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Gendered Civilian Crisis
Management
Troubleshooting CSDP Missions

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Abstract

Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on “Women, Peace and Security”, which calls for gender mainstreaming in peace operations, is today an acknowledged part of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) of the European Union. However, gender mainstreaming faces both structural and actor-level challenges in the framework of civilian CSDP missions. Taking theory of gendered organizations as a starting point, this article focuses on mission hierarchies and gendered practices that pose challenges for effective gender mainstreaming. The research material consists of the experiences of Finnish civilian crisis management experts, including gender advisers and focal points, collected through interviews and an anonymous survey in 2012. The analysis indicates that CSDP missions have not internalized the principles of gender equality within their own organization, which has consequences both for the well-being of mission staff members and practical gender work targeted at the host societies. Furthermore, gender work in the missions is gendered in terms of being conducted mainly by women, and often lacking the wider support of other staff members. Introducing gender adviser positions and separate gender units in organizational structures has not in all cases led to stronger mainstreaming, but rather to marginalization of gender work inside the missions.

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1 Introduction

When examining gender in the context of conflict and crisis management and peacebuilding, we are facing many different kinds of discussions and realities. First, in the academic realm of gender theory, the neat categories of 'men' and 'women' have been contested for a long time¹, and also the concepts of gender, gender equality and gender mainstreaming are a source of constant debate. Beyond the theoretical debate, many researchers in the field of peace and conflict studies as well as practitioners of peacebuilding share a view that understanding the gender dimensions of armed conflicts also means a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics and conduct of conflicts, and more lasting solutions for their resolution.²

Second, at the policy level the past decade has been a 'golden era' of resolutions and action plans that demand gender mainstreaming in the organization and operationalization of crisis management and peacekeeping operations. Since the passing of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on 'Women, Peace and Security' in 2000, which has been accompanied by six complementary UN resolutions³ and 46 National Action Plans (NAPs), organizations such as European Union, NATO, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and African Union have also created their own policies and strategies to enhance the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

However, there is an evident gap between advanced gender theories as well as 1325-rhetorics and the field operations in (post-) conflict settings. Fourteen years after the adoption of UNSCR 1325, the objectives of the resolution - including women in the peace processes, ending conflict-related sexual violence and mainstreaming gender in peace operations - are still distant dreams in many areas suffering from long-term violent conflicts. In the worst case UNSCR 1325 is considered as a 'western policy paper' without real political or practical influence, and sometimes even the western donor community seems to be confused about why to invest in a more than ten-year-old resolution.⁴ Many eager practitioners of gender mainstreaming in the context of crisis management and peacekeeping operations have also become obsessed with the number of women in field operations; this is not to say that women's participation would not be an important goal for gender mainstreaming, but this aspect is often highlighted at the expense of a more cross-cutting understanding of gender or other important objectives of UNSCR 1325.

¹ See e.g. Butler 1990; Squires 1999, 74–77.

² See e.g. El-Bushra 2012; Jukarainen & Terävä 2010; Kronsell & Svedberg 2012; Mazurana, Raven-Roberts & Parpart 2005; Whitworth 2004.

³ UNSCRs 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106 and 2122.

⁴ Jukarainen 2012, 9. It should also be noted that apart from a few exceptions, most of the 46 countries that have adopted a National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 are European or other 'western' states, although, as Jukarainen notes, the birth of the UNSCR 1325 owes to African and Asian women's movements. See the up-to-date list of NAPs on <http://peacewomen.org/naps/list-of-naps> (accessed on 10.7.2014).

In this article we focus on the European Union and its civilian crisis management missions. International operations are rather new fields for the EU⁵, but alongside the organization's evolving crisis management practices, the EU has also put UNSCR 1325 and gender mainstreaming⁶ on the agenda of its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)⁷. Since 2003 the EU has launched 21 civilian missions, currently eleven of them still being active⁸. The scope of EU civilian crisis management extends to police operations, strengthening the rule of law and civilian administration, security sector reform, civil protection, border assistance and monitoring functions. We aim to understand the gap between the 1325-rhetoric and mission reality by analysing the experiences of Finnish civilian crisis management experts deployed in civilian CSDP missions.

Studying the personal experiences of staff members working in the CSDP missions can increase our understanding of successful practices as well as challenges regarding gender mainstreaming in civilian crisis management. We also claim that it is important to study the understandings of gender expressed by the actual practitioners of crisis management, as no policy or action plan for gender mainstreaming or UNSCR 1325 will ever reach its objectives, if the personnel working on the ground are not familiar with or committed to implementing them. As gender advisers and focal points in CSDP missions hold the key positions in regard to gender work, specific emphasis is placed on their experiences. We will also focus on the structures of CSDP missions in order to understand the factors that support or limit effective gender mainstreaming. Our aim is to seek answers for the following questions:

What kind of understanding do Finnish civilian crisis management experts have of gender and gender mainstreaming?

Which factors enhance and restrict effective gender mainstreaming and agency of gender advisers in CSDP missions?

1.1 Materials and methods

This article combines materials and methods of two simultaneously conducted research projects drawing on the experiences of Finnish civilian crisis management experts, who had been deployed to CSDP missions between the years 2007 and 2011.

⁵ Valenius 2007, 7–9.

⁶ The key documents of the EU addressing gender mainstreaming in CSDP missions include among others "Check list to ensure gender mainstreaming and implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the planning and conduct of ESDP operations (2006)", "Comprehensive approach to the EU Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security" (2008), "EU Guidelines on Violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them" (2008) and "Implementation of UNSCRs on Women, Peace and Security in the context of CSDP missions and operations" (2012).

⁷ For development of the 1325 agenda in the EU see Barnes 2011 and Olsson & Sundström 2012.

⁸ See "Ongoing missions and operations" on European Union External Action's www-site, available on http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/index_en.htm (accessed on 10.7.2014).

Both research projects were initiated in 2011 by the Crisis Management Centre (CMC) Finland in order to assess the implementation of the first Finnish National Action Plan (2008–2011) on UNSCR 1325⁹ in the context of civilian crisis management. Johanna Suhonen¹⁰ was conducting in-depth interviews with Finnish experts who had been deployed to the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM) and EU Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL)¹¹. Her research material consists of interviews with 16 female and 13 male experts, including 6 persons who had been working as gender advisers or gender focal points.

