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The Czech Agenda on Women, Peace and Security: Reflections on the first National Action Plan and Future Policy Recommendations¹

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Introduction

In 2017, the Czech Republic introduced its first National Action Plan (NAP) on the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women peace and security (UNSCR 1325). The landmark UNSCR 1325 passed in 2000 has established an international normative framework for the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda, recognizing women's participation in peacebuilding as fundamental for sustainable peace and security. The UNSCR 1325 and the follow-up resolutions have served as guiding principles for NAPs which were, by 2019, adopted by 79 countries.

This study shows that although gender equality has never been a core objective of Czech foreign policy, adoption of this strategic document signifies a certain shift, at least on the declaratory level. While the first Czech NAP initiated an important debate, the upcoming development of the second Czech NAP envisaged for 2020, provides an opportunity to progress from proclamations to a more active advancement of the WPS agenda. The paper reviews the Czech engagement with the WPS agenda, pinpointing its main challenges and opportunities, aiming to provide the starting points for discussion on the drafting of the second Czech NAP. By doing so, it links the Czech experience with a broad feminist critique of WPS and with global developments in WPS implementation.

This work has combined data from interviews conducted during 2018 and 2019, and from desk research of publicly available materials such as conceptual documents and annual reports, including the two annual implementation reports on the Czech NAP for 2017 and 2018 (hereafter referred to as Report). The research draws on 16 semi-structured interviews with altogether 23 representatives of the government, academia and civil society. Some data were also received electronically from various WPS stakeholders. Additional data were gathered through observation and from participation in the WPS Working Group and events such as the workshop "Drafting the National Action Plan on 1325 UNSC resolution" organized by the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in March 2016, a government workshop on sharing experiences on NAPs with Sweden in 2018, or the Annual Conference of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Committee on Gender Perspectives. Analysis of these sources has informed this paper's review of the Czech actions on UNSCR 1325. Since the WPS agenda's coordination is located at the MFA, the greater part of the data was collected here and hence this Ministry is also discussed in greater detail compared to other government actors. The overall data collected do not allow for conducting an impact evaluation of the Czech NAP, and this work should not be viewed as such.

The paper starts by discussing the progress of the normative framework on WPS in terms of the most recent UNSCR 1325-related policy developments and the theoretical and empirical literature on the WPS agenda. Moving to the Czech context, the paper first introduces the political and institutional background of gendering Czech foreign policy. The following part analyses the drafting process and the content of the first Czech NAP 2017 – 2020. Next, the paper concentrates on the NAP's implementation by key actors. The final part considers the opportunities for the second Czech NAP, offering detailed policy recommendations.

The Women, Peace and Security Agenda: From Origins to Implementation

The Normative Framework on Women, Peace and Security

In a preamble and 18 paragraphs, the UNSCR 1325 acknowledges the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflict, and also in peacebuilding, and recognizes the urgent need for mainstreaming gender into peacekeeping³. As such, resolution 1325 is considered revolutionary, as the Security Council for the first time in its fifty-year history recognized that women had a right to protection and a role to play in maintaining peace and security⁴. Resolution 1325 and the succeeding norms⁵ have provided ground for academic research, civil society advocacy and policy-making, spreading remarkably across the globe. This part provides a brief summary of the WPS framework, the key academic critique and the global progress in implementation of the agenda.

The WPS framework is characterized by unprecedented recognition by states at the UNSC and the presence of multiple stakeholders, including its own transnational NGO network focused on the first WPS resolution, namely resolution 1325⁶. Indeed, the resolution originated through a sophisticated bottom-up advocacy of transnational networks⁷ and as such is regarded as a ground-breaking achievement for the global feminist movement⁸. The ownership of the agenda by civil society can thus hardly be disputed and the inclusion or support of civil society is explicitly recognized in some of the follow up resolutions⁹. The foundational resolution 1325 has specified the areas of concern which have been repackaged several times over the years, sometimes around three ‘themes’ (participation, protection and the gender perspective), and at other times around four ‘pillars’ (identified variously: some cite prevention, protection, participation and peacekeeping, while others substitute relief and recovery for peacekeeping and yet others recognize a normative dimension)¹⁰. In the subsequent almost two decades, eight follow up resolutions have been passed, expanding the normative WPS architecture in response to the global development (Table 1). As such, the WPS is not just any normative agenda but a ‘norm bundle’¹¹.

