

Small, Fragile, and Unequal:

Reporting on Women,
Peace and Security in
Cyprus and Kosovo

Veronika Hornyák
Petros Petrikkos



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ABSTRACT

This report looks at two distinct yet comparative cases: Cyprus and Kosovo, two small communities with a violent past. Specifically, the report seeks to develop a better understanding of the policies on gender and security in peacekeeping missions /operations in cases of protracted conflict, with Cyprus and Kosovo as case studies. In doing so, feminist thinking within Security Studies is integrated into a revised approach to Securitisation Theory, which is employed as a model to conceptualise protracted conflicts in small states and communities. We understand a 'protracted conflict' as an "intense and violent conflict over important issues persisting for long periods of time."¹ Both Cyprus and Kosovo, while currently at ceasefire, exist within facilitated peace processes, with a looming risk of violence breaking out again. In both country contexts, the link between gender and security in the comparative sense is an understudied concept, with limited literature on a useful analysis of (a) Cyprus as a case study in terms of gender-security in peace operations, and (b) a comparative examination between Kosovo and Cyprus. While most research examining the gender dimension has focused on newer, more modern missions and operations, such as EULEX Kosovo, there is a considerable gap in research and policy for older missions, with particular reference to Cyprus. As such, this report examines Kosovo and Cyprus in order to assess the differences in the missions and to highlight the gaps between older and newer missions, with emphasis on the link between gender and security in peace operations. The objective is to determine the best peacekeeping practices in Kosovo, which can then be made available for the case of Cyprus.

¹ Michael Colaresi and William R. Thompson (2002) 'Strategic Rivalries, Protracted Conflict, and Crisis Escalation,' *Journal of Peace Research*, 39(3): 264.

OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

In navigating the current peace and security landscape, this report aims to address the prevalent yet conflicting policy that incorporates security and defence aspects for women, as it is applied in missions in protracted conflicts, and specifically in Cyprus. While existing pillars, institutional arrangements, and legal frameworks in the internationally recognised Republic of Cyprus address issues pertaining to domestic violence and abuse, and rights and equality for women at large, the same cannot be said for the case of the unrecognised Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC).² Meanwhile, although recent developments in the Republic of Cyprus (RoC) highlight the state's bid to push for greater peace and security equality provisions, the legal and policy language that truly incorporates a comprehensive security dimension is largely absent from official paperwork and frameworks. Similarly, there are notable attempts by the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) to introduce a working framework in line with the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda within its own staff and facilities, yet there are equally notable areas in need of improvement that are worth mentioning.

Drawing on examples from the case of Kosovo³, this report seeks to identify best practices for use in peacekeeping missions and institutions responsible for delivering foreign, security and defence policies in Cyprus. The institutional arrangements in security, defence and peacekeeping in Kosovo are observed as complementary processes: placing added emphasis on the roles of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) and NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR), with useful additions from the corresponding United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), offers a better picture of how peacekeeping missions interact with each other and the authorities while also complementing each other's work vis-à-vis women and security. Despite Kosovo being far from perfect as a model case, there are elements that can be replicated and incorporated into the case of Cyprus.

² The self-proclaimed 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' since 1983 is only recognised by the Republic of Turkey. The Republic of Cyprus is the internationally recognised state entity that claims jurisdiction over the whole island of Cyprus. It should be noted that the authors primarily refer to the unrecognised status of institutions and their governance mechanisms whenever they refer to 'TRNC' and not the Turkish Cypriot community as a whole.

³ We refer to Kosovo in using the official terminology as highlighted by the United Nations. This does not imply any recognition of Kosovo as a state or otherwise sovereign entity under international law.

The Republic of Cyprus first introduced a comprehensive National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAP-WPS) in 2021.⁴ The state had already incorporated gender equality parameters institutionally, with the example of the Commissioner for Gender Equality, first set up in 2014.⁵ In the Turkish Cypriot community in the north, despite shortcomings, there are active civil society groups that push for greater gender equality and the active participation of women in the political realm. Nonetheless, the concept of security has been underdeveloped in the north as well. As highlighted in a recent PRIO Cyprus Centre policy brief,⁶ there is a “missing link” between existing ‘hard’ security practices and what is mentioned in the WPS agenda. Subsequently, this leads to a less coherent and less structured policy that prevents the holistic implementation of the WPS agenda.

Methodologically, this report utilises a mixed methods approach. Archival and process-tracing methods have been used in order to trace events and transitions in the political-security nexus of developing a gender-mainstreamed and gender-sensitive policy vis-à-vis security in peacekeeping forces and in the institutional context of the armed forces. Policy documents and press releases are also used as part of discourse analysis to critically yet constructively engage with published official material that integrates gender and security through the scope of WPS or national policy. This enables the researchers to flesh out gender- and security-related content in existing national and UN policy in the case of Cyprus, and EU and NATO for Kosovo. At the same time, semi-structured elite interviews with officials form part of the data collection process, obtaining, in this way, the unique perspective of those stakeholders responsible for drafting and executing relevant policy.

Moreover, data sets⁷ are analysed for the purpose of compiling data derived from specific indicators that track the impact of gender and security in peacekeeping missions. To be more precise, WPS Global Indicators are applied to study the case of the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces in Cyprus (UNFICYP). Years of reference for these indicators and relevant policies include the historical WPS Agenda, introduced in 2000 at the UN Security Council, and the strategic guidelines set forth in policy documents by the Department of

⁴ The WPS-NAP of the Republic of Cyprus can be accessed via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website at <https://mfa.gov.cy/press-releases/2020/12/29/national-action-plan-uncs-resolution-1325/>. At the moment, the Plan is only available in Greek.

⁵ Commissioner posts in the Republic of Cyprus are appointed by the Presidency and are directly accountable to the President. Each Commissioner retains a different role. The Commissioner for Gender Equality, who is responsible for enhancing the role and participation of women across society and across all fields, was created in 2014. The role also involves protecting women’s rights and advocating for equality. See the European Institute for Gender Equality (2019) ‘Cyprus,’ Available at <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/countries/cyprus>.

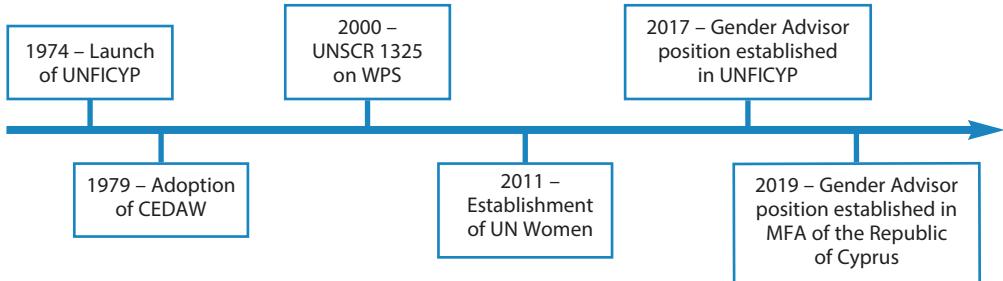
⁶ Veronika Hornyák and Petros Petrikos (2022) ‘Women Between War and Peace in Cyprus: The Security Sector as the Missing Link,’ Peace Research Institute Oslo (Cyprus Centre), PCC Report (03/2022).

⁷ The following indicators are used: United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support (2018) Gender Responsive United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (Review Date: 2021). See also, Indicators under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), introduced as early as 2008 and revised in 2016. Additional revisions are expected in the foreseeable future. See also NATO’s ACO Gender Analysis Tool based on PMESII model; https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2019_07/20190709_1907-wps-glossary.pdf

Peacekeeping Operations. In analysing this data further, a comparison is drawn between the case of UNFICYP in Cyprus and the case of EULEX and KFOR in Kosovo, where EU WPS indicators and relevant NATO documents, as well as available sex-disaggregated data, are used to study the latter. Some additional insights from UNMIK are also utilised for comparative reasons. This combined approach to data collection is appropriate for setting the scene and laying the foundation for additional future discussion, research, and policy development.

The report is evenly split into four sections, followed by a conclusion. In the first section, the report explores the contributions and the added value of this research to existing literature and the policy landscape, by first introducing the guided theoretical framework and subsequently highlighting the key concepts that shape the narrative of this report. In the second section, the research offers a detailed analysis of the current trends in the WPS agenda, situating the reader within the historical developments, as well as the practice of implementing the agenda. The third section constitutes the case of Cyprus and UNFICYP. The fourth section presents the case of Kosovo and situates the case-specific parameters on mission level. The concluding chapter presents a reflective exercise on the two cases and summarises the findings.

Brief Timeline



FRAMING 'HARD' SECURITY AND GENDER: THE VALUE OF SECURITY AND DEFENCE IN GENDER MAINSTREAMING

At present, the literature on protracted conflicts hosting peacekeeping missions has often included perspectives on the historical background of each respective case, the need for reconciliation, developing good governance models, and institutionally designing the state apparatus and the way society itself functions.⁸ These accounts are useful in providing insights and situating practitioners, scholars, and stakeholders of any kind within the history and the aftermath, as well as the ongoing situation, of such conflicts. In the cases of Cyprus and Kosovo, for instance, the literature has often focused on the need to generate resilient and representative models of governance by institutionally designing divided societies experiencing conflict.⁹

However, while it is widely understood that accounts on protracted conflicts will frequently reflect on the deep, enmeshed, and respective issues of the dispute, they sometimes neglect to include or to even mention an adequate and analytical gender-security paradigm, particularly when it comes to the role of women. The need to introduce more inclusive and gender mainstreaming practices in societies and institutions has been noted in other works as well.¹⁰

⁸ For example, see Donald L. Horowitz (1993), 'The Challenge of Ethnic Conflict: Democracy in Divided Societies,' *Journal of Democracy*, 4(1): 18-38. See also Arend Lijphart (2004) 'Constitutional Design for Divided Societies,' *Journal of Democracy*, 15(2): 96-109. See also the practical application of the case of Iraq in the country's reformed constitution in John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary (2007) 'Iraq's Constitution of 2005: Liberal Consociation as Political Prescription,' *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, 5(4): 670-698. See also Feargal Cochrane, Neophytos Loizides, and Thibaud Bodson (2018) 'Mediating Power-Sharing: Devolution and Consociationalism in Deeply Divided Societies,' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 31(1): 85-104.

⁹ Neophytos Loizides (2016) *Designing Peace: Cyprus and Institutional Innovations in Divided Societies*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press. See also Charis Psaltis, Huseyin Cakal, Neophytos Loizides, and Işık Kuşçu Bonnenfant (2020) 'Internally Displaced Persons and the Cyprus Peace Process,' *International Political Science Review* 41(1): 138-154. See also John Hulsey and Soeren Keil (2021) 'Power-Sharing and Party Politics in the Western Balkans,' in Soeren Keil and Alison McCulloch (eds.) *Power-Sharing in Europe: Federalism and Internal Conflicts*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 115-139. See also Adem Beha (2019) 'Consociational Democracy and Political Engineering in Postwar Kosovo,' *Nationalities Papers*, 47(4): 674-689.

¹⁰ For instance, see Sophia Papastavrou (2020) *Women's Organizations for Peace: Moving Beyond the Rhetoric of the Cyprus Problem*, Cham: Springer Nature. See also Anne-Kathrin Kreft (2017) 'The Gender Mainstreaming Gap: Security Council Resolution 1325 and UN Peacekeeping Mandates,' *International Peacekeeping*, 24(1): 132-158. See also Anne Jenichen, Jutta Joachim, and Andrea Schneider (2019) 'Explaining Variation in the Implementation of Global Norms: Gender Mainstreaming of Security in the OSCE and the EU,' *International Political Science Review*, 40(5): 613-626. See also Henry F. Carey (2019) 'Women and Peace and Security: The Politics of Implementing Gender Sensitivity Norms in Peacekeeping,' in Louise Olsson and Torrun L. Truggstad (eds.) *Women and International Peacekeeping*, London: Routledge, 49-68.