At the same time, CMC Finland developed an anonymous web-based survey addressing gender issues in civilian crisis management, which was carried out in January 2012 over a period of three weeks.¹² The extensive questionnaire was sent to 318 Finnish experts seconded¹³ by CMC Finland, excluding persons who had already been interviewed by Suhonen. The questionnaire included structured questions with predefined options and Likert-type scales, but also several open-ended questions to provide more comprehensive information on the topics. Altogether 165 experts (105 men and 60 women) responded to the survey, the three biggest missions (EULEX, EUMM and EUPOL) being represented by 110 respondents. Both the interviewees and survey respondents represent a wide variety of expertise within CSDP missions (e.g. police, rule of law, security, human resources, gender and human rights, communications and mission support), professional backgrounds (public, private and third sectors), ranks and age groups.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used for the analysis of the research data; the survey material was coded and cross-tabulated by SPSS in order to see frequencies of certain topics or phenomena. The interviews and textual material from the open-ended survey responses were used to broaden the information provided by the statistics. In this article quotes from the interviewees and respondents serve as illustrative examples of the topics touched upon in the research material.

To sum up, this article covers the experiences of 194 Finnish civilian crisis management experts. The sample focusing on one single nationality is not comprehensive, but provides us with an interesting picture how the staff members in civilian CSDP missions experience the organizational culture as a working environment and how gender is integrated into the work of the missions. Our starting point is to examine CSDP missions as *gendered organizations*, as the missions build upon gendered division of labour - the clear majority of the staff members (ca. 80 per cent)

⁹ Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2008.

¹⁰ Suhonen 2012.

¹¹ Most of the seconded Finnish civilian crisis management experts have been deployed to these three missions.

¹² See Mäki-Rahkola & Launiala 2012.

¹³ Secondment refers to a practice that the expert is under contract with and paid by the deploying state, but the actual employer is the organization in question. Contracted staff and mission members are directly employed and

are men, who often also represent male-dominated professions, such as police or other security-related professional fields. On the other hand, staff in gender adviser positions and gender and human rights units are mostly female. Furthermore, often the challenges experienced by the Finnish experts in CSDP missions were somehow related to the organizational and/or professional cultures. Hence, the theory of gendered organizations provides a useful framework for analysing the perceptions and experiences of the informants. As for the central concept of the article, gender, we depart from an understanding of it as a social construct which represents and defines our cultural understandings of proper roles and activities for men and women. As such, gender also serves as a 'way' by which relations of power can be articulated in a given society at any particular time.¹⁴

2 The organizational culture of CSDP missions

2.1 CSDP missions as gendered organizations

The intersections of organizational culture, structure and gender are not easily perceived. Organizations tend to be considered as gender neutral both in mainstream organization studies and our everyday thinking. However, from the mid-1970s onwards there has been an increasing amount of academic research on gender and organizations, which indicates that gender affects both the structure and practices of organizations.¹⁵ The theory of gendered organizations, developed by sociologist Joan Acker¹⁶, provides a good starting point for analysing the character of CSDP missions. Acker sees organizations as social structures producing gender differences and hierarchies. The theory thus builds on the idea that organizational structure is not gender neutral; on the contrary, in gendered organizations power relations between the sexes are asymmetrical and masculinity is the norm. In other words, gender, as socially constructed differences, usually involves the subordination of women, either concretely or symbolically. Gender differences and hierarchies are produced in *gendered processes*, which are concrete activities, "*What people do and say, and how they think about these activities*"¹⁷.

Acker outlines four different sets of gendered processes that are intertwined and can also be seen as different dimensions of one and same process. First is the *production of gender divisions* (jobs, wages, hierarchies, power and subordination),

¹⁴ On the concept of gender see e.g. Scott 1986; Squires 1999.

¹⁵ Aaltio & Mills 2002, 5; Acker 1990, 142. For gendered organization studies see also e.g. Ashcraft & Mumby 2004; Calás & Smircich 2006, Gherardi 1995; Hearn & Parkin 2001.

¹⁶ Acker 1990; 1992.

¹⁷ Acker 1992, 251.

which are produced by organizational practices and structures. For example, the gendered division of labour is apparent in CSDP missions both horizontally (specific work being carried out mostly by one sex) and vertically (management and leadership positions being occupied mostly by men). A second gendering process is the creation of *gendered symbols, images, and forms of consciousness*, which explicate, justify and sometimes oppose gender divisions. These become manifested, for example, in the perceptions the experts have on the importance of different tasks or the 'ideal' worker in civilian crisis management missions. A third set of processes includes *interactions between individuals* in which divisions are created. As will be discussed further, experts' interactions may include, among others, overt and covert subordination, exclusion, sexual harassment or discrimination. Finally, a fourth type of process is the *internal mental work of individuals* as they construct their understanding of and interpret their agency, opportunities and demands they face in the organization.¹⁸

Acker's gendered processes mesh with *organizational culture*. According to Albert Mills¹⁹, organizational culture refers to the dominant ways of doing things in an organization or part of an organization that is reflected in the regular activities of its members and the various things, or artefacts, that symbolize those activities. Organizational culture consists of various elements: ceremonies, symbols, buildings, slogans, values, leadership style, etc. It shapes the experiences and views of the members regarding the organization and themselves. Building on Mills' definition of organizational culture, the operational culture of CSDP missions can be understood as both official, publicly expressed, and unofficial, tacit ways of thinking and doing, which manifest themselves and are reproduced in everyday social interaction.

Yet, organizational culture is not an unambiguous concept in the case of CSDP missions. Staff members of civilian crisis management missions come from different professional fields, including security, justice, public administration, humanitarian work, development co-operation, academic institutions, etc. Experts identify themselves with different cultures at various levels through their nationality and work. The classification of cultures in peacekeeping by anthropologist Robert Rubinstein is useful in this respect. Rubinstein makes a distinction between national, professional (military or civilian) and organizational (missions, projects, teams) levels of culture. Starting from these theoretical foundations we will now move on to examine the experiences of Finnish civilian crisis management experts.