³ S/RES/2000/1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Available at [https://undocs.org/S/RES/1325\(2000\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/1325(2000))

⁴ Anderlini, S. N. 2007. *Women Building Peace: What They Do, Why it Matters*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 7.

⁵ 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019).

⁶ True, J. and Wiener, A. 2019. Everyone Wants (a) Peace: The Dynamics of Rhetoric and Practice on ‘Women, Peace and Security’. *International Affairs*, Volume 95, Issue 3, May 2019, 553–574, 4.

⁷ See Cohn, C. 2008. Mainstreaming Gender in UN Security Policy: A Path to Political Transformation? In: S.M. Rai and G. Waylen, eds. *Global Governance: Feminist Perspectives*. Basingstoke and New York, NY: Macmillan Palgrave, 185-206.

⁸ Kirby, P. and L. J. Shepherd. 2016. Reintroducing Women, Peace and Security. *International Affairs* 92: 2, 249–254, 250.

⁹ These include resolutions 1820, 2106, 2122, and 2467. . See also Laura J. Shepherd. 2014. “Advancing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda: 2015 and Beyond”, NOREF Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre. Available at: <https://noref.no/Publications/Themes/Gender-and-inclusivity/Advancing-the-Women-Peace-and-Security-agenda-2015-and-beyond>

¹⁰ Kirby, P. and L. J. Shepherd. 2016. Reintroducing Women, Peace and Security, 249.

¹¹ True, J. and Wiener, A. 2019, 1.

Table 1: Key issues and core provisions in the UNSC resolutions on Women, Peace and Security

<i>Resolution (year)</i>	<i>Key issues and core provisions</i>
1325 (2000)	Representation and participation of women in peace and security governance; protection of women's rights and bodies in conflict and post-conflict situations
1820 (2008)	Protection of women from sexualized violence in conflict; zero tolerance of sexualized abuse and exploitation perpetrated by UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations personnel
1888 (2009)	Creation of office of Special Representative of the Secretary- General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV); creation of UN Action as an umbrella organization addressing issues related to CRSV; identification of 'team of experts'; appointment of Women's Protection Advisers (WPAs) to field missions
1889 (2009)	Need to increase participation of women in peace and security governance at all levels; creation of global indicators to map implementation of UNSCR 1325
1960 (2010)	Development of CRSV monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements; integration of WPAs to field missions alongside Gender Advisers
2106 (2013)	Challenging impunity and lack of accountability for CRSV
2122 (2013)	Identifies UN Women as key UN entity providing information and advice on participation of women in peace and security governance; whole-of-UN accountability; civil society inclusion; 2015 High-level Review of implementation of UNSCR 1325
2242 (2015)	Integrates Women, Peace and Security Agenda in all UNSC country situations; establishes Informal Experts Group on WPS; adds WPS considerations to sanctions committee deliberations; links WPS to countering terrorism and extremism
2467 (2019)	Combating CRSV and promoting a survivor-centred approach in preventing and responding to CRSV; advancing accountability and justice and protection for survivors and imposition of sanctions against perpetrators; recognition that men and boys are also survivors of CRSV; recognition of children born of CRSV.

Source: Adapted from Kirby, P. and L. J. Shepherd. 2016. Reintroducing women, peace and security. *International Affairs* 92: 2, 249–254, 251 and updated with the information on the new resolution 2467 (2019)¹².

The key issues and core provisions of the WPS resolutions have thus included women's participation in peace and security, protection of women from sexualized violence in conflict, the creation of global indicators to map the implementation of UNSCR 1325, challenging impunity and lack of accountability for conflict-related sexual violence, monitoring of sexual violence in conflict, and the more recent linking of WPS to global countering of terrorism and extremism (Table 1). The last, ninth resolution, resolution 2467, adopted in April 2019, focuses on survivors of sexual violence, promoting a survivor-centred approach (Table 1). Nonetheless, resolution 2467 has also encountered the current global backlash on gender, as an important reference to reproductive and sexual health rights was deleted

¹² S/RES/2019/2467. Available at: [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2467\(2019\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2467(2019))

from the final text upon the pressure of the US administration. While some from the WPS academic-activist community have raised concern over the future of the WPS agenda¹³, others, in a more optimistic mode, emphasize that the reference's exclusion from one resolution does not walk back its inclusion in three previous resolutions – Resolutions 1889, 2106, and 2122 - all of which were referred to in the Preamble of UNSCR 2467¹⁴. These responses are an example of the two decades of a close examination of the victories and failures of the WPS agenda by the academic community.