These accounts are helpful in addressing deficits in gender and women-centred approaches to the way policy is shaped and politics is conducted.

'Gender' as a variable is understood as the socially constructed norms associated with the social and cultural differences and/or prejudices as to what defines a person as a man, a woman, a boy, or a girl. On the other hand, women's and feminist approaches to politics focus on better understanding and critiquing the way the political system is often interpreted from a male-dominated perspective, while revisiting ideas that can be reshaped for the purpose of advancing women's perspectives.¹¹ These approaches, as the literature notes, have been observed and are widely discussed today in political circles. Nonetheless, what is missing from the equation is a security-led approach towards systematically incorporating gendered perspectives and ideas when studying protracted conflicts like Cyprus and Kosovo. Not only that, but these two cases – although quite different – are in fact comparative in the sense that conflict in both small communities escalated dramatically in their respective histories, and identity has been the main driver for war. The comparable dimension of the two country contexts is further strengthened by their significance in the regional, European, and transatlantic security realms, influencing talks, first and foremost, on hard security issues.

When it comes to our approach, we understand 'hard' security and defence concepts as issues pertaining to physical threats challenges to the peacekeeping missions, the institutions, and society as a collective. These threats vary and may include gender-based violence, war crimes, and other atrocities. At the same time, they also include non-physical threats and policy gaps, such as deficits in hate and sexist speech regulation, or underdeveloped policies on protection in field operations, to name a few, which often directly lead to physical security threats and violence.

Our applied framework works in a multidimensional way. First, it addresses the literature gap in Securitisation Theory (ST) and the need to add a feminist perspective in Security Studies to ask more critical questions regarding the issue of gender and security. Second, it launches a serious conversation on the actual policy deficit vis-à-vis the role of women and gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping missions in protracted conflicts. Third, it paves the way for considering existing practices in the case of Kosovo to further conceptualise and improve the existing apparatus and practices in Cyprus. Finally, it looks at the impact of gendered discussions on hard security and defence in protracted conflicts where case studies involve smaller communities and the presence of peacekeeping missions and operations. In doing so, the first part of the framework incorporates Feminist Security Studies thinking into ST. The second part integrates this thinking into the issue of small states and communities, as in the cases of Cyprus and Kosovo. Finally, the framework concludes with some reflections on utilising this framework for studying both cases.

¹¹ Karin Aggestam and Annika Bergman Rosamond (2019) 'Feminist Foreign Policy 3.0: Advancing Ethics and Gender Equality in Global Politics,' *SAIS Review of International Affairs*, 39(1): 37-48. See also Jennifer Thomson (2019) 'The Women, Peace, and Security Agenda and Feminist Institutionalism: A Research Agenda,' *International Studies Review*, 21(4): 598-613.

Feminist Security Studies and Securitisation Theory

Protracted conflicts are complex, severe, and often violent. The issue with this type of conflict is that they take place across a range of socio-political circumstances, involving apparatuses “within and across states” or other political actors pursuing statehood.¹² In the case of Securitisation, the theory addresses the extent to which security-referent objects are inherently linked to political agendas of securitising actors.¹³ Protracted conflicts, then, experience issues of identity that have been securitised to the extreme, causing lasting, severe, and violent conflict between warring parties. Utilising the approach led by the Copenhagen School theorists,¹⁴ ST emphasises the ways through which political actors insist on taking precautions against perceived threats by politicising and bringing security referent objects into the public discourse. Such objects are often understood as threats or vulnerabilities in both military and non-military terms. Non-military vulnerabilities may include economic, environmental, political, or societal vulnerabilities. When brought to light, they are also framed by a securitising actor as existential threats, which subsequently legitimises the need for additional emergency security restrictions.¹⁵ What is particularly interesting is that securitisation takes place in various ways, including through documentation, public announcements, press releases, and even speech acts.¹⁶

Securitisation Theory has been criticised for failing to address more critical points across space and time regarding how scholars conceptualise world political phenomena, on the one hand, and how politicians craft policy, on the other.¹⁷ While we welcome this criticism and understand its importance in developing all-encompassing tools to address different concepts such as gender more universally, our reasoning lies in a more constructive rather than destructive approach towards ST. As others have pointed out, the theory itself is the starting point of the conversation.¹⁸

¹² Oliver Ramsbotham (2005) 'The Analysis of Protracted Social Conflict: A Tribute to Edward Azar,' *Review of International Studies*, 31(1): 114-115.

¹³ A securitising actor is a political being (politicians, activists, civil society members/organisations) who is in the position to deliberately frame an object into a security-referent object, thereby 'securitising' and labelling the said object as a security and existential threat.

¹⁴ This refers to the scholars who first engaged with and later developed this particular notion of Securitisation Theory. See Bill McSweeney (1996) 'Identity and Security: Buzan and the Copenhagen School,' *Review of International Studies*, 22(1): 81-93.

¹⁵ Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde (1998) *Security: A New Framework of Analysis*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc. See also Ole Waever (1995) 'Securitization and Desecuritization,' in R. D. Lipschutz (ed.) *On Security*, New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

¹⁶ R. Guy Emerson (2019) 'Towards a Process-Oriented Account of the Securitisation Trinity: The Speech Act, the Securitiser and the Audience,' *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 22(3): 515-531.

¹⁷ Examples include the critical yet constructive approach in the text of Lene Hansen (2000) 'The Little Mermaid's Silent Security Dilemma and the Absence of Gender in the Copenhagen School,' *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 29(2): 285-306. Other critical texts that are more critical of Securitisation Theory include examples like Alison Howell and Melanie Richter-Montpetit (2020) 'Is Securitization Theory Racist? Civilizationism, Methodological Whiteness, and Antiracist Thought in the Copenhagen School,' *Security Dialogue*, 51(1): 3-22. In our view, it is much preferable to build on Securitisation Theory and to revisit its deficits in order to provide holistic answers to questions like gender and security rather than dismissing the theory itself, or worse, accusing the theory of being morally questionable.

The analytical tools available for studying non-traditional, security-referent objects have shaped the way we understand how policy is structured. We thus make use of speech acts to understand how policy is constructed and security framing takes place during and after a public appeal by a securitising actor.¹⁹ Speech acts – the mere performance via the spoken word – are central to how securitisation functions in politicising and subsequently framing objects into a security issue. Not only that, but securitisation can take place in written format, precisely through works like the National Action Plan on WPS. For instance, the integration of gender mainstreaming language into the public dialogue acknowledges that the issue of gender inequality must be addressed and those exposed to the injustice and prejudice of inequality must be protected – thus the issue becomes securitised. The reverse process of securitisation is ‘desecuritisation’ – nullifying the effects of securitisation through a change or reverse in policy, thus taking the object out of a security frame.²⁰

Nevertheless, like every other theory, there are gaps that could be filled in an interdisciplinary fashion. Some gaps identified within ST may include the actual mentioning of gender and feminist-led discussions. At its conception, ST initially dealt with broader political sectors: the economy, the environment, the ‘traditional’/military, the society, and the political sector.²¹ Breaking down these sectors helps pinpoint whatever is missing from the analysis in order to address Securitisation via a more gender-inclusive lens. In addressing these gaps, we turn to Feminist Security Studies (FSS), which as a subdiscipline of Security Studies sheds light on the gendered dimensions of security, including highlighting the distinct security perceptions of women and men.

As an approach, FSS is rooted in the idea that security should be understood as the state in which violence, whether it is sexual, military, economic, environmental, physical, or psychological, is simply absent.²² Feminist movements around the world have been a source of inspiration for greater emancipation²³ within Security Studies and in how the discipline approaches conflict from a feminist lens. The quest for emancipation, under this notion, cannot be complete without the full, systemic, and simultaneously systematic gendered transformation of hierarchies across society.²⁴ In this way, FSS addresses the issue of inclu-

¹⁸ Lene Hansen (2020) ‘Are “Core” Feminist Critiques of Securitization Theory Racist? A Reply to Alison Howell and Melanie Richter-Montpetit,’ *Security Dialogue*, 51(4): 378-385.

¹⁹ Emerson (2019). See also Lise Philipsen (2020) ‘Performative Securitization: From Conditions of Success to Conditions of Possibility,’ *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 23(1): 114.

²⁰ Ole Waever (2007) ‘Securitization and Desecuritization,’ in Barry Buzan and Lene Hansen (eds.) *International Security: Widening Security*, Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 66–99.

²¹ Buzan et al. (1998).

²² Katěrina Krulišová and Míla O’Sullivan (2022) ‘Feminist Security Studies in Europe: Beyond Western Academics’ Club,’ in Maria Stern and Ann E. Towns (eds.) *Feminist IR in Europe: Knowledge Production in Academic Institutions*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 33-53.

²³ The concept of “security as emancipation” is among the core tenets of the Welsh/Aberystwyth School of Security Studies that espouses a critical approach to security. While security is understood as the ‘Self’ being free from threats, emancipation is the act of freeing the Self. As such, the practice of security is seen as something positive; being secure means being free. This is also a concept adapted into FSS. See Ken Booth (1991) ‘Security and Emancipation,’ *Review of International Studies*, 17(4): 313-326. See also Soumita Basu (2013) ‘Emancipatory Potential in Feminist Security Studies,’ *International Studies Perspectives*, 14(4): 455-458.

sivity for marginalised and vulnerable groups that have struggled against oppression, or which have different security needs and perceptions, offering a more holistic scope, including the issue of sex and gender, among others.

Taking the conceptual contributions of FSS into consideration, ST can accommodate feminist thinking by primarily utilising the emancipatory aspects the former introduces. While ST is particularly good as a problem-solving tool for addressing securitisation and de-securitisation processes in referent objects, FSS can be used as a complement to raise important questions over the issue of gender, women's empowerment, and security as freedom. In the case of violent conflict, where the issue of gendered hierarchies is often neglected in official policy, such a combined approach may help identify the missing link between women during wartime and peace, their interaction within and with peacekeeping missions and operations, and the way we exercise security and defence policy.

The issue of 'smallness' in protracted conflicts

The concept of smallness and small societies is another notion through which a feminist take on securitisation can further expand its horizons. In smaller communities, governance and policymaking as processes often rely on extended networked partnerships between relevant stakeholders, be they civil society groups, kinship, the government, or private organisations. 'Network-oriented' tools is a tactic of influence that shapes policymaking, both in a top-down way (from the institutions, introducing concepts and/or policies to the rest of society), but also in a bottom-up fashion (grassroots action reaching the decision-making and policy-making bodies).²⁵ Based on this notion, feminist-led movements and organisations in network-oriented environments are more likely to thrive in their pursuit of policy changes that address gender mainstreaming and equality, provided they create, integrate, and utilise networking opportunities with relevant stakeholders. This is particularly evident in the potential interactions of such movements with peacekeeping missions and operations as part of the wider civil society strata.

When it comes to gendered perspectives in the field of security, the issue of smallness is equally important for at least three reasons:

- (a) Security is often among the primary concerns in small societies;
- (b) Feminist-led narratives and the question of gender mainstreaming are often side-lined in smaller case studies experiencing conflict;
- (c) Protracted conflict-related analysis focuses more on the totality of violence and institutional impact, yet additional investigation into the impact of vulnerable groups and the role of women in such conflicts is limited.