¹⁸ Ibid., 252–255.

¹⁹ Mills 1996, 321.

²⁰ Rubinstein 2003; 2005; 2008.

2.2 Hierarchies of CSDP Missions

One of the central findings of this research project deals with the official and unofficial hierarchies of CSDP missions. Finnish experts' perceptions differed in that, as a rule, only women mentioned and felt that different professional groups form a hierarchical structure in the missions. The narratives of the experts, regardless of their sex, show that the staff members of CSDP missions categorize themselves on the basis of their professional background roughly in three groups: police, military and civilian. Staff members with military or police background are often lumped together, so that a clear line is drawn between them and staff members with civilian backgrounds. Many female experts, particularly those with civilian backgrounds, reported that the staff members with police or military background were, in one way or another, higher in the mission's hierarchy. Male experts also brought up differences in professional cultures and ways of doing things in their answers, but their criticism mainly focused on varying work ethics among different nationalities. With the exception of a few male interviewees, men did not associate the mentioned categorization (police-military-civilian) with hierarchies or ponder on the possibility that women and men might experience the interaction between these three groups differently. The men who brought up the categorization represent experts with civilian backgrounds.

The research results thus suggest that the tri-partition police-military-civilian is a central factor in defining the experiences of Finnish experts. Furthermore, besides being 'hierarchical' the operational culture of CSDP missions was described as 'bureaucratic', 'male-dominated' and/or 'military', of which the two latter were associated with masculinity by the experts. Again, the experts' answers differed in that both women and men described the missions as being bureaucratic and hierarchical but, apart from a few exceptions, only women referred to male-dominated or military operational culture. As some female experts pointed out, although the concept 'civilian crisis management' refers to civilian expertise, the current missions are largely run by ex-military or police staff and a significant amount of all mission staff members are policemen, in other words members of rank-based organizations. To use the words of one female survey respondent:

"...the job descriptions and civilian crisis management missions build on military thinking, military terminology, military working methods and values. From my personal experience I have seen that women usually end up working either in

²¹ Several experts highlighted the importance of leadership for the development of operational culture. Principally, men reflected either a positive or neutral attitude towards the leadership of the missions, whereas women criticized the leadership style. Their comments suggest that the mission leadership play a key role in steering the operational culture in a less masculine direction.

support functions (administrative functions) or as advisers, that is to say outside of 'chain of command'. In the operations I have been working in, all strongly male-dominated (=military and police) organizations, the reactions towards me have been kindly and paternal, but neither my colleagues nor superiors have considered my working field or expertise very relevant for the operational functions."

But how do masculinity and hierarchies manifest themselves in practice, and what does this mean from the point of view of the functioning of CSDP missions? First, hierarchies manifest themselves in the everyday life of the missions in the gendered division of tasks and as gendered symbols and images, which explicate and justify these divisions. Masculinity and hierarchies work behind individual interactions, in which dividing practices are developed and images of gender are created and affirmed. They also shape experts' understandings of the mission's gendered structure of work, their opportunities and demands for gender-appropriate behaviour and attitudes within the mission. Each of these gendered processes will be discussed in more detail further on.

The gendered division of work in CSDP missions can be perceived in many ways. Missions are clearly male-dominated in numbers, as ca. 80 per cent of the mission staff members are men. However, the gender balance among the staff members varies between different missions; for example, in EUMM Georgia women make up 33 per cent of all the staff members, whereas in EUPOL Afghanistan women's participation is considerably lower with 16 per cent.²² Moreover, the work in the missions is divided along gender lines both vertically and horizontally; leadership and management positions are mainly occupied by men, who also make up the majority of the personnel performing so-called core tasks, while women are more strongly represented in administrative, support and adviser functions.²⁴

The research material indicates that in addition to this official and 'natural' division of tasks, also unofficial gendered division of tasks occurs in the missions. In other words, certain tasks may be perceived as men's or women's work. This division of tasks seems to reflect traditional, stereotypical ideas of work suited for men or women; men do the work that is thought to be more 'manly' and sometimes, perhaps, more dangerous, and tend to lead the field patrols while women are assigned occupational roles that are secretary-like or require social skills. In these cases gender manifests itself as a power relation, as something that is used, either consciously or unconsciously, to explicate and justify gendered divisions and hierarchies.²⁵ For

²²European External Action Service, Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC), Gender Figures 31.08.2012.

²³ In October 2012, there were no women among the twelve Heads of CSDP missions and operations, nor as Heads of Crisis Management bodies in Brussels. From eleven EU Special Representatives two were female. European Peacebuilding Liaison Office 2012.

²⁴The EU crisis management instruments, such as CPCC, do not collect data on what kinds of positions male and female staff members fill in the missions. However, many interviewed Finnish experts referred to gendered division of positions in CSDP missions. According to Häikiö (2010, 72–73) the gendered division of tasks is also observable among the locally contracted staff members; local women are usually hired as interpreters or for other auxiliary functions of the mission, while men occupy the expert functions.

²⁵ Scott 1986.

example, in EUMM Georgia the gendered division of tasks was observable in the structure and functions of the mission; the heads of field offices placed most women in human rights teams while there were only a few female experts in the patrolling Administrative Boundary Line teams that were in touch with the local police and military actors. Besides the work done by human rights teams work related to gender and UNSCR 1325 is often considered as women's field of work, as well as for positions of gender adviser.

Each staff member of the mission has a certain idea of the nature of the mission, the importance of different tasks and the best ways to achieve the objectives of the mission. The research indicates that a significant part of the personnel perceive the 'hard' functions related to security as being the most central and important functions of the missions. Femininity that is often associated with the tasks performed by women, manifests itself in the images and expressions that are used to describe a specific task or its performers. For example, some interviewees described the previously mentioned human rights teams of EUMM Georgia as 'soft' teams, others told how the members of these teams were sometimes called 'tree huggers' or 'baby kissers'. The 'harder' tasks and a specific professional group can sometimes pronouncedly be seen as the core of civilian crisis management, and the ideal worker is thought to be a man; that is, men are perceived as more capable or suitable to perform and advance the core functions of the missions. This has become apparent, for example, in the recruitment process. As one female human resources expert commented:

"It is common that the leadership of CSDP missions have police or military backgrounds (...) It also gets reflected downwards so that very often the leadership seem to think that if you work with policemen, the chain of command should also consist of policemen, based on the idea 'a policeman understands another policeman', sort of. And border guards and soldiers are easily lumped together. They are thought to share a common understanding of what leadership is, how you lead and work in a mission. (...) Sometimes we had tough conversations on this matter, since I, as a civilian, was of the opinion that if a police background is not listed as a requirement in the job description, it shouldn't be a criterion for selection either."