Research on the WPS Framework and its Implementation

While academics have generally welcomed resolution 1325, they have soon subjected it to critical scrutiny. The literature on WPS has been extensive, developing into a new subfield of feminist International Relations. While in the early years following the adoption of 1325, academics have responded to UNSCR 1325's conceptual and textual grounding, more recent literature deals with its implementation with an increasing number of national and international actors adopting the agenda. Whether looking at discourse or practical implementation, the primary concern of feminist research in this respect is the transformative potential of the WPS agenda.

The early critique of UNSCR 1325 mainly problematized the discursive construction of both 'gender' and 'security'. Scholars have argued that through the productive discursive power of its framings, 1325 produces certain types of masculinities and femininities, normalizing binaries and fixed ideas about gender practices¹⁵. As such, the resolution neglects the dynamic and relational understanding of gender as being produced and reproduced through the structures of subordination, resulting in all the focus being on women rather than men, masculinities and militarism¹⁶. Resolution 1325, for instance, clearly links "gender" with "women", failing to even include the word "men"¹⁷. The norm's victim and protection narrative represents women as a vulnerable group associated with children¹⁸. Scholars have long argued that this essentialist view of women as mothers, nurturers, and communal peacemakers has the potential to push post-conflict societies back to the status quo in terms of traditional gender roles¹⁹, since this representation also functions to define men as responsible for protecting 'their' women and children and the nation as a whole²⁰. Concerning the conception of security, the literature

¹³ Allen, L. and Shepherd, L. J. 2019. "In Pursuing a New Resolution on Sexual Violence Security Council Significantly Undermines Women's Reproductive Rights." LSE Blogs. Available at <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/wps/2019/04/25/in-pursuing-a-new-resolution-on-sexual-violence-security-council-significantly-undermines-womens-reproductive-rights/>

¹⁴ Davies S. E. and J. True. 2019. "Pitfalls, Policy, and Promise of the UN's Approach to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence and the New Resolution 2467". PRIO Blogs. Available at <https://blogs.prio.org/2019/05/pitfalls-policy-and-promise-of-the-uns-approach-to-conflict-related-sexual-violence-and-the-new-resolution-2467/>.

¹⁵ See Vayrynen, T. 2010. "Gender and Peacebuilding". In: *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding*, Richmond, O. (ed.), Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 137 – 53, cited in Duncanson, C. 2016. *Gender and Peacebuilding*. Cambridge and Malden: Polity Press, 35.

¹⁶ Duncanson C. 2016, 36.

¹⁷ Shepherd, L. J. 2008. *Gender, Violence and Security: Discourse as Practice*. London and New York: Zed Books, 116.

¹⁸ See e.g. Shepard, Laura J. 2008.

¹⁹ Hudson, N. F. 2009. Securitizing Women's Rights and Gender Equality, *Journal of Human Rights*, 8:1, 53-70, 61.

²⁰ Shepherd, L. J. 2008, 115.

challenges the resolution's conventional approach grounded in the existing militarized structures and processes. This particularly means the resolution's silence on militarism, the notion of masculinity and the war system in general²¹. Other scholars question the Resolution's focus on armed conflict, as opposed to other forms of structural violence²². In other words, the resolution ignores the feminist conception of security,²³ therefore leaving the conflict's root causes intact²⁴.

These problematic aspects of the resolution, as defined by academics, are traceable in the implementation of the WPS agenda. The research has generally regarded the implementation as insufficient due to the lack of political pressure and resource scarcity associated with liberal peacebuilding, which is also the conclusion of the Global Study²⁵. The empirical literature shows that the WPS agenda has been added to the existing security framework represented by liberal peacebuilding, which has reproduced the problematic focus on women's protection at the expense of participation and prevention, undermining the transformative intentions of 1325²⁶. This perception has been so widespread among scholars and practitioners that Kirby and Shepherd²⁷ talk about a chronic protection–representation dilemma as a legacy of UNSCR 1325. While scholars have not denied the urgent need to respond to conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), they have gathered much empirical evidence to demonstrate that reducing the WPS to this theme is problematic as it supports women's victimization and passivity at the expense of women's agency²⁸.