²⁴ Krulišová and O'Sullivan (2022: 35).

²⁵ Ivalyo Iaydjiev (2011) 'Searching for Influence and Persuasion in Network-Oriented Public Diplomacy: What Role for 'Small States'?', *Exchange: The Journal of Public Diplomacy*, 2(1): 40-48. See also Nayia Kamenou (2020) 'Feminism in Cyprus: Women's Agency, Gender, and Peace in the Shadow of Nationalism,' *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 22(3): 359-381.

Security is often prioritised as an issue of survival²⁶ in the political realm for states in general. Nonetheless, in the case of smaller actors specifically, questions beyond survival also emerge: how to form reliable partnerships, how to preserve one's distinct identity, how to ensure continuity in everyday tasks – processes that involve continuity, order, and a sense of safety in an ontological and existential context.²⁷ Identity, in particular, has often been painted as religious, ethnic, or tribal. These questions and priorities, then, are not merely state-centric, as they are also typically associated with the pursuit of individual and collective interests within society, as well as with emotional and psychological responses to security issues.

In the same way, communities may organise themselves around these priorities during conflict more frequently than in peacetime. In the absence of resilient tools and mechanisms that can help, any disruption in routinised, daily activities may lead to insecurity and anxiety. In the case of applied securitisation and desecuritisation in protracted conflicts, as seen in other contemporary research,²⁸ these issues may even lead to the institutionalisation of the conflict itself, thereby making it part of a group's or state's identity. In fact, in small societies, the conflict can “effortlessly preoccupy the entire society,” primarily because the conflict becomes embedded and its narrative repeated on a daily basis.²⁹ This means that desecuritisation processes are harder to achieve – the ‘Self’ is under constant threat of a demonised ‘Other’ that is alien, foreign, and threatening. Nevertheless, small societies residing in the internal security realm carry out their day-to-day activities in a highly securitised environment; thus, the smallness of the state, as well as the protracted nature of the conflict, may lead to the external desecuritisation of the very same conflict in the regional security dynamics, something primarily caused by conflict fatigue of those not belonging to the highly securitised internal conflict reality.

It becomes apparent that these approaches to protracted conflicts in small states and societies often focus on the individuals in each respective community. When it comes to addressing conflict as such, mutual agreements and practices must be developed in the form of confidence-building mechanisms. This involves engaging with civil society, experts, and other stakeholders, encouraging Track II diplomacy³⁰ channels. Nonetheless, what is often missing is an even more focused analysis of whether such mechanisms are effective or not. These approaches, including Track II diplomacy, often give the impression that gender dynamics and perspective have no significant impact on the conflict.

²⁶ Alyson J. K. Bailes, Jean-Marc Rickli and Baldur Thorhallsson (2016) ‘Small States, Survival and Strategy,’ in Clive Archer, Alyson J. K. Bailes, Anders Wivel (eds), *Small States and International Security: Europe and Beyond*, London and New York: Routledge, 26-45.

²⁷ Petros Petrikkos (*forthcoming* – 2023) ‘The Everyday Construction of Regional Security: A Comparative Study of Small States’ (in)Security in the Baltic Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean,’ *Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean Review*, 1(1).

²⁸ Constantinos Adamides (2020) *Securitization and Desecuritization Processes in Protracted Conflicts: The Case of Cyprus*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

²⁹ *Ibid*: 71.

³⁰ This refers to the non-governmental, private individuals’ interactions and unofficial activities that Track I diplomacy (i.e., the state) may utilise in developing insights and good practices for formulating policy and negotiation tactics. Track II diplomacy does not replace Track I diplomacy.

However, as it is explored in the next few sections, Track II diplomacy also encompasses large movements and organised groups with different interests, including feminist-led or gender-sensitive approaches. Tracking down and exploring the link between peace, security, and gendered narratives is important, not least because the impact of grassroots movements as such has equally shaped top-down approaches to policymaking. As already mentioned in this section, attention to identity has often considered religious, ethnic, or kin-based identities. Yet the literature on protracted conflicts has disregarded gendered identities directly and has been primarily influenced by other identity elements. The reasons as to why it is important to engage with the different needs of women and men during conflict and war has equally been disregarded.³¹ Addressing the conflict through a feminist lens allows the social collective to (a) emancipate itself from patriarchal norms and insecurities, (b) desecuritize the demonised 'Other' by drawing attention to the struggles on either side of the conflict, and (c) introduce confidence-building mechanisms that include a gendered perspective aimed at upholding the value of equality during peace and war. In smaller societies and states, the information flow on these issues can be faster, should the conditions allow for gender mainstreaming to be securitised, on the one hand, while the 'Other' is equally desecuritized.

Putting it together

Collectively, this approach is an attempt to view protracted conflicts in small societies through a Feminist Security Studies approach. While ST sheds some light on how the 'Other' has been overly securitized in certain areas of the conflict, there is a need for utilising securitisation practices to underline the deficit that is currently present when we look at WPS, as different security perceptions lie at the heart of both frameworks. As it will become apparent in the case studies that follow, civil society engagement is strong, whilst the conflict itself is normalised and routinised, but at a ceasefire. Similarly, any existing policy and negotiation attempts to address each particular conflict target society as a whole, while policies for individual groups such as feminist-led movements and approaches are not incorporated sufficiently into the peace process. Where peacekeeping missions and operations interact with civil society initiatives, they also prioritise Track II attempts in terms of unofficial activities, events, contacts between the opposing sides, and workshops, in a bid to desecuritize the 'Other' in each respective community. Such missions and operations also maintain their own gender mainstreaming practices within their own jurisdictions yet have sometimes been unable to export and introduce such practices at the institutional level in each respective community, often due to mandate limitations and prohibitions.

³¹ Laura McLeod & Maria O'Reilly (2019) 'Critical Peace and Conflict Studies: Feminist Interventions,' *Peacebuilding*, 7(2): 134.

WPS CURRENT TRENDS

This section provides an overview that situates the reader within the history and evolution of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The first part deals with the direct relevance of WPS-related resolutions, which collectively form the WPS framework. The second part of this section constitutes the more contemporary developments and adoption of WPS-related practices, including relevance in peacekeeping missions.

Framing an agenda: The WPS Resolutions

The Women, Peace and Security agenda – referred to as a framework as well – was born with the adoption of the landmark resolution of the United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1325 in 2000 (hereinafter: UNSCR 1325), followed by nine subsequent related resolutions: 1820 (2009); 1888 (2009); 1889 (2010); 1960 (2011); 2106 (2013); 2122 (2013); 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019), and 2493 (2019).³² The WPS framework based on these ten UNSC resolutions noted the disproportionate effect of war and armed conflict on women, as well as the importance of women’s participation and inclusion in peace processes and conflict resolution. This issue has clarified that the WPS resolutions have been the product of securitisation, and subsequently, spoke to a need for security framing on the protection, participation, inclusion, and wider mobilisation of women in the peace and security structures, locally, regionally, and globally.³³ As such, gendered perspectives on violence, war, and crime, and the very presence of several UNSCRs encompassing such a framework, is testament to “an ongoing securitisation process that indicates a continuous struggle over the construction of security” – in this case, from feminist-led perspectives.³⁴

Policy revolving around this thinking contributed to the development of frameworks that would have been impossible without this revisitation and reconceptualization of security. The main four pillars of the agenda, which have remained untouched at the time of the writing, focus on four core areas: Protection, Participation, Prevention, and Relief and Recovery. While

³² Peacewomen (2022) ‘The Resolutions,’ Available at: <http://www.peacewomen.org/why-WPS/solutions/resolutions>

³³ Maria Jansson and Maud Eduards (2016) ‘The Politics of Gender in the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security,’ *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 18(4): 590-604. See also Sara Meger (2019) ‘Gender, Violence, and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda,’ in Laura J. Shepherd (ed.) *Handbook on Gender and Violence*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 279-294.

³⁴ Jansson and Eduards (2016: 594)

the Protection and Prevention pillars focus on sexual and gender-based violence in conflict and war, Participation highlights and calls for the systematic inclusion of women at all levels of conflict resolution and peace processes, emphasising the importance of female agency in war and peace. Lastly, the fourth pillar, Relief and Recovery, concentrates on the special needs of women and girls, highlighting the strong gendered dimensions of humanitarian response and crisis management action in war and conflict.³⁵

Despite the unanimous adoption of UNSCR 1325 in 2000, there has been little concrete action by UN member states to localise and operationalise the normative framework laid down by the first resolution. In order to mobilise member states, the UNSC and the Secretary-General encouraged national implementation by calling for the preparation and adoption of National Action Plans (NAPs).³⁶ Some European countries have taken the first steps forward, in 2005 and 2006 – namely Denmark, followed by the United Kingdom, Sweden and Norway – in adopting their own NAPs, ensuring the contextualisation and implementation of the agenda in a national context. While the number of NAPs has steadily increased since 2005, national implementation has been complemented and reinforced by regional processes and initiatives as well, adopting, as a result, Regional guidelines and Action Plans (RAP) on Women, Peace and Security. By the end of the decade, the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) adopted their first strategic documents on WPS, while in the 2010s the League of Arab States, the Pacific Islands Forum and several regional organisations in Africa, including the African Union, elaborated an action plan.³⁷

Contemporary WPS trends and developments

In 2015 the WPS framework was also reinforced through its integration with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which recognised the substantial connection between gender equality and sustainable development as a crucial pillar for inclusive security and peace.³⁸ As of 2022, 104 UN member states have adopted NAPs to implement the WPS agenda, with currently 27 countries having two plans, 17 countries having three, and 6 other countries already working with their fourth NAP on WPS.³⁹ In spite of the increasing international focus on WPS in the last two decades, the operationalisation and implementation of these action

³⁵ The introduction of female agency is a product of feminist-led movements and organisations worldwide, and the injection of a feminist narrative vis-à-vis security processes is an academic contribution derived from FSS, as seen in the previous section. See United Nations – She Stands For Peace (n.d.) Available at <https://www.un.org/shestandsforpeace/content/four-pillars-united-nations-security-council-resolution-1325>

³⁶ S/PRST/2004/40.