Apart from sex, other identity markers, such as nationality, age and professional background, intertwine with each other and produce hierarchies in the mission's organizational culture. Rather than identifying themselves with the European Union²⁶, the mission staff members represent different member states that offer varying kind of benefits for their seconded experts in terms of pre-deployment training, salary, family policy and psycho-social support. Many Finnish experts considered CSDP missions to be inherently political in nature, and saw the missions as a playground for national struggles over influential positions inside the missions. At the individual level, the role

²⁶ Suhonen 2012, 88.

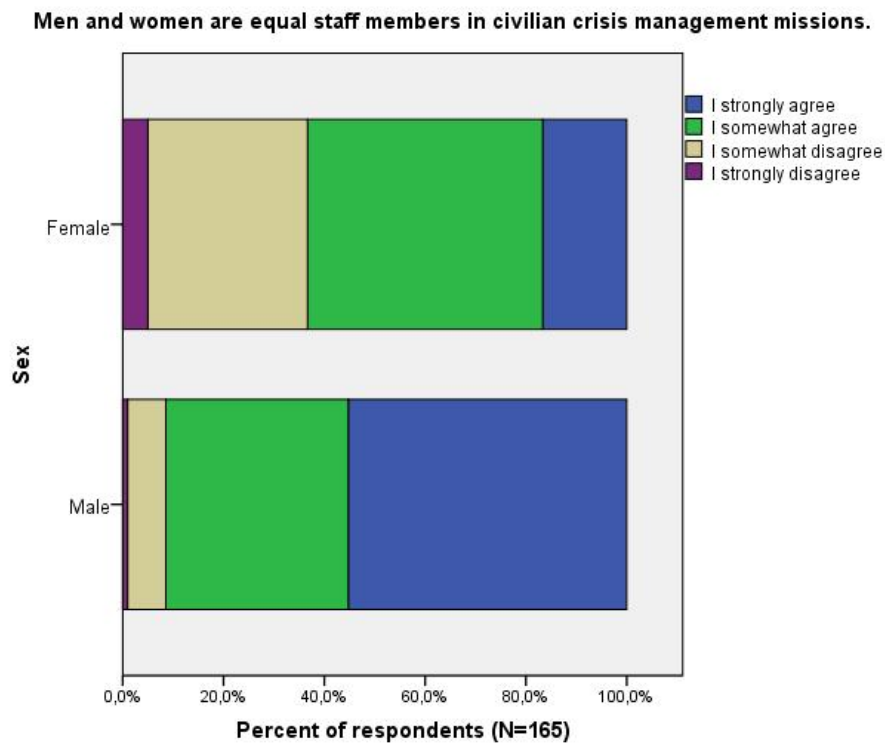
and rank of a person plays a crucial role in determining her/his authority in the mission. Some female respondents mentioned that a young, civilian woman in a male-dominated police organization does not have the easiest position for building up authority amongst her colleagues. Therefore, the research suggests that masculine operational culture is not necessarily favourable for female experts' agency, or for that of male experts with civilian background. Several civilian experts commented that they felt as if they had to justify their participation in the mission and that they were underdogs in relation to the staff members with police or military backgrounds.

Van der Lippe, Graumans and Sevenhuijsen who have conducted research on equality and equality work in police forces conclude that male-dominated work culture favouring masculine values discriminates against everything perceived as feminine and also restricts women's behaviour and professional advancement in the organization. They further point out that women tend to be more aware of the masculine norms of the working environment than their male colleagues who perceive it as neutral. According to Kronsell it is exactly the women's presence in the male-dominated organizations that makes the masculine norms visible, and they can become verbalized and apparent. Our research project revealed that Finnish male and female experts indeed perceived the equality between the mission staff members and their opportunities for decision-making very differently. For example, in the survey 55 per cent of all male respondents (58/105) agreed strongly with the argument that male and female experts are equal in the civilian crisis management missions, while only 17 per cent of the female respondents (10/60) shared the same opinion (see Figure 1 below for details).

²⁷Van der Lippe, Graumans & Sevenhuijsen 2004. See also Martin & Jurik 2007, 68; Valenius 2007, 40–44; Wertsch 1998, 35–40.

²⁸Kronsell 2006, 188–121.

Figure 1. The perception of equality among the mission staff members by Finnish male and female experts.



The perceptions and experiences of female experts can be partly explained by the fact that most of them do not have police or military backgrounds and therefore they feel the hierarchical and masculine professional cultures of their colleagues are foreign. The female experts were, naturally, aware of the intrinsically hierarchical nature of the missions and of the fact that their actions are ultimately defined by the strategic objectives of the missions. However, they questioned the operational culture that they considered as challenging and limiting their agency.

2.3 Gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment in CSDP missions

Discrimination against one's sex and sexual harassment are part of unequal, gendered power relations in organizations, which can have serious, negative effects on a person's well-being and the working environment as a whole. According to Valenius sexual harassment is:

*"Any unwelcome sexual advance or conduct on the job (e.g. touching, gestures, jokes, display of pornographic material, disparaging remarks) that has the effect of making the workplace intimidating or hostile."*²⁹

²⁹ Valenius 2007, 41.

Although *Generic Standards of Behaviour for ESDP Operations* dating back to 2005 condemn the unlawful discrimination, sexual abuse and harassment, our research project indicates that discrimination and sexual harassment against women still exist in civilian CSDP missions. The survey of Finnish experts revealed that 50 per cent of the female respondents (30/60) had either experienced discrimination or harassment themselves, or they had observed other female staff members being discriminated against or harassed. Male respondents reported on sexual harassment as well, but only four men out of 105 described having personally experienced sexual harassment during their deployments. Also male experts reported mainly on cases in which their international female colleagues or local women, for example, female interpreters working for the mission, were harassed by the mission personnel or members of the local population.