To strengthen women's agency, many have called for paying more attention to women's participation in the post-conflict phase while focusing on the long-term transformative aims²⁹. This literature calls for addressing structural inequalities and root causes of conflict and violence through a focus on socioeconomic conditions that affect women's participation in peacebuilding³⁰. Along with the participation-protection debate, scholars have problematized the existing limited participation itself

²¹ See e.g. Cohn, C. 2008.

²² Pratt N. and Richter-Devroe, S. 2011. Critically Examining UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 6:113:4, 489 – 503, 499.

²³ Most scholars view feminist security in multidimensional and multilevel terms, meaning security, physical, structural, economic and ecological terms - e.g. Duncanson 2016; Tickner, J. A. and Sjöberg, L. 2013. Feminism. In: T. Dunne, M. Kurki, and S. Smith, *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 205-222.

²⁴ E. g. Ruby, F. 2014. Security Council Resolution 1325: A Tool for Conflict Prevention? In: Heathcote, Gina and Otto, Dianne 2014: *Rethinking Peacekeeping, Gender Equality and Collective Security*. Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 173-184.

²⁵ Coomaraswamy, R. et al. 2015. *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, New York: UN Women.

²⁶ E.g. Duncanson 2016.

²⁷ Kirby, P. and Shepherd, L. J. 2016. The Futures Past of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. *International Affairs* 92: 2, 373-392, 380.

²⁸ See e.g. Kreft, A.-K. 2016. The Gender Mainstreaming Gap: Security Council Resolution 1325 and UN Peacekeeping Mandates, *International Peacekeeping*, 132-158.

²⁹ See e.g. Duncanson 2016.

³⁰ Cohn, C. and Duncanson, C. 2017. What Kind of Growth? Economies That Work for Women in Post-War Settings. A "Feminist Roadmap for Sustainable Peace" Workshop, Boston; True, J. 2014. The Political Economy of Gender in UN Peacekeeping. In: Heathcote, G., Otto, D. (eds.) *Rethinking Peacekeeping, Gender Equality and Collective Security. Thinking Gender in Transnational Times*. Palgrave Macmillan: London, 243-262.

above all for being instrumentalized as having an added value to peace³¹. Although feminist scholars have warned that the effectiveness argument can divert from the core problems of gender inequality in contrast to the rights-based approach³², it has been widely used in policy and practise.

For instance NATO has been linking gender and 1325 primarily with operational effectiveness, rather than gender equality more broadly, which can reinforce positions of power within the military,³³ and a similar rationale is applied by the UN's Department for Peacekeeping Operations³⁴. From the feminist pragmatist perspective, these defence institutions are invested in WPS, which can lead to institutional transformation³⁵. Indeed, there are optimistic accounts looking at the small wins achieved by feminists in the militaries that can be aligned with the vision of WPS³⁶. Besides the growing research on institutions of global security governance such as the EU³⁷ and the OSCE³⁸, a lot of field research has focused on national case studies and the production of NAPs.

The research on NAPs has focused mainly on countries in conflict³⁹ or post-conflict setting⁴⁰, and NAP content analysis or discursive analysis⁴¹. The literature warns of state-centrism, as the NAPs increasingly draw the agenda into the apparatus of states, while marginalizing civil society⁴². These states are sometimes criticized for having donor-driven NAPs which lack local ownership⁴³ and for having solely externally focused NAPs which fail to scrutinize the gendered impact of their own peace and security institutional and policy-making processes on the realization of women's security⁴⁴.

³¹ See e.g. Olsson, L. and Gizelis, T.I. 2015. An Introduction to UNSCR 1325: Measuring Progress and Impact. In: Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene and Olsson, L. eds. 2015: *Gender, Peace and Security: Implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325*. New York, Oxon: Routledge.

³² Olsson and Gizelis 2015, 5.