³⁷ <https://wpsfocalpointnetwork.org/regional-action-plans/>

³⁸ UN WOMEN: 2019-2020 (2020) 'Women, Peace and Security in Action,' New York, Available at <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2020/Women-peace-and-security-annual-report-2019-2020-en.pdf>

³⁹ Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (2022) '1325 National Action Plans: At a glance,' Available at <https://1325naps.peacewomen.org/>.

plans on national levels leave room for improvement. Frequent criticisms of national efforts on WPS implementation include, among others, the lack of budget allocation and follow-up mechanisms for the effective implementation of the Agenda, and the varying and sometimes poor quality of these NAP documents produced.⁴⁰

In the last 20 years, WPS has developed in policy and in research, as well as on the strategic-political and operational levels. The growing literature now includes empirical research, which has underlined and legitimized the normative framework laid down in the WPS resolutions, and thus contributes to the understanding of the gendered nature of war, armed conflict, warfare, as well as peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Official WPS language today is routinely included in UN peacekeeping mandates, though implementation depends not only on the language in mandate, but also on leadership and resources (including specialised ones, like women's protection advisors or gender advisors in the field). There is also ongoing discussion in the UNSC, especially among the P5, on how prescriptive the language should be, which moves the negotiations towards a 'too little to too much' direction.⁴¹ Moreover, most WPS language focuses on the Protection pillar (out of the four), although recently the Participation pillar language has started to be used more frequently. At the time of writing, all mandates have language that calls for increased participation of women as civilian and/or uniformed personnel.⁴²

In terms of resources, a number of different aspects are to be considered when focusing on the possibilities of implementing the WPS framework in peacekeeping missions. At the strategic-political level, the most important points of reference are the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), both led by an Under-Secretary-General and located in New York at the UN Secretariat. The operational planning is supported by the Department of Operational Support (DOS). In the last two decades, the WPS framework has transformed and greatly influenced peacekeeping today. Integrating the WPS principles in the actions of the 2030 Agenda in relation to the development of institutional and reporting mechanisms, one of the most significant steps toward WPS implementation in UN peacekeeping was the initiative of Secretary-General Guterres, namely the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P). Launched in 2018, A4P is a comprehensive commitment by the UN to reflect on the challenges of modern conflict, war, and crisis, focusing on eight thematic areas of commitment, one of which is the WPS agenda.⁴³

⁴⁰ Sahla Aroussi (2017) (ed.) *Rethinking National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security*. Amsterdam: IOS Press. See also Caitlin Hamilton, Nyibeny Naam, and Laura J. Shepherd (2020) *Twenty Years of Women, Peace and Security National Action Plans: Analysis and Lessons Learned*, Sydney: University of Sydney Press.

⁴¹ Lisa Sharland (2021) *Women, Peace, and Security Mandates for UN Peacekeeping Operations: Assessing Influence and Impact*, International Peace Institute, Available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep28903>

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ United Nations Peacekeeping (n.d.) 'Action for Peacekeeping (A4P),' Available at <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-for-peacekeeping-a4p>

A key element of the A4P is to enhance the participation of women in peacekeeping; this was further transformed in 2021 with Action for Peacekeeping+ (A4P+), the implementation strategy for A4P for 2021-2023. In A4P+, in recognition of the cross-cutting nature of the WPS principles, the WPS agenda is not only integrated as one of the concrete areas of commitment and action, but it is also interpreted and used as a normative framework related to and affecting all issues and priorities overall.⁴⁴ The Participation pillar of WPS was further supported by the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy of 2018-2028, as elaborated by the DPO. The Strategy's objective is to ensure, "that the uniformed component of United Nations peacekeeping is diverse and inclusive of women, reflecting the communities the United Nations serves."⁴⁵ As the number of women serving in peacekeeping missions has stagnated since 2010, the Strategy addressed external and internal challenges, as well as decided that as ideal target numbers, women should represent at least 25% of both military and police personnel by 2028.⁴⁶

The strategic-political importance and policy relevance of WPS in UN peacekeeping is unquestionable. Nonetheless, the operationalisation and implementation on the operational and tactical levels continue to face challenges on the ground. At the time of writing, "All multidimensional peacekeeping missions have gender units and women's protection advisers. Almost every mandate for peacekeeping now includes specific provisions on women, peace and security."⁴⁷ However, having institutions and people on the ground does not automatically guarantee effective implementation in the field. Even so, gender units, gender and women's protection advisers, as well as appointed gender focal points in peacekeeping missions, all contribute to internal and external training, education, and raising awareness on the WPS principles. Both the gender units and gender advisers are engaged in the dialogue with civil society and NGOs on different issues, such as women's participation, protection, and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence. Despite this, in several theatres, the tactical implementation and coordination between components faces challenges due to the restrictions of the mission mandate.

⁴⁴ United Nations Peacekeeping (n.d.) 'Action for Peacekeeping+ (A4P+)' <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-peacekeeping>

⁴⁵ United Nations Department of Peace Operations (2017) 'Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028,' Available at <https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/uniformed-gender-parity-2018-2028.pdf>, p. 2.

⁴⁶ Ibid: 5-6.

⁴⁷ UN WOMEN (2020) 'Women, Peace and Security in Action: Annual Report 2019-2020,' Available at <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3908310?ln=en>, 25.

CYPRUS: A NATIONAL CONTEXT

This section of the Report outlines the institutional setting vis-à-vis the policymaking process. The institutional parameters that define Cyprus' position when it comes to the WPS framework are twofold: (a) the historical background from an institutional perspective, including former and present practices, as well as the issue of non-recognition of the 'TRNC' and the impact this has on the Turkish Cypriot community, and (b) the state and applicability of the National Action Plan on WPS (adopted in 2021). The final part of this section addresses some of the shortfalls and challenges for Cyprus in adopting a clear gendered perspective in security and defence.

Institutional Background

Since 1960, the fragility of the Republic of Cyprus as a state was noted in its constitutional conception, which was predominantly based on consociational elements and complex power-sharing. The 1963-1964 intercommunal violence that broke out was testament to the fragility of the power-sharing system, as it led to the withdrawal of the Turkish Cypriot community from the RoC political apparatus. This also triggered constitutional 'emergency measures' that enabled the RoC to temporarily amend the fundamentals of law to redefine priority areas, including security and defence, which led to the formation of the National Guard in 1964, in which only Greek Cypriots would subsequently serve.⁴⁸ Following additional intense periods of intercommunal violence and killings, the 1974 military-fascist coup on the one hand, and the subsequent Turkish invasion on the other, laid the foundations for an unrecognised state nine years later: the creation and proclamation of the 'TRNC' in 1983.

The proclamation – and subsequent lack of international recognition – of the 'TRNC,' an entity that is only recognised by the Republic of Turkey, has led to negotiations and policy revolving around the issue of the presence of two entities, one being an internationally recognised entity and the other unrecognised. In the case of the RoC, the state claims *de jure* jurisdiction over the entire island, whereas in the case of the 'TRNC', *de facto* jurisdiction is claimed in the north alone. This denotes two issues of interest:

⁴⁸ Thomas Diez (2021) 'Recognition, Reproduction, Transformation: The Use and Abuse of International Justice in the Cyprus Conflict,' in Nikola Tomić and Ben Tonra (eds.) *Conflict Resolution and Global Justice: The European Union in the Global Context*, London: Routledge, 19-34. See also Finabel: European Army Interoperability Centre (n.d.) 'Cyprus,' Available at <https://finabel.org/cyprus/>

- (a) The RoC state, on the one hand, is free to enjoy benefits and privileges enshrined in its participation in the international community, particularly within the UN and the EU. On the other hand, the 'TRNC' administration cannot incorporate any such privileges;
- (b) The presence of two conflicting entities claiming jurisdiction in Cyprus creates an existential issue for the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, due to the persistence of the status quo: a conflict under prolonged ceasefire since 1974.

Post-EU accession, only the Republic of Cyprus was admitted into the European Union. Having integrated into the European structures of defence and security, the RoC also adopted the Common Security and Defence Policy, thus entering the civilian and military security and defence structures of the EU. Through these structures, security and defence policy has been reformulated. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), for instance, is the primary security coordinating entity of the state. This means that it works together with other agencies to facilitate discussion, policy, and decision-making on matters of security and defence.⁴⁹

With that in mind, feminist-led policy vis-à-vis security and defence would have to first be introduced at the MFA. A full-time, role comprising the duties of a Gender Advisor to the Minister was initially established in 2019 in the form of a direct appointment. This was the result of a decision taken by RoC's Council of Ministers and approved by the House of Representatives. Josie Christodoulou, a gender expert with a strong civil society background, was initially appointed in February 2019 and remained in office until January 2022. Christodoulou's work throughout this period consisted of utilising gender mainstreaming as a tool to integrate gendered perspectives in foreign policy (namely, a more Feminist Foreign Policy – FFP) and beyond.⁵⁰ As such, the work of the Gender Advisor has consisted of 5 key pillars:

- (1) Creating opportunities to improve multilateral cooperation on the issue of gender mainstreaming in foreign policy (including multilateral organisations);
- (2) Improving bilateral cooperation based on the principle of gender equality and related practices (including policy development, project work, and the impact of gendered policies in EU and non-EU countries);
- (3) Incorporating issues of humanitarian aid and the protection of marginalised groups into the wider sphere of foreign policy;
- (4) Encouraging the active cooperation of the MFA with civil society groups and academics (including organisations such as the Anna Lindh Foundation and organising events such as #SheonFriday⁵¹ at the MFA and University spaces);
- (5) Generating gendered perspectives and integrating them within the MFA (both top-down as well as bottom-up approaches).

⁴⁹ Interview with officer in the RoC security and information sector (April 2022).

⁵⁰ Interview with former Gender Advisor to the MFA, Josie Christodoulou (May 2022)

⁵¹ This event series, under the initiative of the MFA, aimed at creating additional public engagement and public diplomacy opportunities by organising events, lectures, and other activities to promote gender mainstreaming in foreign policy.

Additional training on gender and gender mainstreaming within the MFA had been undertaken through the initiative of the MFA's Permanent Secretaries. Despite these developments, the very short and recent introduction of the Gender Advisor post has left the RoC's feminist foreign policy approach at an 'embryonic stage.' While a number of Track II diplomacy engagement protocols were utilised to build recognition and momentum across the social strata, gender mainstreaming in hard security and defence practices has not fully materialised. The security component, nonetheless, was picked up by the Ministry of Defence's Security and Defence Academy, which led to training and educational activities that integrate gender in security and defence. These efforts are recognised and applauded, with the example of a gender-integrated CSDP-related workshop co-organised by the RoC Ministry of Defence and the European Security and Defence College of the EU's External Action Service taking place in Cyprus for the first time.⁵²

While all diplomats recognise the importance of UNSC Resolution 1325, integrating gender mainstreaming in security and defence has been on an ad hoc basis. Thessalia-Salina Shambos, Middle East, Gulf, and Africa Division Director at the MFA, picked up where Josie Christodoulou had left off, utilising the same approaches to introduce gender mainstreaming into the RoC's foreign policy. Characteristically, Christodoulou's "high-impact legacy" at the MFA has created a gendered structure that has been put in place at the MFA. Nonetheless, at the moment, the role of the Gender Advisor is not distinct from that of other duties and roles. This means that the role itself is absorbed into other diplomats' roles and routines.⁵³

The current setting and stage in RoC foreign policy, however, has not allowed the incorporation of a permanent post of a Gender Advisor. For instance, the current Gender Advisor at the time of writing, Ambassador Elena Rafti, is also the RoC's Permanent Representative to the EU.⁵⁴ In a period of less than a year, the role has been assigned to three different people. This suggests that the integration of a separate advisory role at the MFA would help alleviate the imbalance and constant shifting, which, in turn, could help cultivate in an in-depth gendered perspective in policy. Finally, the MFA does not directly collaborate or engage with UNFICYP on matters related to gender and security. While there have been informal exchanges, there is no official policy or framework that encourages such interactions – something that is, in fact, equally restricted by UNFICYP's mandate.

