defence Ministers' meetings, as well as of Defence Policy Directors' meetings. It provides advice on NATO-EU cooperation on capability development and military mobility as well as on European Defence. The Section maintains an awareness of major security and defence developments on the international scene, and prepares policy papers for Allies' consideration on a wide range of defence policy issues. It also engages with Allies and Partners on defence policy issues on a regular basis.

The incumbent is responsible in particular for the provision and coordination of advice on general questions of defence policy. S/he must be able to draft policy papers on a wide range of issues and political-military advice to be discussed by the Defence Policy and Planning Committee (DPPC), in particular on the overall implementation of the Alliance's strengthened deterrence and defence posture. In this context, s/he will be asked to draft defence policy papers for the Council and subordinate committees, prepare briefing materials for the Secretary General and other high-level officials, write speeches and articles, provide lectures and briefings, and represent NATO at international conferences.

Gender-inclusive language.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

ESSENTIAL

The incumbent must:

- possess a university degree from an institute of recognised standing;
- possess at least 7 years of relevant work experience in defence policy development, in a national administration or international organisation;
- be conversant with the Alliance's political and military consultative processes and key defence and security policy issues on its agenda;
- be conversant with Alliance defence policies and strategies;
- demonstrate good political judgement;

This phrasing is more inclusive than restricting education to NATO schools only for example.

Here again, enlarging the scope of work experience to national administration or international organizations is more inclusive than limiting it to defence policy.

Not too restrictive, which is welcome.

- have strong communication and drafting skills;
- have a clear understanding of major contemporary international political, politico-military and defence questions;
- be able to analyse and assess these issues and prepare competent products on them under time pressure;
- possess the following minimum levels of NATO's official languages (English/French):
V ("Advanced") in one; I ("Beginner") in the other;
- be prepared to travel and to work long and irregular hours when needed.

This wording does not directly exclude anybody.

DESIRABLE

The following would be considered an advantage:

a basic knowledge of NATO, EU or national defence planning procedures.

INTERRELATIONSHIPS

The incumbent reports to the Head, Defence Policy (DPP), and through her/him to the Director, Defence Policy and Capabilities Directorate as needed. S/he assists in the coordination of the Directorate's work within the Division, with other divisions of the International Staff, with the NATO Military Authorities and with national delegations. S/he liaises with other international organisations to develop unified defence and security policies, as appropriate.

Gender-inclusive language.

Direct reports: N/a.

Indirect reports: N/a.

COMPETENCIES

The incumbent will demonstrate the following competencies:

Analytical Thinking: Makes complex plans or analyses;

Clarity and Accuracy: Checks own work;

Conceptual Thinking: Applies learned concepts;

Customer Service Orientation: Takes personal responsibility for correcting problems;

Impact and Influence: Takes multiple actions to persuade;

Initiative: Is decisive in a time-sensitive situation;

Organisational Awareness: Understands organisational climate and culture;

Teamwork: Solicits inputs and encourages others.

d. Decision Sheets

The following is a fictitious example of a gender-biased Decision Sheet. What could you do to make it more gender-neutral?

NATO CLASSIFICATION

DECISION SHEET

COMMITTEE-DS(2020)0001

COMMITTEE

Meeting held on 15 February 2020

I. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Document: COMMITTEE-A(2020)0001

The COMMITTEE approved the agenda after adding two other items to “Any Other Business”.

II. ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

(1) The COMMITTEE considered that 1 September was not the best time to hold elections because a) it had been noted over the years that anyone in the Committee Secretary’s role always had a very heavy workload at that time of year and she would be unable to prepare the documents in time and b) many mothers had to take leave that day to take their children to school on the first day of the school year;

(2) The current Committee Secretary, Mrs Green, confirmed that she would prefer to hold the elections at a later date that month;

(3) The Treasurer pointed out that if the elections were held later in September, this would clash with the Winter Seminar Preparatory Meeting;

(4) The representatives said that they would check with their assistants whether they would be able to take on some of Mrs Green’s workload to hold the elections on 1 September after all.

[...]

Compare the two versions

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Glossary

The following definitions all come from the NATO booklet entitled “Concepts and definitions – Women, Peace and Security in NATO”.¹

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

Discrimination against women is defined as ‘any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on the basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field’.