³³ Hurley, M. 2017. Gender Mainstreaming and Integration in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. In: Duncanson, Woodward (eds.) *The Palgrave International Handbook of Gender and the Military*. Palgrave Macmillan UK, 413.

³⁴ See Karim, S. and Beardsley, K. 2013. Female Peacekeepers and Gender Balancing: Token Gestures or Informed Policymaking?, *International Interactions: Empirical and Theoretical Research in International Relations*, 39:4, 461-488, 472.

³⁵ Davies, E. and True, J. 2019. WPS: A Transformative Agenda? In: Davies, E. and True, J. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of Women, Peace and Security*. New York: Oxford University Press, 3-14, 6.

³⁶ Bastick, M. and Duncanson, C. 2018. Agents of Change? Gender Advisors in NATO Militaries, *International Peacekeeping*, 21.

³⁷ See e.g. Guerrina, R., Wright, K.A.M. 2016. Gendering Normative Power Europe: Lessons of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. *International Affairs* 92 (2), 293-312.

³⁸ Jenichen, A., Joachim, J. and Schneiker, A. 2018. Gendering European Security: Policy Changes, Reform Coalitions and Opposition in the OSCE, *European Security*, 27:1, 1-19.

³⁹ O'Sullivan, M. 2019. 'Being Strong Enough to Defend Yourself': Untangling the Women, Peace and Security Agenda Amidst the Ukrainian Conflict. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*.

⁴⁰ E.g. Bassini, H. and Ryan, C. 2016. National Action Plans as an Obstacle to Meaningful Local Ownership of UNSCR 1325 in Liberia and Sierra Leone, *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 37(3) 390-403.

⁴¹ Shepherd, L. J. 2016. Making War Safe for Women? National Action Plans and the Militarisation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. *International Political Science Review*, 1-12.

⁴² Kirby, P. and Shepherd L. J. 2016. The Futures Past of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, 383.

⁴³ Barnes, K. 2011. The Evolution and Implementation of UNSCR 1325. An Overview. In: Olonisakin, Funmi, Karen Barnes and Eka Ikpe, (eds.). 2011: *Women, Peace and Security: Translating Policy into Practice*. London: Routledge, 24.

⁴⁴ True, J. 2016. Explaining the Global Diffusion of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 37(3) 307-323, 312.

Another critical perspective on externally oriented security politics and practices is provided by Shepherd⁴⁵ based on her review of six NAPs drawn up by countries that have considerable military involvement in an ongoing conflict and high levels of military spending (Australia, Georgia, Germany, Italy, the UK and the USA). Shepherd argues that ‘outward-facing’ NAPs, such as those produced by the USA, the UK and Australia, tend to focus on making ‘war safe for women’ rather than demilitarisation strategies and thus perpetuate the very dynamics of militarism and elite-centric security governance that the WPS agenda seeks to challenge⁴⁶. Recent research shows that the second and third generation NAPs, which are more impact-oriented, tend to include inward-looking strategies⁴⁷.

Overall, the academic research on the WPS agenda has been extensive, responding to the almost twenty years of experience with the WPS framework. Both conceptual and implementation-oriented literature provides a valuable foundation for the review and development of new NAPs. It is also useful to reflect on these critiques when analysing the Czech case and when drafting a new NAP, which is the focus of the following text.

Institutional History of Gendering Czech Foreign Policy

The Czech Republic is among the latecomers to actively embrace a gender agenda in foreign policy in general, and specifically in the area of WPS. This delay reflects a gradual rather than rapid transformation of domestic - meaning internally directed - gender equality policies, linked primarily with EU membership, as well as the low political priority given by government and public institutions to the gender equality agenda. This section of the paper introduces the Czech foreign policy’s political context and institutional gendering history, providing a foundation for the later analysis of the first NAP’s drafting process and its content.

The Czech Republic’s current legislative and institutional framework concerning gender equality is largely the result of its EU membership obligations. The process of harmonization of Czech law with European Community law concentrated heavily on the field of labour and employment law, bringing with it a strong component of anti-discrimination rights, although the laws’ guarantees have also extended to previously uncovered issues, such as domestic violence and GLBT rights⁴⁸. The focus on the area of employment and social policy has since translated into institutional changes and policy reform, including the adoption of important financial instruments, including the Operational Programmes of the European Social Fund. Accordingly, in the post-accession period, the key gender

⁴⁵ Shepherd, L. J. 2016.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 10.