In the case of the Turkish Cypriot community, the issue of gender and security is largely unaddressed, particularly due to 'TRNC' being internationally unrecognised, which subsequently bans and excludes the Turkish-Cypriot community from the WPS framework at

⁵² Interview with Lt Colonel Symeon Zambas, Director of the Security and Defence Academy, Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Cyprus (May 2022). See also Goalkeeper-Schoolmaster of the EEAS (2022), 'Integration of a Gender Perspective in CSDP,' <https://goalkeeper.eeas.europa.eu/course/details.do?id=848>

⁵³ Interview with former Gender Advisor Thessalia-Salina Shambos (June 2022), Director of the Middle East, Africa, and the Gulf Division of the Republic of Cyprus Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁵⁴ In conversation with RoC diplomat (December 2022).

the UN level. The exclusion from UN membership has also prompted the 'TRNC' administration to question whether the presence of UNFICYP is necessary. As noted in our policy brief, there is, on the other hand, "insufficient data to indicate or otherwise conclude whether this notion is also expressed collectively by all Turkish-Cypriots or whether these are mere statements by the regime. For instance, the bi-annual renewal of the UNFICYP mandate is not officially endorsed by the 'TRNC' administration, which has protested this in official announcements."⁵⁵

Strategies – The National Action Plans

The Republic of Cyprus initially developed two National Action Plans on gender equality across institutions and society: dubbed as the 'National Action Plans on Gender Equality for Cyprus of the Ministry of Justice and Public Order,' the first was developed for 2014-2017 and the second for 2018-2021.⁵⁶ The Plans initially aimed at addressing issues of gender-based violence and domestic abuse, among others. Even so, these Plans did not account for security vis-à-vis WPS. The WPS National Action Plan of 2021 is the first comprehensive document to be pushed through by the Office of the Commissioner for Gender Equality in the RoC, effective until 2025. The WPS NAP is supported by the Presidency via the Commissioner's Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The emergence of a National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security in Cyprus is the product of extended government-civil society connections. This is particularly evident in how both the RoC Presidency through the Commissioner post, and the MFA, have utilised their links with civil society as part of a wider consultation scheme for introducing gender mainstreaming in policy, specifically in foreign policy. The foreign policy of the Republic of Cyprus has also adopted more gender-sensitive approaches internally and externally, as well as through public diplomacy.⁵⁷

The WPS NAP clearly indicates the distribution of existing funds, while also making use of ongoing projects and affiliations, such as the MFA's financial contribution to the Anna Lindh Foundation towards programmes that train and empower young women in the Middle East and beyond. An interesting aspect of the WPS NAP is that the National Mechanism for Women's Rights at the Ministry of Justice, presided over by the Commissioner for Gender

⁵⁵ Hornyák and Petrikos (2022). See also Ministry of Foreign Affairs – 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' (2022) 'Regarding the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2646 (2022),' <https://mfa.gov.ct.tr/regardingthe-united-nations-security-council-resolution-2646-2022/>. See also Nick Theodoulou (2022) 'North Says It Will "Take Measures" in Response to UNFICYP Mandate Renewal,' <https://cyprus-mail.com/2022/07/30/north-says-it-will-take-measures-in-response-to-unficy-p-mandate-renewal/>

⁵⁶ Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2021) 'Questionnaire of the Working Group on the Issue of Human Rights and Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises,' <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Business/Gender/Cyprus.pdf>

⁵⁷ For instance, a conference on feminist foreign policy and gender equality was held in October 2021. See the Republic of Cyprus Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2021) 'International Conference on "The Role of Foreign Policy in Advancing Gender Equality",' Available at <https://mfa.gov.cy/events/2021/10/10/coe-conference-on-foreign-policy-and-gender-equality/>

Equality, vouches to support and accommodate Turkish Cypriot women's organisations that seek to be integrated into related WPS NAP structures. No such framework or other equivalent policy exists in the northern part of Cyprus, even though Turkish Cypriot civil society organisations have introduced some feminist-led initiatives.⁵⁸

The inclusion of civil society and related organisations and movements was already addressed in a previous PRIO Report by Olga Demetriou in 2019.⁵⁹ On the occasion of the adoption of the Action Plan, leaders of the two communities also committed to include a minimum 30% of women in future delegations. Six months after adoption of the Action Plan, the two leaders have met again, which could mean two things:

- (a) gender equality is considered a soft issue compared to border management or territorial questions, meaning that the leaders are brought to the table more easily;
- (a) even if this is the case, it does not diminish the importance of issues, such as gender equality and women's participation, which allows them to have another face-to-face meeting in half a year.

The Action Plan, developed by the Technical Committee with the facilitation of the UN, contains three main focal points: "how to ensure women's full, equal and meaningful representation; how to engage with civil society, including women's organizations, in order to solicit their views; and how to include a gender perspective."⁶⁰

While overall, the gender equality plans and related action positively shape society, in the case of the RoC WPS NAP, the hard security and defence parameters are left unaddressed. The NAP – which is only available in Greek, being an unusual practise for WPS NAPs globally – is 44 pages long, yet it lacks comprehensive and detailed guidelines on what security consists of. For instance, the NAP heavily focuses on the WPS agenda's Participation pillar, without explicitly mentioning any hard security practices. While it is important to note that the word 'security' in Greek appears 50 times, the document mainly refers to either the UN Security Council or security in broader terms, without any relevant policy output. The NAP's parameters instead draw attention to policy on the (civilian) Participation pillar. On the other hand, there is no mention of UNFICYP's role in pursuing or cooperating with the RoC in implementing the WPS agenda, other than providing humanitarian aid for the enclaved population in the northern part of Cyprus.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Presidency of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (2021) 'Northern Cyprus Women's Organisations Network is Established,' <https://kktcb.org/en/northern-cyprus-womensorganisations-network-is-established-9114>

⁵⁹ Olga Demetriou (2019) 'Gender in the Cyprus Negotiations,' Peace Research Institute Oslo (Cyprus Centre), PCC Report (03/2022), Available at <https://legacy.prio.org/utility/DownloadFile.ashx?id=1792&type=publicationfile>

⁶⁰ UNSC (2022) 'Mission of Good Offices in Cyprus Report of the Secretary-General,' S/2022/534, 2022, Available at <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/406/27/PDF/N2240627.pdf?OpenElement>, 4.

⁶¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus (2021b) Women, Peace, and Security National Action Plan, Nicosia: RoC MFA and Gender Equality Commissioner, Republic of Cyprus [in Greek], <https://mfa.gov.cy/Cyprus%20National%20Action%20Plan%201325.pdf>

Challenges in Policy and Beyond

As observed in this section, the de facto presence of the 'TRNC' has not only inhibited the cultivation of a gendered understanding of security and the development of a gender-sensitive foreign, security, and defence policy, but it has also isolated the Turkish Cypriot community, effectively preventing them from introducing recognised WPS-related practices in the north. Moreover, despite a milestone achievement for the RoC, the WPS NAP is not without its shortcomings. As observed, the security-coordinating entity being the MFA, no gender advisory roles have been developed in other institutions. In fact, the Ministry of Defence proceeded with facilitating the organisation of workshops on gender and defence, with contributions from the MFA, yet without any direct, systematic engagement or directions/suggestions.

Moreover, despite the use of existing resources to facilitate discussion on gender mainstreaming, there is no real overlap with WPS practices. The fact that the NAP is under the Office of the Commissioner for Gender Equality, supported closely by the National Mechanism for Women's Rights, shows that the NAP heavily relies on existing projects and funds that are allocated to specific activities over time. There is no direct autonomy over the budget of the Plan, simply because the Office of the Commissioner is funded by the Presidency.

Last but not least, a serious deficit in policy is due to the unresolved Cyprus problem, a constant element across all policymaking areas, taking up much of the decision-making process in the RoC.⁶² This means that policy growth, encompassing even more inclusive processes in fields such as gender mainstreaming in security and defence, is substantially hindered, i.e., due to the continuation of the status quo in the conflict. This also prevents the RoC from fully developing its policy, as the primary concerns related to foreign, security, and defence matters are the possibility of threat and deep-rooted insecurity over the northern part of the island and/or Turkey.

⁶² Petros Petrikkos (2022) 'Stuck in the Middle: Constructing Maturity and Restoring Balance in RoC-EU Relations,' in Zenonas Tziarras (ed.) *The Foreign Policy of the Republic of Cyprus: Local, Regional and International Dimensions*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 77-104.

THE CASE OF UNFICYP

Established in 1964, UNFICYP⁶³ is one of the oldest UN peacekeeping missions, tasked with ending hostilities between the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities following incidents of intercommunal violence in 1963-1964. UNFICYP was established with UN Security Council Resolution 186 (1964), with its mandate renewed every six months since then. Currently led by Colin Stewart as head of mission, UNFICYP works with more than 1100 personnel across four main components: military, police (UNPOL), civilian (Civil Affairs Section) and administration.⁶⁴

A decade later and following the military-fascist coup and the Turkish invasion of 1974, the mission's main task remains unchanged: to safeguard the ceasefire, to monitor and maintain the buffer zone⁶⁵ established between the two sides of the island, and, with the Head of Mission also serving as the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General to Cyprus, to facilitate dialogue towards a peaceful settlement.⁶⁶ Alongside these core tasks, UNFICYP is involved in demining, as well as in humanitarian aid coordination, the latter of which also coincides with the priorities of the Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan of the Republic of Cyprus.

Recent trends

The renewal of the Cyprus Mission mandate in July 2022, and as highlighted by the Secretary-General's report, took place in a dynamically changing European and transatlantic security environment, where the UN, the Mission itself, as well as individual contributing countries, have all faced several evolving strategic and security challenges. These are linked to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, where organisations like the EU have had to revisit their strategic and security approaches.⁶⁷ Moreover, the protracted nature of the conflict in Cyprus, as well as international developments, have had a toll on UNFICYP in general. Combined with

⁶³ UNFICYP Official Website: <https://unficyp.unmissions.org/resolutions>

⁶⁴ UNFICYP (2021) 'A Force for Peace,' Available at https://unficyp.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/fact_sheet_1.pdf.

⁶⁵ This is a UN-administered area. Also known as the 'ceasefire' or 'green' line.

⁶⁶ See UNFICYP (2021).

⁶⁷ This meant that EU member states like Cyprus also had to adapt to policy and strategic changes as such, as observed with the introduction of the EU Strategic Compass. See Council of the European Union (2022) *A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence*, Brussels: Council of the European Union.

international tensions, lack of progress, and recent and past atrocities and trauma affecting the Mission's work, the challenges have exceeded operational capacities. Decreased trust in both sides, the isolation and human cost of COVID-19 that further increased challenges in 2019-2022, were also acknowledged in the Secretary-General's July 2022 report.⁶⁸

Further militarisation on both sides is also a concern. This militarisation takes various forms, including enhanced surveillance and the use of surveillance technology,⁶⁹ and the recent creation and recreation of concrete firing positions – all of which threaten UNFICYP's authority and mandate. More specifically, what has been under threat is the area of operations and the practice of creating and maintaining the ceasefire line and buffer zone between the parties.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, the establishment of direct military contact mechanisms – also emphasised and urged by Secretary – General Guterres – is an issue that is still pending.⁷¹ The latest mandate also “urg[ed] the sides to renew their efforts to achieve an enduring, comprehensive and just settlement based on a bicomunal, bizonal federation with political equality,” while condemning the lack of progress.⁷²

UNSCR 2646, in particular, notes several issues derived from the WPS agenda, explicitly referring to UNSCR 1325 and encouraging the full and meaningful participation of women in the peace processes and talks.⁷³ Despite the two-decade long history of UNSCR 1325, the first direct reference to the landmark WPS resolution was not included in the Mission's mandate until 2018. As this time, more detailed actions “to implement the WPS mandates were elaborated upon within the July 2018 mandate renewal, including the revitalization of a technical committee on gender equality and a recommendation to conduct a gender-sensitive socio-economic assessment.”⁷⁴ In this context, we highlight that the Participation pillar of WPS has been the strongest in the UNFICYP July 2022 mandate, focusing not only on the inclusion of women in the peace talks on informal and formal levels, but also noting the substance of involving women's organisations in these processes.