As the survey results show, male and female experts have very different experiences of discrimination and harassment. The main concern of male experts was positive discrimination favouring women in the recruitment process, and some men claimed that the demands being made to increase the number of women in the missions have resulted in replacing good male candidates with incompetent female experts. The existing practice at CMC Finland is to nominate candidates of both sexes for a position in the mission if there are qualified candidates among both male and female applicants, which has been criticized by some dissatisfied applicants.³⁰ Despite the criticism, CMC Finland is not breaking Finnish law on equality as long as the most qualified applicants are identified during the recruitment process.³¹ Besides, the final selection of staff members is always made by the actual mission, as seconding authorities only nominate the candidates. As increasing the number of women in civilian crisis management is difficult due to the structural challenges³² to begin with, this procedure seems to have been the most efficient way to increase the number of women in civilian crisis management.

In CSDP missions, discrimination and sexual harassment seem to be a general problem rather than limited to one single mission. According to the survey results discrimination and sexual harassment have many forms, ranging from belittling women's professional expertise and other mental harassment to very severe physical harassment and sexual violence. One female expert described the varying forms of harassment as follows:

"It's very difficult to address the issue in this kind of survey. Harassment that

³⁰ Pitkänen 2009, 31.

³¹ Ibid.

³² For example, ca. 40 per cent of the seconded Finnish experts are police officers, and the proportion of women in the police forces in Finland is around 14 per cent.

starts verbally and ends in oppressive situations, for instance, in the operations that require staying overnight or using a car together in the evening. Being silenced in meetings, rolling one's eyes, the constant sexually-loaded talking... and if you don't play along with it, you are treated with animosity. Stereotypical joking with the concept of gender and making you look like a fool."

In general, many female respondents had been irritated by the constant sexually-loaded talk and joking of their male colleagues. Other disturbing behaviour mentioned in the responses included sexual overtures and advances, comments on female experts' appearance, name-calling, and spreading rumours about the private or sexual lives of female staff members in order to slander them. One woman described how if she was assigned a task outside of her team, her male team members started to insinuate it had happened because of *"other than professional merits"*. The most severe cases reported in the responses included assault, abuse, and rape. However, there is no reason to underestimate the consequences of other types of harassment, as *"chronic sexual harassment can have the same psychological effects on victims as rape or sexual assault"*³³. Also, the Finnish female experts mentioned the exclusion of women as a more tacit, but a very powerful form of discrimination in the civilian crisis management missions.

Apart from insults or acts directed at individuals, the whole working environment can become affected by behaviour defined as *"unprofessional"* by some Finnish female experts. For example, the display of pornographic material may not be offensive if displayed purely for other colleagues, but may be considered inappropriate in the local cultural context, as one female expert pointed out.

Our research material indicates that the cases of gender-based discrimination or sexual harassment are dealt differently depending on the mission. Some missions have a rather strict policy towards discrimination and harassment and also effective procedures to proceed and investigate these cases. The Finnish experts described some cases where the perpetrators had to bear the consequences for their actions, ranging from a formal reprimand to repatriation. The role of the leadership and senior management is crucial when fighting against discrimination and harassment. However, if the leadership of the mission is guilty of harassment or abusive behaviour as well, the victims find it very hard to have justice for themselves. For example, the following quote from one female expert shows how the behaviour of the management might affect the mission's general attitude towards harassment and even on the women's position in the mission:

"No [action was taken]. The leaders were either harassers themselves or they had local mistresses, thus they needed to cover up for themselves. The abuse of local

³³ Valenius 2007, 41.

women was so widespread and open in the mission that the female colleagues were usually seen as posing a threat; in a way, the abuse of local women, also of minors, was normalized and it was a subject of jokes. If somebody was seriously [talking about it], it caused a strong defensive reaction."

The survey results also suggest that quite often the mission staff members experiencing discrimination or sexual harassment do not want to make official complaints about their cases. Instead, some female experts reported that they started to question the seriousness of the incidents, or tried to cope with the situation by sharing the burden with trustworthy colleagues and/or by avoiding the persons or situations where harassment was likely to recur. According to Batt and Valenius³⁴ one central reason for not making official complaints is that the staff members encountering discrimination or harassment do not know whom to turn to. Our research partly supports this argument, as 33 per cent of the female survey respondents (20/60) did not know whom to contact if discrimination or harassment occurs during a mission. Some Finnish female experts also highlighted that the missions did not offer reliable and functioning mechanisms to proceed with complaints.

Another reason for not proceeding officially with the discrimination or harassment cases might be the phenomenon to which Carreiras refers as the "*paradox of discrimination*". Carreiras' research on women's integration in the military forces revealed that even when encountering explicit and effective discrimination, women preferred not to talk about the harassment and discrimination against them and they tended to frame discriminatory practices as being exceptional. According to Carreiras an explanation for this might be that the women want to avoid the "*undesirable role of the victim*", which would underline their minority role in a male-dominated organization and perhaps jeopardize their chances of being accepted in the work community.³⁵ The attitudes and awareness of the work community is also of great importance. For example, according to the survey results, a few experts seem to think that "*strong women*" can handle the harassment by themselves. Also, practices such as sexist talk are often justified as simply being "*jokes or natural flirtation between the sexes*".³⁶ However, rather than being merely harmless or unavoidable practices the existing discrimination and harassment might have a significant influence on the experts' well-being and working efficiency in CSDP missions.

³⁴ Batt & Valenius 2006, 13–15.

³⁵ Carreiras 2008, 166–168.

³⁶ Batt & Valenius 2006, 13–15.