⁴⁷ For instance the UK’s third NAP recognizes the intrinsic linkage between armed conflict and domestic policy, including issues of child and early or forced marriages, human trafficking, female genital mutilation and violence against women more generally (Barrow, A. 2016. Operationalizing Security Council Resolution 1325: The Role of National Action Plans. *Journal of Conflict & Security Law*, 128).

⁴⁸ Havelková, B. 2010. The Legal Notion of Gender Equality in the Czech Republic. *Women’s Studies International Forum*, 33(1), 21–29, 24.

equality actors from the government, civil society organizations (CSOs) and academia have dealt exclusively with domestic issues predominated by equal opportunities in employment, such as non-discrimination, equal pay or work-life balance.

Aside from employment questions, funding, particularly from international donors, has enabled civil society and academia to uncover other areas of concern, among them gender in education, women in politics, domestic and gender-based violence and a number of other issues raised in shadow reports. Over time, these reports also referred to gender in foreign policy⁴⁹, with non-governmental actors becoming the driving force behind the progress of a broader gender equality agenda and providing impetus for a more positive government response. Although the government's strategic document for gender equality, entitled *Priorities and Policies of the Government in Promoting of Gender Equality* (hereafter referred to as '*Priorities*') was first compiled in 1998, the first decade of its implementation was repeatedly criticized by civil society⁵⁰. More specifically, the shadow reports, as alternatives to the government's annual reports on the *Priorities*, highlighted the policy's poor conceptual basis and other institutional gaps, hindering effective gender mainstreaming⁵¹. While the critique by non-governmental actors has helped to usher positive changes since around 2008, these could not have taken place without committed individuals working within the civil service and government structures⁵². Indeed, enhanced knowledge and capacity, gender expertise and increasing commitment from the Department of Gender Equality⁵³, led to the re-conceptualization of *Priorities* in 2008, evident from a new strategic document *Government Strategy for Equality of Women and Men in the Czech Republic for 2014 – 2020* (hereafter referred to as the '*Strategy*').

Civil society and academia generally regard the *Strategy* as a progressive document⁵⁴, especially since it aims to stabilize the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda in public policy by going beyond the term of one government⁵⁵. This is important, given its political unpopularity, evidenced by the repeated moving of the Department of Gender Equality from the Office of the Government to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and most recently to the Ministry of Justice and then back to its present address at the Office of the Government⁵⁶. It is clear that having the national coordination of the gender equality agenda in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs made little sense. Given the crosscutting nature of the agenda, the current location in the Office of the Government allows the Department to adopt a broader thematic scope and pursue gender mainstreaming in all government policies. That said, the real situation is still far from this ambition, reflecting low political support and insufficient human and financial resources, among other barriers. Nonetheless, the agenda is now

⁴⁹ See e.g. Kubálková, P., Wennerholm Čáslavská, T. (eds.) 2010. *Ženy a česká společnost - hodnocení implementace Pekingské akční platformy na národní a mezinárodní úrovni* (Peking + 15).

⁵⁰ Kubálková 2010, in: Kubálková, P., Wennerholm Čáslavská, T. (eds.), 31; Devine Mildorf, J. 2016. *Institucionální zajištění rovných příležitostí*. In: Kubálková, P. *Ženy a česká společnost: Hodnocení implementace pekingské akční platformy na národní a mezinárodní úrovni* (Peking +20), 69.

⁵¹ Devine Mildorf, J. 2016.

⁵² Interview with NGO representative, Prague, 5 March 2019.

⁵³ The Department of Gender Equality, Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, national coordinator.

⁵⁴ Pavlík, P., Pavlas, T., Tenglerová, H. 2015. *Institucionální zajištění agendy rovnosti žen a mužů*. In: Smetáčková I. (ed.) *Stínová zpráva o stavu genderové rovnosti v České republice v roce 2015*. Česká ženská lobby; Devine Mildorf, J., 2016.

⁵⁵ Devine Mildorf, J. 2016, 72.