Discrimination can stem from both law (*de jure*) or from practice (*de facto*). The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) recognizes and addresses both forms of discrimination, whether contained in laws, policies, procedures or practice:

- ‘**De jure discrimination**’, for example, in some countries, a woman is not allowed to leave the country or hold a job without the consent of her husband.
- ‘**De facto discrimination**’, for example, a man and woman may hold the same job position and perform the same duties, but their respective benefits may differ.

CEDAW was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly and is the only international bill of rights for women. It is the second most ratified convention, following the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

GENDER

Gender refers to the social attributes associated with being a female or male, which is learned through socialization and how society/culture interprets what is permissible for women and what is permissible for men. Gender determines what is expected, permitted and valued in a woman or in a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in many areas. Gender does not mean women.

[See DISCRIMINATION]

Although the terms ‘**sex**’ and ‘**gender**’ are often used interchangeably, they have slightly different but distinctive connotations; ‘sex’ tends to see biological differences – the individual’s designation at birth – girl/boy; while ‘gender’ more often refers to cultural and social differences and sometimes encompasses a broader range of identities.

GENDER BIAS

Gender bias is the inclination to favour/support or prefer one gender over another. Gender bias can be unconscious and unintentional, but it still may result in discrimination, if not acknowledged and addressed proactively.

Gender bias can take the form of preference of recruiting men or women for specific types of jobs.

¹ https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2019_07/20190709_1907-wps-glossary.pdf

Stereotypes can play into the unconscious acceptance of women and men's aptitude for certain functions; for example, women make up higher numbers of teachers, healthcare professionals and administrative staff and men as leaders in politics, business and military spheres. This is often attributed to gender bias in recruitment.

GENDER BLINDNESS

Gender blindness is the term used to refer to the failure to recognize that the roles and responsibilities of men/boys and women/girls are assigned to them in specific social, cultural, economic, and political contexts and backgrounds. Projects, programmes, policies and attitudes which are gender-blind do not take into account these different roles and diverse needs. They maintain the status quo and will not help transform the unequal structure of gender relations.

For example, a failure to recognize and respond to the physiological differences between male and female soldiers may lead to the procurement and provision of inadequate or ill-fitting items of kit and/or equipment for women which may not, ultimately, be fit for purpose.

GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men.

Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born female or male.

Gender equality recognizes the diversity of perceptions between women and men, but allows for both women and men to advance equally across all spheres – social, political, economic and cultural.

Notably, gender equality is not solely a 'women's issue' but is a concern for both men and women.

For NATO, gender equality is at the core of the Alliance's work. It provides the basis for the NATO/EAPC Policy and Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

GENDER EQUITY

Gender equity involves treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.

Gender equity is the process of allocating resources, programmes and decision-making fairly to both women and men. This requires ensuring that everyone has access to a full range of opportunities, and therefore may need specific actions adopted to support achievement of gender equality.

Gender equity is not the same as **gender equality**. Equity is developing specific and different strategies for women and men based on requirement (fairness). Equality is providing the same opportunities equally (sameness).

Equity measures are sometimes called for when women are unable to achieve equality without specific and targeted intervention. These measures are commonly referred to as positive discrimination or affirmative discrimination. Establishing quotas for women's participation is an example of a positive discrimination measure. Quotas are seen as a technique to improve gender balance. This can be seen through the lens of gender equity.

GENDER-INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Using gender-inclusive language means speaking and writing in a way that does not discriminate against a particular sex and does not perpetuate gender stereotypes. Given the key role of language in shaping cultural, political and social attitudes, using gender-inclusive language is a powerful way to promote **gender equality** and eradicate **gender bias**.

For example, the use of the term “Chair” instead of “Chairman” is gender-inclusive language.

SEX

Sex refers to the biological characteristics of women and men. These characteristics are usually permanent and immutable biological characteristics common to individuals in all societies and cultures. Gender refers to the social attributes associated with being male and female, which are learned through socialisation and determine a person’s position and value in any given context.

Gender, although it originates in objective biological divergences, goes far beyond the physiological and biological specifics of the two sexes in terms of the roles each is expected to play. Gender differences are social constructs, inculcated on the basis of a specific society’s particular perceptions of the physical differences and the assumed tastes, tendencies and capabilities of men and women.

Gender differences, unlike the immutable characteristics of sex, are universally conceded in historical and comparative social analyses to be variants that are transformed over time and from one culture to the next, as societies change and evolve.

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Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

Please send queries to
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April 2020



0308-20-WPS

NATO Graphics & Printing