Moreover, the mandate promoting the participation of women in the UNFICYP Mission across its own components also reflects on qualitative protective and preventive measures as a prerequisite to successful implementation of the WPS agenda's Participation pillar. This

⁶⁸ UNSC (2022) 'United Nations Operations in Cyprus: Report of the Secretary-General,' Available at https://unficyp.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/s-2022-533_sg_report_on_united_nations_operation_in_cyprus.pdf

⁶⁹ For instance, Turkey has established a drone base in the northern part of Cyprus, posing growing regional security risks. See Menelaos Hadjicostis, Samy Magdy, and Josef Federman (2021) 'Turkish Drones in Northern Cyprus Heighten Regional Unease,' *AP News*, Available at <https://apnews.com/article/europe-middle-east-africa-business-cyprus-5b2dba1458da62db059c4e4722aaf6f8>.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ UNSC (2022).

⁷² UNSCR 2646 (2022).

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ UNDPO (2020) *Gender Equality and Women, Peace and Security: Resource Package*, Gender Unit, Department of Peace Operations, United Nations, Available at https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/gewps19_respack_v7_eng_digital.pdf p. 36.

also encourages the full inclusion of women in the peacekeeping forces, specifically in “safe, enabling and gender-sensitive working environments.”⁷⁵ The mandate has also noted the vital role of UN members, especially troop-contributing countries to the Mission, urging them to ensure successful WPS implementation at home as well. In parallel, the resolution acknowledges the importance of gender-responsive capacities and capabilities, including gender expertise in the field. The latter, in practice and in the field, is ensured by the Gender Affairs Office (GAO) of the Mission, as by the gender focal points appointed across sectors and components.

It is worth noting that implementation of the WPS agenda is a core task across all components in UNFICYP, as supported by the GAO of the Mission and the gender expertise deployed on the ground, namely the gender advisor and the gender focal points. This central pillar of the WPS infrastructure in the Mission was first introduced in 2017, 17 years after the adoption of UNSCR 1325, and represents a relatively new element in UNFICYP’s structure. The gender advisor, positioned in the Head of Mission’s office, provides strategic oversight and advice, as well as on-site expertise for the effective implementation of the WPS agenda in UNFICYP.⁷⁶ In order to strengthen the strategic approach on WPS, the GAO also utilises the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System (CPAS)⁷⁷ and coordinates WPS efforts across the mission.⁷⁸ This is done in cooperation with the appointed gender focal points in the respective components. The focal points – made up of both male and female colleagues – in the military component are usually appointed by the Acting Commander in the different sectors on the island. In the case of the police gender focal points, however, the appointment follows after candidates either apply on a voluntary basis or are selected in a similar way as the military components.⁷⁹ The operationalisation and implementation of the WPS approach is further strengthened by the gender perspective integrated in workplans of all units in the mission since 2019.⁸⁰

Moreover, the operationalisation and implementation opportunities of the different pillars of the WPS framework are vastly different across components, primarily due to two reasons: (a) the difference in the nature of the components and institutions, such as police or armed forces; (b) the broad and dispositive mandate on WPS. The military, as the biggest component of UNFICYP, for instance, works with over 800 troops across the island, of which the percentage of female troops has been as high as 12.5% of the personnel across all ranks, but also

⁷⁵ UNSCR 2646 (2022) 17/(a).

⁷⁶ Interview with UNFICYP officer (January 2022).

⁷⁷ United Nations Peacekeeping (2020) ‘CPAS: The Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System,’ Available at <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/cpas>

⁷⁸ Interview with UNFICYP officer (January 2022).

⁷⁹ Interview with Captain Anikó Simon, Hungarian Defence Forces (August 2022).

⁸⁰ Gender Unit (2022) *Leaders and Changemakers: Women driving sustainable peace and security outcomes - Women, Peace and Security Highlights of UN Peacekeeping in 2021*, Department of Peace Operations, United Nations, Available at https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/dpo_wps_report_2021_final.pdf

remaining permanently above 10%, depending on the rotations.⁸¹ Women first joined the military component in 1979 after deployment by Sweden, and specifically the Swedish Infantry Battalion.⁸²

Despite the heavy emphasis on the military presence and representation in the Mission, due to the institutional nature and culture of the armed forces, implementing the WPS agenda in the military component has been the most challenging. The number of women in the military component originally, and in principle, depends on the average percentage of women in the military in the troop-contributing countries. The top three contributing countries in the case of the military component, the United Kingdom, Argentina, and Slovakia have slightly more women in their militaries than the world's average, with 10-13% women in their ranks.⁸³ The UNFICYP military component, however, is facing challenges and pressure from the strict Command and Control structure, as well as the nature of carrying out orders. Due to the broad nature of the WPS implementation in the mandate, translating principles into orders is very difficult, especially on an operational and tactical level that may involve tasks such as patrolling along the buffer zone.

Similar to the military component, women in UNPOL are better represented in UNFICYP than in any other UN peacekeeping mission globally, with a steady 40-48% of female colleagues in the approximately 70 personnel on the island.⁸⁴ Three different elements have contributed to the successful and permanent strong gender balance in UNPOL:

- (a) the individual nature of the recruitment and deployment process in contrast to the deployment of military troops;
- (a) the 'rank-less' nature of the mission, allowing women of lower rank in their respective home states to apply for positions in the UNFICYP, and;
- (a) the relatively peaceful, non-violent nature of the conflict.

The last element not only influences and encourages foreign individual applicants and their commanders, but also allows police troops stationed in the Mission for an approximately year-long period, to have family members visiting, creating a more family-friendly environment for troops.⁸⁵ In contrast to the military component, where the main troop-contributing countries deploying whole contingents/ units together have limited options to influence the number of women in the forces, police personnel are sent to the Mission directly by home authorities on an individual basis. Accordingly, police-contributing countries have a number of options for encouraging women to apply for a position in the mission.⁸⁶

⁸¹ UN Peacekeeping (2022) 'Gender (Monthly Gender Statistics),' Available at <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/gender>

⁸² UNFICYP Facebook Page (2022) – 24 March 2022, Available at <https://www.facebook.com/UNFICYP/posts/pfbid02A3PPR5DsgxT4sd2otrcDKroWyREULGHVEQ54Qj8sqxkbcAGFeXPjGo p2jd49mizl>

⁸³ United Nations Peacekeeping (2022) 'UNFICYP Factsheet,' Available at <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/unficy>

⁸⁴ UN Peacekeeping (2022) 'Gender (Monthly Gender Statistics),' Available at <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/gender>.

⁸⁵ Interview with Gordana Mitrovits, UNPOL, UNFICYP (October 2022).

⁸⁶ Ibid.

Both military and police components at UNFICYP are above the global average for their percentages of female uniformed personnel in UN peacekeeping missions. This means that UNFICYP is leading by example, not only in quantitative terms, but also qualitatively speaking, as the Mission continuously has female leaders in all positions, including at leadership and command levels. At the time of writing, both the Mission Commander of the military forces and the Senior Police Advisor and Commander of UNPOL in Cyprus are women. It should also be highlighted that previously, in 2019, when the Head of Mission was also a woman, UNFICYP was the first and only UN peacekeeping mission that had all-female leadership in all components.⁸⁷

While the general perception of women's participation in peacekeeping is still closer to the 'woman first, soldier second'⁸⁸ and 'equal but different'⁸⁹ mentality, in the case of UNFICYP, this might be different due to the high number of uniformed personnel, including in senior leadership positions. Taking into account the core idea of gender equality and balanced representation in the forces, inclusion of male colleagues in leadership and command positions has also been an important issue.⁹⁰ Recent developments on the police side, which also allow the mission to work with WPS, is that regular meetings have been agreed and established between UNFICYP's Senior Police Advisor and the Head of Police in both communities.⁹¹ The Joint Contact Room that facilitates bilateral support from both communities offers room for police cooperation, facilitated by the UN and UNPOL in Cyprus, to address criminal activities, including highly gender-sensitive issues, such as human trafficking.

Overall, work on WPS is led by the Mission's GAO and strongly supported by the Civil Affairs Section. The latter has a crucial role in involving civil society from both sides, including bicomunal initiatives and organisations that work towards the implementation of the WPS agenda. International days, such as the International Women's Day in March and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in November, continue to be the most important highlights of the inter- and bicomunal efforts to engage women of both communities, while also raising public awareness on different issues under the WPS framework. According to the UN Department of Peace Operations, in 2018 UNFICYP "supported 16 inter-communal initiatives, involving over 500 participants, led by women's civil society organisations and informal women's groups to strengthen women's participation," including the provision of financial support for eight of these initiatives.⁹²

⁸⁷ UNFICYP (2019) 'UNFICYP Leadership Participates in Panel Discussion on Women in Peacekeeping,' Available at <https://unficyp.unmissions.org/unficyp-leadership-participates-panel-discussion-women-peacekeeping>

⁸⁸ Lotte Vermeij (2020) 'Woman First, Soldier Second: Taboos and Stigmas Facing Military Women in UN Peace Operations,' International Peace Institute, Available at <https://www.ipinst.org/2020/10/taboo-and-stigmas-facing-military-women-in-un-peace-operations>.

⁸⁹ Shirley Graham (2016) 'A Gender Paradox: Discourses on Women in UN Peacekeeping,' *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 27: 165-187.

⁹⁰ Interview with Satu Kovi, UNPOL, UNFICYP (October 2022).

⁹¹ UNSC (2022).

⁹² UNDPO (2020) 'Gender Equality and Women, Peace and Security Resource Package,' Available at <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/gender-equality-and-women-peace-and-security-resource-package> 57.

Additionally, these activities are coordinated by the GAO of the Mission and in cooperation with other components, especially the Civil Affairs Section, which has been successful in engaging with civil society organisations, particularly those of women and youth on both sides of the conflict. UNFICYP has also helped to facilitate several bilateral agreements on women's participation, for example, the 2022 joint 'Action Plan on ways to ensure women's full, equal and meaningful participation in the settlement process/an eventual settlement process in Cyprus. Moreover, troop-contributing countries, like Slovakia, Norway, and the United Kingdom, as well as international organisations and NGOs, all continue to provide assistance in supporting project-based initiatives on WPS, coordinated or carried out by the Mission. As a matter of fact, in 2022 the Mission organised a series of events, workshops, and trainings in partnership with the British Council to work on the Participation pillar of the WPS agenda, supporting the inclusion of women into the peace process, with special focus on youth.⁹³

UNFICYP's gender mainstreaming efforts are highly reliant on public outreach and its Public Information Office, which has successfully supported all components in implementing the WPS framework. UNFICYP's special focus on social media, including platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, enables it to have an outreach across generations and without borders when it is running a targeted marketing campaign on WPS-related issues, such as the '16 days of activism raising awareness on the violence against women,' or the promotion of female leaderships and individual career paths. The official magazine of the mission, the 'Blue Beret', which is published quarterly online, contributes to the implementation of the WPS agenda by discussing related topics and portraying female peacekeepers in every issue.⁹⁴

Alongside the strong Participation pillar, the issue of gender-based violence in Cyprus (related to the Protection and Prevention pillars) has been one of the issues providing a common topic on which bicomunal cooperation and understanding might be possible.⁹⁵ While the mission itself continues to remain uninvolved in sexual misconduct and abuse cases, it has taken steps to help prevent such abuse by working together with UNFICYP online, which has been – especially due to COVID-19 restrictions – the common practice with regard to training on sexual exploitation and abuse inside the Mission.⁹⁶ UNFICYP's main focus remains strong condemnation of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). This operates not only as an internal focus and part of the code of conduct in everyday operations, but also as an external focus— through gender focal points across the police and military components, and cooperation with civil society on the topic via the gender advisor of the mission and the Civil Affairs Section. Similar to the

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ UNFICYP (2022) 'The Blue Beret Magazine,' Available at <https://unficy.unmissions.org/blue-beret-magazine>

⁹⁵ UNSC (2022).