⁵⁶ For an analysis of the years 2008 – 2015, see Pavlík, Pavlas, Tenglerová 2015.

discussed at the highest level, including the Prime Minister's level, who chairs the Government Council for Equality for Women and Men, the permanent advisory body to the government established in 2003. The gender equality agenda's broader thematic scope is already reflected in the *Strategy*, outlining nine strategic areas, among them gender equality in external relations. The *Strategy* also introduces identified problems in each of the nine strategic areas, and sets a main goal and more specific goals linked to indicators in each of these areas⁵⁷.

As for encompassing gender in foreign policy, the years preceding the adoption of the *Strategy* can be identified as a turning point. The Department of Gender Equality has played a key role in advancing the gender equality agenda, being responsible for updating tasks for other government ministries in implementing the *Priorities* and overseeing their annual reporting. Since 2009, the *Priorities* have concretized the actions to be undertaken by the MFA, particularly in gender and development,⁵⁸ and the MFA's updated *Priorities* for 2010⁵⁹ included a new section on the 'Promotion of equality of women and men in external relations'.

Concerning the WPS agenda, in 2009, reference to UNSCR 1325 was made in the *Priorities* for first time, but was limited to increasing the number of women in foreign military operations and pre-deployment gender training⁶⁰. The *Priorities* in the following years were again restricting UNSCR 1325 commitments to the Defence Ministry, requesting the drafting of a ministerial action plan in 2014. It was not until the *Priorities* for 2016, based on the policy recommendations by civil society and academia⁶¹, that the Department of Gender Equality tasked for the first time relevant ministries through the *Priorities*, to draft a NAP on 1325⁶². The tasks set in *Priorities* are usually taken seriously by individual ministries and the past decade has indeed showed significant progress on the policy level.

The Government's new Development Cooperation Strategy 2010 – 2017 has evidenced significant progress, assuming a twin-tracked approach to gender mainstreaming, i.e., firstly, mainstreaming in the development cooperation programming and in various stages of the project cycle, and secondly, via a thematic approach supporting specific projects aimed at empowering women⁶³. The document was preceded by initial academic work criticizing Czech development cooperation for being gender

⁵⁷ Government Strategy for Equality of Women and Men in the Czech Republic for 2014 – 2020. Available at https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/dokumenty/Government_Strategy_for-Gender_Equality_2014_2020.pdf

⁵⁸ O'Sullivan, M. and Šimůnková, B. 2010. Mezinárodní dimenze naplňování Pekingské akční platformy. Ženy a ozbrojený konflikt, Lidská práva žen. In: Wennerholm Čáslavská, Tereza, Kubálková, P. (eds), 2010, 127.

⁵⁹ Aktualizovaná opatření Priorit a postupů vlády při prosazování rovných příležitostí pro ženy a muže. Available at <https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/dokumenty/Aktualizovana-opatreni-na-rok-2010.pdf>

⁶⁰ Aktualizovaná opatření Priorit a postupů vlády při prosazování rovných příležitostí pro ženy a muže. <https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/dokumenty/Aktualizovana-opatreni-na-rok-2009.pdf>

⁶¹ Interview with employees of the Office of the Government, Prague, 18 January 2019.

⁶² Interview with employees of the Office of the Government, Prague 18 January 2019.

⁶³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. 2010. Development Cooperation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2010 – 2017, 20 – 21. Available at https://www.mzv.cz/file/762314/FINAL__Development_Cooperation_Strategy_2010_2017.pdf

blind⁶⁴ and by joint advocacy from civil society and academia⁶⁵. The gender equality perspective has gradually become part of other policy documents, among them the Human Rights and Transition Promotion Policy Concept of the Czech Republic 2015, dedicating a full page to Priority Number 6: Promoting equality and non-discrimination, including combating violence against women and girls, and specifically in situations of armed conflict, and discrimination against LGBTIQ+ persons⁶⁶. Importantly, the new Concept of the Czech Republic's Foreign Policy 2015, still valid today, states the following:

"The Czech Republic will also work towards the global strengthening of women's place in society. Although this assistance will typically be provided as part of the general promotion of human rights, the Czech Republic will raise this issue more actively within the United Nations because it considers it to be a serious global problem that cannot be reduced to human rights or development issues. The Czech Republic will concentrate in particular on matters related to women's participation in public life".