3 Gender work in CSDP missions

As the connection between gender sensitivity and the effectiveness of crisis management missions and operations has been recognized³⁷, CSDP missions have developed different practices for mainstreaming gender in their work.³⁸ Finnish experts mentioned practices such as collecting and analysing sex-disaggregated data, providing training for the mission staff members as well as for local partners and stakeholders, consulting women's and other civil society organizations in the mission area and organizing events and campaigns, which aim to increase awareness of women's rights and UNSCR 1325. Appointing gender advisers to the missions has been one of the central achievements in mainstreaming gender into civilian crisis management; today practically all the CSDP missions have at least one gender adviser, some missions also have human rights and gender units. In some missions, e.g. in EUMM Georgia, there are also gender focal points to support the work of the gender adviser in the headquarters.

However, despite these progressive steps in the path of gender mainstreaming, in line with previous studies our research findings suggest that gender work carried out in CSDP missions tends to be challenging.³⁹ The challenges can be divided into structural challenges and those that occur at the level of actors.⁴⁰ The structural challenges refer to factors and arrangements at the strategic and operational levels creating a framework for action, such as mandate, structure of the operation, resource allocation and training. The latter deals with interpersonal relations and gender awareness and the attitudes of the mission staff members. We will discuss the role of gender experts and both types of challenges in the section below.

3.1 Role and agency of gender advisers and focal points in CSDP missions

The documents shaping the character and functioning of a CSDP mission are part of important structural factors that contribute to the effective gender mainstreaming. Gya notes that there is a positive trend towards greater and more specific inclusion of gender and human rights in mission mandates, Crisis Management Concepts (CMCs) and Concept of Operations (CONOPS)⁴¹, which form the framework of action in civilian CSDP missions. According to some Finnish experts, a too "strict" a reading of the

³⁷ See e.g. Council of the European Union 2006a.

³⁸ See also Council of European Union 2006b; Gya 2010.

³⁹ See e.g. United Nations 2010; Valenius 2007; Leinonen 2010.

⁴⁰ For example local culture and political context could also be seen as structural challenges. Due to the character of CSDP missions, the job description of gender advisers and also the general focus of the research, emphasis is placed on the structure and agents of the missions.

⁴¹ Gya 2010, 55–58.

mandate may, however, hinder gender related work. Those who had worked as gender advisers pointed out that the formulations of documents usually leave some room for interpretation. Therefore, the possibilities for action also depend on the priorities set by the mission leadership and management.

Also the placement of gender adviser in the hierarchical structure of CSDP missions is highly significant for her/his agency and the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming; those working directly subordinated to the Head of Mission (HoM) considered their potential for carrying out actions and having influence much better than those being placed lower in the chain of command. The ability to participate in senior management meetings is also important, since it promotes early inclusion of the gender perspective, at best already during the planning phase. One structural challenge concerning the work of gender advisers in the missions was located at the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC)⁴², based in Brussels. Some of the interviewed gender advisers pointed out that the lack of colleagues or a "counterpart" at the CPCC, who would be able to outline general guidelines of gender work, was a real problem. Since November 2009, there have been yearly meetings for gender advisers in Brussels to exchange experiences, practices and support one another.⁴³ However, one former gender adviser who took part in the meeting in 2011 noted that the meeting was very useful *"in a therapeutic sense"*, but was not represented by any high quarter of CSDP structure. The interviewed gender advisers also stressed that even though the advisers in the meeting represented different CSDP missions, the challenges in their work and in gender mainstreaming in general were surprisingly similar.

EUPOL Afghanistan and EULEX Kosovo provide an example on the significance of structural factors for the gender related work. As a consequence of the structural changes in EUPOL, carried out in 2009, a specific Human Rights and Gender Unit was established and the human rights and equality work was directed towards the local society. As the promotion of human rights and gender mainstreaming was named as one of the strategic objectives of the mission, the unit was allocated proper resources and gender work received a stronger role in the mission; many of those seconded after the year 2009 considered that the unit has a clear mandate for its work.⁴⁴

During the time of the research the Human Rights and Gender Unit of EUPOL was also the biggest of all similar units with its nine staff members. Compared to the over one thousand member EULEX, in which there were only six people to take care of human rights and gender mainstreaming, EUPOL had the above-mentioned nine positions although it was clearly smaller than EULEX with its 500 staff members.

⁴² On tasks of the CPCC, see Council of the European Union 2012a.

⁴³ Gya 2010, 55.

⁴⁴ See also Jukarainen 2012, 6.

Together, the lack of resources, small size of the Human Rights and Gender Office (HRGO) and the minor weight given to its work led to the sad situation in which the unit at EULEX had to use the scarce human and time resources in lobbying other units and actors of the mission in order to avoid total marginalization of human rights and gender issues. The example of EULEX shows that if the resource allocation does not reflect the size of the mission or the amount of work carried out by the HRGO, the implementation of gender mainstreaming suffers significantly. There are also ambiguous views on the establishment of gender units in general; some gender experts highlighted that moving gender work to a special unit means that gender issues are easily marginalized in the structure and conduct of the missions.

The hierarchical, masculine organizational culture becomes reflected directly in the work of gender advisers reducing the opportunities for taking action. For example, although Afghanistan is a very challenging environment for promoting gender equality, sometimes it seems to be even harder *"to win hearts and minds inside the mission"*⁴⁵. As one female expert from EUPOL Afghanistan notes:

"One strategic priority of the mission was the reinforcement of human rights and gender structures in the Ministry of Interior Affairs and in the police of the host state. However, there was not much weight added to this goal, and the efforts were not very vigorous."

Many Finnish experts, interviewed gender advisers and focal points in particular, highlighted the role of interpersonal relations as a factor either limiting or supporting their work. With this they referred, above all, to the interaction with the leadership of the mission or field offices.⁴⁶ Unawareness of the gender approach among the mission leadership, or their low commitment to implementing it, was named as one of the most significant factors complicating the role and agency of gender experts and reducing the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming. Lack of support at the level of leadership manifested itself, among other ways, as a negative stance towards the propositions or requests made by the gender adviser, and in the marginalization of the 1325-related work, which meant that only a little time and few human resources were allocated to it.

Those doing gender work also reported on several cases where acquisition or flow of information was problematic and limited their ability to take action; the leadership and senior management of the missions act as certain kinds of informational nodes in the chain of command and therefore the actions of one person can hinder the work of an entire gender unit. An illustrative example combining all the above-mentioned factors

⁴⁵ Jukarainen 2012, 6.