⁹⁶ Ibid.

Protection and Prevention pillars – i.e., less relevant than in other more violent contexts and theatres with more acute daily threat to women’s physical security – the Relief and Recovery pillar is addressed to a gender- sensitive approach, in coordination with humanitarian aid provided by the Civil Affairs Section.

While UNFICYP is taking steps to both internalise and externalise the WPS agenda, as well as to strengthen implementation on the ground, it continues to rely heavily on the civilian aspects, especially on the Participation pillar and the cooperation with civil society organizations. Because the civilian and police components – which interact with the population more frequently— have been given more flexibility and opportunities to fulfil their tasks, they are able to lead the implementation efforts. The military component, in contrast, is more tightly bound to the chain of command and their respective tasks.

KOSOVO'S PROTRACTED CONFLICT

Kosovo is a rather important case for the European regional context due to the particularly violent nature of the Balkan wars in terms of conflict-related, sexual, and gender-based violence. Rape was widely used as a tactic of war,⁹⁷ shaping and scarring the life of the wider population of the Former Yugoslav Republic, including Kosovo, which in 2008 was the last community to attain its independence from Serbia. As observed in the case of Cyprus, international recognition plays a major role in shaping policy for Kosovo as well. Several UN member states, including states in the European region such as Spain, Romania, Slovakia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Greece, and the Republic of Cyprus itself, do not recognise Kosovo as a sovereign state.⁹⁸ The Pristina-Belgrade dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia has been frozen for nearly two decades, with no significant steps taken. The dialogue has also faced challenges similar to Cyprus as a result of the overall tense and burdensome security situation in the European region due to Russian war against Ukraine. In late 2022, tensions between Kosovo and Serbia flamed up over issues such as car license plate requirements for Serbians residing in the territory of Kosovo, Serbia's increased military expenditures and investments, as well as the government ordering all unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) close to military facilities and entering the no-fly zone to be brought down.⁹⁹

Kosovo's National Action Plan for 2013-2015 was adopted in 2014, and elaborated by the Agency on Gender Equality in the Office of the Prime Minister (AGE), "in cooperation with the working group, which consisted of central governmental entities and civil society members, and with the support of UN Women and OHCHR."¹⁰⁰ Reflecting the particularly violent nature of the Yugoslav Wars, the main focus of Kosovo's first and only NAP was on the Protection and Prevention pillars, as well as on Relief and Recovery as part of the reconciliation and recognition of the victims of the war. Nevertheless, the NAP did not ignore the Participation pillar, but included it as one of the focus points for the future and as one of NAP's three

⁹⁷ See UNSCR 1820 (2008), Available at [https://undocs.org/S/RES/1820\(2008\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/1820(2008))

⁹⁸ In the case of the RoC, it is impractical for the state to recognise Kosovo due to the ongoing Cyprus problem. See World Population Review(2022) 'Countries that Recognise Kosovo,' Available at <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/countries-that-recognize-kosovo>

⁹⁹ Tamara Kovacevic (2022) 'Kosovo: Why Trouble Flared up Between Serbs and the Albanian-Led Government?,' *BBC*, Available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/62382069>. See also Elisabeth Gosselin-Malo (2022) 'Serbia May Become Biggest Operator of Military Drones in Balkans,' *C4isrnet.com*, Available at <https://www.c4isrnet.com/unmanned/2022/11/21/serbia-may-become-biggest-operator-of-military-drones-in-balkans/>.

¹⁰⁰ *Peacewomen.org* (n.d.) 'Kosovo,' Available at <http://1325naps.peacewomen.org/index.php/kosovo/>

designated outcomes. This led to the increased participation of women in the peace processes, in peacekeeping and in security structures, while also improving government agency responses to societal needs, and helping in the rehabilitation of victims of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence.¹⁰¹ By 2022, Kosovo had organised and hosted the first Forum on Women, Peace and Security in Pristina with the participation of EU and UN experts.¹⁰² The high-level conference was the first significant national effort on WPS implementation since the adoption of Kosovo's first NAP almost a decade ago in 2014.

¹⁰¹ Agency for Gender Equality (2014) 'Working Plan to implement Resolution 1325, "Women, Peace and Security" 2013-2015,' Kosovo: Office of Prime Minister - Republic of Kosovo , Available at http://1325naps.peacewomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/kosovo_nap_2014.pdf, 136.

¹⁰² EEAS: EU and UNDP Continue to Promote the Role of Women in Peace and Security, 23 October 2022, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kosovo/eu-and-undp-continue-promote-role-women-peace-and-security_en?s=321

UNMIK, EULEX, AND KFOR IN KOSOVO UNDER WPS: THE HEART OF THE MATTER

International presence in Kosovo is permanent and has grown in significance since the early 2000s. This has not changed, not even since the declaration of independence in 2008, nor due to the last 15 years of frozen conflict. All major international organisations are present on the ground, including the United Nations, the European Union, the OSCE and NATO, and all are individually and in coordination, working on the implementation of the WPS in Kosovo. Between 1999 and 2008, the UN-led international coalition, which also included international organisations, took the stand to re-establish peace, supporting the creation of a functioning state structure and authority for Kosovo, based on a four-pillar model including the UN, the UNHCR, the OSCE, and the EU.¹⁰³ Conflict-based sexual violence and the end of impunity is at the heart of the conflict resolution and peacekeeping efforts in Kosovo. Accordingly, WPS in the case of Kosovo's protracted conflict is what the literature has addressed and referred to as 'the heart of the matter,' in several cases following up on women's physical security.¹⁰⁴ Systematic sexual and gender-based violence against women on both sides of the conflict was also a direct driving force towards the adoption of subsequent resolutions of the WPS agenda, such as UNSCR 1820 (2008), with which UN member states noted and acknowledged "sexual violence as a tactic of war"¹⁰⁵ or UNSCR 1960 (2010), which tackles the issue of impunity and accountability.¹⁰⁶

Kosovo – similarly to Cyprus – is one of the protracted conflicts in Europe that has influenced the strategic and politico-military landscape of Europe in the 21st century. As a case study, it has also been covered by permanent and continuous, yet often rather reactive and low intensity, conflict resolution and management efforts from the international community. Nevertheless, while in Cyprus the main international actor managing a complex multidimensional and multicomponent peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts is the United Nations, in Kosovo different international organisations are present, focusing on different elements of

¹⁰³ Rok Zupančič and Nina Pejič (2018) 'EU Affairs in Kosovo,' in Rok Zupančič and Nina Pejič (eds.) *Limits to the European Union's Normative Power in a Post-Conflict Society: EULEX and Peacebuilding in Kosovo*, Cham: Springer, 33-63.

¹⁰⁴ Valerie M. Hudson, Mary Caprioli, Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill, Rose McDermott and Chad F. Emmett (2009) 'The Heart of the Matter: The Security of Women and the Security of States,' *International Security*, 33(3): 7-45.

¹⁰⁵ See UNSCR 1820 (2008), Available at [https://undocs.org/S/RES/1820\(2008\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/1820(2008))

¹⁰⁶ See UNSCR 1960 (2010), Available at [https://undocs.org/S/RES/1960\(2010\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/1960(2010))

the peace process and peacekeeping within their field missions. While the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the NATO-led Kosovo Force were both deployed in the same year directly after the UN Security Council Resolution 1244 in 1999, the mission led by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) was established in 2002, while the EULEX Kosovo mission of the European Union began its work in 2008.¹⁰⁷ UNMIK's strategic role in peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts goes beyond its own mandate with also coordinating the international civilian presence in Kosovo. Characteristically, OSCE 'retains the status of UNMIK's pillar for institution building.' EULEX Kosovo, on the other hand, provides and operationalises the rule of law-related mandate in the country, which also operates under the UNMIK umbrella.¹⁰⁸ As such, the UN coordinates and is responsible for the majority of the civilian security sector reform-focused peacebuilding efforts. However, in the last decade, the role of the EU as the primary mediator between Belgrade and Pristina has increased. This is also partly due to changes in UNMIK personnel. Numbers on the ground were 374 in 2021, with heavy civilian focus, such that there were only 18 uniformed personnel, of which 8 were military observers and 10 were UNPOL service members.¹⁰⁹ UNMIK's role in coordination also includes focus on WPS efforts, as gender advisors deployed to the field in the different international missions are in close contact and supporting each other. Alongside official, formal meetings between gender advisors in UNMIK, EULEX Kosovo, KFOR and the OSCE missions taking place in every two weeks, these experts have informal lines of communication, where they share news, ideas and concerns with each other on a daily basis.¹¹⁰

EU action in Kosovo, including the work of the civilian CSDP mission, EULEX Kosovo, is framed by the revised indicators for the implementation and monitoring of the comprehensive approach on WPS in the EU from 2016, encompassing five different thematical topics and 17 indicators in total.¹¹¹ The EULEX Kosovo mission aims to deliver comprehensive reform in the Kosovar security sector, focusing on two main areas of activities: (a) monitoring, and (b) operations.¹¹² Currently, the Mission works with a staff of approximately 400, including local and international staff. In EULEX's focus on the rule of law, WPS is not only a cross-cutting issue, but also a main focal point of the mandate. Daily implementation and operationalisation of the WPS is accomplished via the monitoring mechanism provided at mission level, such as

¹⁰⁷ See UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) [on the deployment of international civil and security presences in Kosovo]

¹⁰⁸ United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (2021) 'Mandate,' Available at <https://unmik.unmissions.org/mandate>

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Interview with UNMIK Officer (January 2023)

¹¹¹ Council of the European Union (2016) 'Revised indicators for the comprehensive approach to the EU implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security,' Available at <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12525-2016-INIT/en/pdf>

¹¹² See Council Joint Action 2008/124/CFSP of 4 February 2008 on the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, EULEX Kosovo.

monitoring selected judicial cases (including those of sexual violence), and providing support to the Kosovar forensic services. While the operational mechanisms have mainly focused on maintaining a 'standby' police capability (referred to as EULEX's Formed Police Unit), the Mission also operates its own witness protection programme.¹¹³ WPS implementation by EULEX Kosovo is further supported by internal and external education and training for the Mission's own personnel, as well as Kosovar state security providers, such as the police with 'Train the Trainers' course for Kosovo Police officers focusing on the interviewing and management of vulnerable victims.¹¹⁴

The EU's overall focus on capacity building and development of the Kosovo Police has been significant in several aspects, including gender training.¹¹⁵ Moreover, the EULEX mission has created a Gender Resource Centre, which mainstreams gender equality and women's empowerment through campaigns, projects, and events.¹¹⁶ Expertise and experience gathered in the field, as well as from the historic and violent heritage of the conflict in Kosovo, contributed to the fact that EULEX Kosovo has become a flagship mission of the EU on WPS implementation. The EULEX mission has also contributed to the elaboration and formation of vital EU policy documents, such as the Civilian Operations Commander Operational Guidelines for Mission Management and Staff on Gender Mainstreaming by the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) Directorate in 2018, while also creating its own gender analysis tool.¹¹⁷ All action on WPS by EULEX Kosovo fulfils the requirements of the EU indicators on WPS, such as "EU activities in support of women's participation in peace negotiations," and "modalities and EU tools, including financial instruments, that the EU has used to support WPS in its partner countries."¹¹⁸ However, with regard to EU action in Kosovo, and more broadly in the Western Balkans, this is sometimes interpreted as a collective sense of guilt at the Union's inadequate efforts to halt the violence in the region after the secession of the former Yugoslavia. It appears that criticism of their lack of action in the Balkan Wars later led the EU to start its first major external effort and action on peacekeeping in the Balkans.¹¹⁹

The NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) has been on the ground in Kosovo since the very beginning of the conflict, its numbers reflecting the changing situation. NATO's military presence in Kosovo, with approximately 4,000 troops, has been a crucial part of the three-layered security responder mechanism, where the national Kosovar police force is the first

¹¹³ EULEX Kosovo (2021) 'Factsheet,' Available at <https://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/eul/repository/docs/Brochure-1762102.pdf>

¹¹⁴ Council of the European Union (2018) 'Civilian Operations Commander Operational Guidelines for Mission Management and Staff on Gender Mainstreaming,' EEAS Working Document, Available at <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12851-2018-INIT/en/pdf>

¹¹⁵ Zupančič and Pejič (2018).