⁴⁶ Here by leadership is meant, in addition to the Head of Mission, staff members occupying senior positions (Chief of Staff, Chief of Operations, Deputy Head of Mission, and so forth) and Heads of field offices and components.

comes from EULEX Kosovo; The Human Rights and Gender Office was charged with preparing and supervising the implementation of the mission's human trafficking policy. In order to fulfil this task the unit expected and requested information on prostitution and violence against women from the police and justice components of the mission. However, their work was constantly hindered by the lack of gender sensitivity and unawareness regarding human trafficking. According to several interviewees, human trafficking was not perceived as organized crime by the police component. Hence, the work of the HRGO was considered less important than the other functions, e.g. tackling war crimes or drug trafficking. The information requests of the unit were treated with low priority and even condescension; according to one former EULEX expert, her superior once publicly expressed that *"women and children are not our concern"*.

According to the Finnish experts, the effectiveness of gender adviser and gender focal points⁴⁷ also depends a lot on their own personal activity and willingness to organize gender and 1325-related activities. The person and approach of those performing gender work was experienced relevant in another sense, too; especially the male experts claimed the approach to gender issues sometimes being too academic and theoretical. This reminds of the fact that flexibility and mutual learning is always required.

3.2 Gender awareness of the experts and attitudes towards gender work

Gender work in the missions should not be the responsibility of gender advisers alone. According to the Treaty of Lisbon (2009) every EU official is responsible for promoting gender equality in the framework of her/his job. Hence, all experts seconded to civilian CSDP missions are expected to have an understanding of gender and UNSCR 1325 and to actively promote gender equality in their work. This is also one of the main objectives of Finland's National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325:

*"Finland will ensure that persons sent on military and civilian crisis management missions, their trainers and liable public authorities all have the information, know-how and capacity required to engage in co-operation concerning human rights and equality issues."*⁴⁸

In our view, the required gender and human rights expertise operationalizes itself as an awareness of gender issues and as a positive attitude towards enhancing gender equality. Furthermore, knowledge of UNSCR 1325 is important in this respect.

In the survey conducted by CMC Finland, Finnish experts were asked to explain

⁴⁷ It should be noted that the task of gender focal point is usually carried out alongside the expert's regular task, which means that this role depends more strongly on other activities of the mission. A certain amount of time is allocated to the work of gender focal point but in practice the attitudes of the management in field offices define significantly the actual possibilities for action.

⁴⁸ Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2008, 23. The same objective appears slightly differently formulated in Finland's second, revised National Action Plan 2012–2016. See Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2012, 29.

their personal understanding of gender and assess their personal gender competence and the importance of implementing a gender approach in civilian crisis management missions, as well as in their own work. Generally, most of the survey respondents evaluated their level of gender competence as being high and also claimed being able to include the concept in their work. However, the survey results showed that the concepts of 'gender' and 'gender equality' have different meanings amongst the Finnish experts. This leads to the conclusion that when we are talking about gender work or gender mainstreaming in civilian crisis management, we are not necessarily sharing a common understanding of what is meant by these concepts or what the best means are to address gender issues in the missions. According to El-Bushra the fraught conceptual basis for a gendered approach spills over into its practical applications.⁴⁹

Another central finding of our research project is that gender is an emotionally loaded concept, because the survey questions alone caused strong reactions among some Finnish experts. For example, some male experts felt that they were made to feel guilty or discriminated against by the questions concerning the number and status of women in the missions. Some female experts also feared that keeping topics such as women's participation in CSDP missions on the agenda causes resistance against them from their male colleagues. The fear of getting stigmatized as a "fundamentalist" or "lesbian feminist" in a male-dominated organization seems to pose a real problem for some female experts. To quote another study on gender mainstreaming in CSDP missions,

*"Gender mainstreaming' is a concept that still does not enjoy wide currency, and its applications and purposes are often misunderstood. Among the uninitiated, it tends to elicit reactions ranging from amused bafflement to scepticism, irritation and outright hostility. For many, the term has off-putting connotations of sterile 'political correctness' or allegedly strident 'feminist dogma'."*⁵⁰

Furthermore, experts' understandings of gender are influenced by 'Finnish' or 'Nordic' conceptions of equality. Finland is generally regarded as a country with progressive gender equality policies, and some survey respondents expressed that this kind of societal background helps them to think and work 'gender neutrally', in other words, to treat both international colleagues and members of the host society equally and without any gendered bias. On the other hand, as the discussion on the gendered organizations and practices above shows, we do not think or act in a gender-neutral way, may it be unconscious or otherwise. Moreover, other research projects on peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions have showed that the staff members from

⁴⁹ El-Bushra 2012, 17–18.

⁵⁰ Valenius 2007, 11.

⁵¹ See e.g. Bevan 2011; Myrntinen & Mäki-Rahkola 2013.

industrialized, western countries tend to see themselves as "natural" gender experts as opposed to "less developed" mission personnel from Eastern Europe, Asia or Africa.⁵¹ The examination of Finnish experts' perceptions on gender indicates that misconceptions, confusion, and even resistance against gender mainstreaming are persistent among the Finnish experts as well. In the interviews, the attitudes of Finnish experts were reflected, for example, in the following way:

"Of course there must be worse attitudes [towards gender work] than those of the Finns. But one could hope that the Finnish policemen understood, given they have been trained on this issue, and that they might have internalized some things. But this was not the case."

The association of Nordic countries with progressive gender policies also has consequences for the distribution of tasks in CSDP missions. EUMM Georgia presents a good example on how stereotypes regarding a nation's gender competence may influence gender work and even the operational effectiveness; because Nordic countries are seen as leading the way in gender issues, the task of being gender focal point is often offered to Finnish or Swedish experts. There is usually no public announcement regarding the vacancy so that anyone could express her/his interest in it. Yet, in order to promote gender mainstreaming and change attitudes among the mission staff members it could be useful to assign persons representing varying professional backgrounds and nationalities to perform this task. The practice in question also cements the idea of gender work as being a distinctively 'Nordic phenomenon'. This can result in reduced ownership of gender work among the mission staff members representing other nationalities, as the responsibility for gender mainstreaming is left to the gender experts and certain nationalities.