¹¹⁶ EULEX Kosovo (2021).

¹¹⁷ Council of the European Union (2018).

¹¹⁸ Council of the European Union (2016).

¹¹⁹ Zupančič and Pejič (2018:41).

security responder, the EULEX police capability is the second, and KFOR is the third.¹²⁰ Moreover, the presence of NATO forces in Kosovo also contributes to the maintenance of a safe and peaceful environment, and offers citizens freedom of movement.¹²¹ KFOR, being completely independent from the UN mission, represents a pure military component in the Kosovo case, and has had a designated and deployed gender advisor in the force since the Office of the Gender Advisor (GENAD) was established in 2011.¹²² Moreover, the KFOR Commander is obliged to undertake specific gender training before taking command, as well as to consider the implementation of the WPS agenda in operational planning and execution.¹²³

NATO's focus, which has geared towards dedicating gender expertise in the field to raise awareness of the importance of gendered perspectives in operations and operational effectiveness, is continuous. For instance, since the late 2000s, the first gender advisor in the field in Kosovo – an American lieutenant colonel – emphasised that she had to 'begin from zero,' working within WPS structures in early 2010 in KFOR.¹²⁴ The NATO-led Kosovo Force has its own magazine, the 'KFOR Chronical', which is very similar in nature to the 'Blue Beret' published by UNFICYP. The KFOR Chronical has touched upon and dedicated its attention to the WPS agenda, including publishing a special edition for the 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in 2020.¹²⁵ The special edition notes the core and direct ties between the 2000 landmark WPS resolution and UNSCR resolution 1244 authorising international involvement in resolving and supporting the end of the conflict in Kosovo, while at the same time acknowledging the ~250 female troops serving in KFOR. It has also identified one of the most important tasks of the GENAD, which has been to increase "the mission's situational awareness and operational effectiveness" in providing a gender perspective.¹²⁶ KFOR also works with gender focal points – similarly to UNFICYP's military component – that encourage the integration of male troops in the gender mainstreaming efforts, having two male soldiers appointed across the force units. While one focal point is placed at the headquarters to focus on cultural training, the other focal point works with the Liaison Monitoring Teams' Coordination Cell.¹²⁷

¹²⁰ EULEX Kosovo (2020) 'EULEX Formed Police Unit, Kosovo's Second Security Responder,' Available at <https://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/?page=2,11,1197>

¹²¹ NATO's KFOR (n.d.) 'NATO's Role in Kosovo,' Available at <https://jfcnaples.nato.int/kfor/about-us/welcome-to-kfor/natos-role-in-kosovo>.

¹²² See NATO News (2011) 'Improving gender awareness in KFOR,' Available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_74396.htm. See also KFOR Chronicle (2020) 'Women, Peace and Security – 20 years of United Nations Resolution 1325,' Special Edition, Available at <https://jfcnaples.nato.int/kfor/media-center/archive/chronicles/chronicle-2020>

¹²³ Interview with Major General Ferenc Kajári, Hungarian Defence Forces, former Commander of NATO's KFOR mission (December 2022).

¹²⁴ NATO News (2011).

¹²⁵ KFOR Chronicle (2020).

¹²⁶ Ibid: 14.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

All three missions in Kosovo have their own gender capabilities (gender advisors) and deployed expertise, which follow the same organizational structural pattern in how they directly report and advise the Head of Mission or the Force Commander. Moreover, UNMIK's gender advisor works in a similar fashion to the gender advisor in EULEX Kosovo, as they remain responsible for systematically including a gender perspective in the work of the Mission and the different components.¹²⁸ In the EULEX mission, the gender advisor is assisted by more than 20 colleagues in different mission components, who are appointed gender focal points, and responsible to "integrate a gender perspective in the work of their respective offices."¹²⁹ Gender advisors across different missions, UNMIK, KFOR, EULEX and OSCE, meet, coordinate, and consult regularly.¹³⁰ Such cooperation is also reflected and identified as a core pillar and indicator by the EU action on WPS.¹³¹ Last but not least, as a vital part of the WPS agenda, the international missions in Kosovo, especially those with a heavy civilian focus, such as UNMIK, OSCE and EULEX, have an active relationship with local women and civil society organizations, such as Kosovo Women Network.¹³²

¹²⁸ UNMIK (2022) 'Women, Peace and Security,' Available at <https://unmik.unmissions.org/women-peace-and-security>

¹²⁹ Eulex-kosovo.eu (2021) 'The victims are not alone; we are all together! Speak up on time!' –EULEX gender advisor's interview with Radio K4, Available at <https://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/?page=2,11,2422>

¹³⁰ Interview with Major General Ferenc Kajári, Hungarian Defence Forces, former Commander of NATO's KFOR mission (December 2022).

¹³¹ Council of the European Union (2016) 'Revised indicators for the comprehensive approach to the EU implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security,' Available at <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12525-2016-INIT/en/pdf>

¹³² Eulex-kosovo.eu (2014) 'Fighting gender-based violence,' Available at <https://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/en/news/000486.php>

REFLECTING ON GENDERED SECURITY PROCESSES IN CYPRUS AND KOSOVO

Assessing protracted conflict cases from a gendered perspective on security in small communities, while at the same time recognising issues stemming from political disputes such as international recognition and proclamation of a state post-secession, collectively pose a major challenge for settling disputes in both Kosovo and Cyprus. Not only that, but such issues have also steered and shaped the work of international organisations, such as the UN and the EU. Securitised identities, as presented in each respective conflict, have undoubtedly left women-led and feminist-gendered narratives outside the equation for a prolonged period. Recent efforts, however, have brought about some guidance as to how gendered perspectives can be integrated when addressing protracted conflict in the case of small states and communities. For that, the WPS agenda, an already securitised framework, needs to be pushed further.

In the case of international organisations, the the UN and the EU have played a substantial and active role in addressing issues related to women and security in both Kosovo and Cyprus. The Union has also had an important role in easing tensions and fostering European values heavily mainstreamed in EU Common Foreign and Security Policy, including CSDP, as unifying ideals across communities. Nonetheless, the issue of political recognition and secession in each respective case study frequently undermines the opportunities of international actors, especially the UN and EU, to act. Gender advisors deployed to both UNMIK and UNFICYP are working with the implementation of WPS principles externally – with partners and the host country –, and internally inside the missions as well focusing on issues, such as gender parity. The UN and its missions in Kosovo and Cyprus have played a vital role in continuously and deliberately collecting comprehensive sex-disaggregated data on missions' personnel, which is a crucial pillar for the successful internal implementation of the WPS agenda inside these missions. NATO's effort for systematic collection of sex-disaggregated data is also an added value.

On the other hand, the SGBV history of each conflict has been painted rather differently. This gives WPS implementation a distinct focus: a special emphasis on the Participation pillar in Cyprus; a more balanced approach across all WPS pillars in Kosovo. This is an important distinction, as the desired balance has not yet been achieved in Cyprus. While in Cyprus the

WPS framework serves as a holistic framework across mission components— as it has been in the case of UNFICYP, but also in part for the WPS NAP of the RoC— in Kosovo, the pillars of the WPS agenda reflect directly on the history of the conflict, as well as in the mandate of the respective peacekeeping missions. This builds momentum, as it cultivates a direct response to the conflict, without any side-lining or neglecting to provide full accounts on all opposing sides' view in the conflict.

While there are good intentions in each respective case study under consideration to further empower women and promote gender equality, this is not actively promoted as part of a serious negotiation strategy. In the case of Cyprus and across both communities, we must begin asking more questions as to why each respective community and their leaderships have succeeded at recognising the importance of working on cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, on the one hand, while failing to incorporate such issues more systematically to their efforts to build a sustainable and peaceful resolution to the conflict, on the other. The conflict in Cyprus is experienced on a daily basis by everyone on the island, disrupting the daily, routinised societal processes, while also causing serious disputes between the two communities and on international platforms.

Meanwhile, peacekeeping action in each respective case has borne different fruits. Kosovo has had more missions and operations on its soil. Similarly, Kosovo itself could provide added value to the knowledge pool for UNFICYP when it comes to mine action and clearing, where women are also included in mine action services and activities, whereas no such reported case exists for Cyprus. Kosovo, just like Cyprus, faces similar challenges derived from the smallness of its community and the relatively peaceful, comfortable, and safe nature of the status quo. The protracted and overlooked nature of the conflict in both cases is the product of bigger, more acute external threats to European and transatlantic security, thereby side-lining the two cases.

Despite this latter issue, the paradoxically peaceful and safe environments in Kosovo and Cyprus have enabled discussion on boosting gender mainstreaming efforts, including implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Such efforts have contributed to the willingness of troop-contributing countries to send more female uniformed personnel to these missions, as well as dedicating more focus and allocating more capacities to gender mainstreaming efforts. While in these missions female uniformed personnel frequently face the undermining narrative of their presence, being facilitated by the relatively peaceful environment of these theatres, the deployment experience in the long run can support further integration and qualitative development of gender equality in institutions, such as in the military or the police. In fact, the ongoing discussion about focusing not only on women's individual physical security, but also highlighting the security and protection of women's organisations and women peace advocates, is a growing trend in Cyprus, in which lessons identified and learnt in Kosovo could serve as best practices for further development of the cause.

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This report looks at two distinct yet comparative cases: Cyprus and Kosovo, two small communities with a violent past. Specifically, the report seeks to develop a better understanding of the policies on gender and security in peacekeeping missions /operations in cases of protracted conflict, with Cyprus and Kosovo as case studies. In doing so, feminist thinking within Security Studies is integrated into a revised approach to Securitisation Theory, which is employed as a model to conceptualise protracted conflicts in small states and communities. We understand a ‘protracted conflict’ as an “intense and violent conflict over important issues persisting for long periods of time.” Both Cyprus and Kosovo, while currently at ceasefire, exist within facilitated peace processes, with a looming risk of violence breaking out again. In both country contexts, the link between gender and security in the comparative sense is an understudied concept, with limited literature on a useful analysis of (a) Cyprus as a case study in terms of gender-security in peace operations, and (b) a comparative examination between Kosovo and Cyprus. While most research examining the gender dimension has focused on newer, more modern missions and operations, such as EULEX Kosovo, there is a considerable gap in research and policy for older missions, with particular reference to Cyprus. As such, this report examines Kosovo and Cyprus in order to assess the differences in the missions and to highlight the gaps between older and newer missions, with emphasis on the link between gender and security in peace operations. The objective is to determine the best peacekeeping practices in Kosovo, which can then be made available for the case of Cyprus.

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