At the level of CSDP missions, considering all international experts, it is also very common to associate gender with the rights and needs of women. As one interviewee who has worked as gender adviser put it:

"Gender is strongly seen as the promotion of women's position, which creates resistance especially among the male members of the mission. [...] Persons with civilian, police as well as military background have problems with their attitudes regarding the concept of gender."

Associating the concept of gender with women is problematic in many respects. First, as the analysis of the operational culture in CSDP missions showed, gender work is associated with femininity and perceived as women's work. As such, it is subordinate to the masculine norms of the missions and often a marginalized function in the operational framework. According to the Finnish experts the security-related core functions are attached more importance, and gender work is usually carried out by a few committed individuals without adequate support from other members of the

mission. Second, due to marginalization, gender mainstreaming is seldom understood as a cross-cutting issue in the missions, which should automatically be included in all activities starting with the fact-finding and planning phases. Gender is rather seen as a separate function that is taken into account within the limits of possibilities.

According to the research results, it is possible to observe a gendered division in interest and perception of importance on the topic of gender between the Finnish male and female experts, as the female respondents placed higher value on gender competence than their male colleagues.⁵² However, some Finnish male experts criticized the practice of appointing mainly women as gender advisers and gender focal points in CSDP missions. Appointing more male gender advisers might also reduce the tendency to consider gender as a purely 'women's issue'. El-Bushra notes that despite the commonly repeated mantra "*gender is not just about women*", many practitioners of peacebuilding still find it difficult to translate this in practice.⁵³

Training for the mission staff members has been the key strategy in improving the awareness and skills related to gender issues. In the context of CSDP missions, the pre-deployment training remains the responsibility of the member states, and the resources and approaches to gender training are characterized by great diversity within the training providers.⁵⁴ The Finnish experts reported that the level of knowledge of mission staff members regarding gender varies significantly, and the gender training during the mission is often insufficient or non-existent. To improve the situation, at the moment there are some serious efforts in the EU for the harmonization of gender training and for creating a standard pre-deployment training package combining the issues of gender, human rights and protection of children. It should however be noted that pre-deployment training also has its limits, for example, the limited time alongside a great variety of other important issues expected to be covered during the basic training and pre-deployment courses. Considering the sensitivity and emotional reactions on the topic of gender, which became apparent during this research project, successful gender training also requires advanced methodology in order to produce positive training results. A few Finnish experts expressed scepticism as to whether negative attitudes towards gender can really be changed by gender training:

"[The training] didn't offer any new information to me. If equality is not one of the expert's personal values prior to the mission, the in-mission training won't change that – and probably no training will."

⁵² 47 per cent (28/60) of the female survey respondents assessed gender approach as being 'very important' for the success of civilian crisis management missions whereas 48 per cent (50/105) of the male respondents chose options at the other end of the scale, indicating that gender approach is 'not at all important' or 'somewhat important' for the missions. None of the female respondents saw gender approach as being 'not at all important', and less than 20 per cent 'somewhat important'. When asked about the importance of gender competence for experts' own work in the mission, 62 per cent of female respondents (37/60) saw the gender expertise as being 'very important' or 'quite important' for their work. Again, the majority of male respondents – 65 per cent (68/105) of them – chose the options 'not at all important' or 'somewhat important'. The analysis of qualitative research material pointed to similar tendencies.

⁵³ El-Bushra 2012, 19.

⁵⁴ Olsson & Ahlin 2009.

Still, many experts representing the interviewees and respondents of this research project considered the training to be the key issue for more effective gender mainstreaming. Above all the training and constant mentoring of the mission leadership was emphasized.

4 Conclusions

In this article we have shed light on the hierarchies and power structures of CSDP missions, at times official, visible and accepted, at others unofficial, invisible and contested. The survey and interviews conducted for the research project made it clear that gender, together with other differences and identity markers, shape the organizational culture in many ways. Starting from the theoretical framework of gendered organizations we aimed to find out which factors enhance or restrict effective gender mainstreaming and the agency of gender advisers in CSDP missions. At the same time the varying understandings of 'gender' and 'gender mainstreaming' of Finnish civilian crisis management experts became apparent.

In the official culture of CSDP missions, gender approach seems to be gaining growing attention, in terms of the documents guiding the missions, more concerted training efforts aiming to improve gender competence of the mission staff members and having gender advisers and other experts leading gender work in the missions. However, the hierarchical structures based on the division between military, police and civilian expertise, gender, nationality and age of the mission staff members restrict not only female experts' agency, but also the gender work itself. Hierarchies within the missions have a critical influence on how the priorities of a mission are set, how the mandate is interpreted and whose voice is heard. The high rate of reported discrimination and harassment cases also indicate that CSDP missions have failed to institutionalize gender equality within their own organization, and raises the question of whether the working environment is women-friendly at all.

The gender work in practice is lacking comprehensiveness and shared understanding of how to "do gender" in terms of everyday work and operations. The confusion around the concept of gender and the varying understandings of how it should be implemented create a challenge for effective gender mainstreaming. Besides, gender work in the missions is gendered in itself, as it is mainly conducted by women and understood as a female field of expertise and responsibility. Appointing gender advisers, or creating special units for gender issues and human rights, is not a sufficient strategy to guarantee gender mainstreaming in the missions. In fact, leaving gender issues to the responsibility of individual experts or separated units seems to lead to an increased

marginalization of gender work. Gender mainstreaming should be the responsibility of every mission staff member.

In the end, it is not just about CSDP missions. The stance on gender mainstreaming and understanding of gender are about questions a great deal larger than any one mission, such as the fulfilment of the principle of human security, which lies, or should lie, behind all activities, the means that are considered as the most appropriate to achieve security, and effectiveness of the missions. For example, in Finland one of the objectives of the training given to the experts that are to be seconded is to offer them tools to operationalize the concept of human security in their work. Taking the gendered effects of all our actions into consideration is clearly connected to human security. Negative attitudes towards gender mainstreaming or gender work can thus be thought to reduce the effectiveness of CSDP missions and, in the worst case, to reproduce inequality between the sexes and in societies.

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