Including gender equality and women's rights explicitly in conceptual documents has improved the country's engagement with these issues in its foreign policy and practice⁶⁷. The wording and scope of foreign policy is critically important, and in this regard, the current policy framework, although improved, nevertheless has some challenges remaining. For example, the above quotation from the Concept is located in the text about vulnerable and marginalized people, thus supporting the language of victimization⁶⁸.

Overall, the references to gender equality and women's rights in the policy documents remain brief and vague, thereby creating a perception of proclamatory commitments. This vagueness further translates into repeated general texts, and into "intuitional support in practice"⁶⁹. In reality, the situation has progressed only slowly, being largely dependent on the personal initiatives of several individuals. These actors are at the same time constrained by limited capacity, the lack of gender equality's systematic anchoring, and political will. The current level of engagement at the ministerial level goes hand-in-hand with gender equality's notable absence in foreign policy discourse in Czech academia and in civil society advocacy.

⁶⁴ Horký, O. 2008. Gender a rozvoj: co nás rozděluje, co nás spojuje. *Gender, rovné příležitosti výzkum* 9(2). 10-21.

⁶⁵ Horký, O., Lukášová, M. 2009. Strategie začlenění genderu do české rozvojové spolupráce: Ne móda, ale nutná podmínka efektivit. *Policy paper ÚMV*, 9/2009.

⁶⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. 2015. Human Rights and Transition Promotion Policy Concept of the Czech Republic 2015, 11 – 12. Available at https://www.mzv.cz/public/98/7c/e8/2239165_1648851_Human_rights_and_transition_promotion_policy_concept_of_the_Czech_Republic_.pdf

⁶⁷ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 1 August 2018.

⁶⁸ O'Sullivan, M. and Šimůnková, B. 2018. Ticking Off the Czech Republic's UN Commitment as Completed: Reflecting on the First Czech National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. In: *Gender and (Military) Conflicts in Eastern-European Countries through Feminist Lenses. Materials of the V International Gender Workshop*. Lviv: Heinrich Boell Foundation, 38. Available at https://ua.boell.org/sites/default/files/anglgender_ta_voienni_konflikti_u_krainah_shidnoi_ievropi_2.pdf

⁶⁹ O'Sullivan, M., Šimůnková, B. České nakročení k celosvětové podpoře ženských práv. *Mezinárodní politika*, 28. 2. 2017. Available at <https://iir.cz/article/ceske-vahave-nakroceni-ke-globalni-podpore-zenskych-prav>

Whereas internationally, feminist scholarship has gained recognition in the discipline of international relations (IR) research over the past three decades⁷⁰, such research has been rather scarce in Czech academia being limited to just a few individuals⁷¹. According to a recent analysis, there is theoretical openness to feminist perspectives in IR research, but since these are largely lacking in the field, they have so far failed to truly affect IR discourse in Czech academia⁷². At the same time, the scarcity of women researchers in the field parallels the situation in other social sciences and humanities disciplines, but is further exacerbated by the predominantly masculine environment of Czech IR⁷³. The gendering of IR subfields most relevant for the WPS agenda, such as political economy or security, is, as with development and post-colonial studies at their outsets, similarly limited to few academics or and isolated contributions. Although Gender Studies as a discipline is well established in the Czech Republic, it has not really reached or collaborated with the IR field, despite its interdisciplinary nature⁷⁴.

Czech civil society shows some similarities with academia. While gender CSOs possess gender analysis expertise, such knowledge is lacking in development organizations⁷⁵. Although this deficit was identified in Horký's 2008 breakthrough analysis, it is still largely relevant today, with the exception of development CSOs that try to meet higher gender mainstreaming standards in projects financed by foreign donors⁷⁶. Gender CSOs still focus solely on domestic issues, with a few exceptions, such as the conference on UNSCR 1325 organized in 2009 by the Czech Women's Lobby. This conference seemed to be a promising start, having a high proportion of attendees from the MFA. However, the event became a one-off event, failing to trigger broader civil society advocacy in subsequent years. Advocacy on gender in foreign affairs has therefore been limited to the policy recommendations in the shadow reports on implementation of the CEDAW Convention⁷⁷, and the Beijing Platform for Action⁷⁸. In contrast, the exclusively domestic focus of the gender community is most evident from the 2015 shadow report prepared jointly by academia and civil society, covering 17 areas in a 180 page analysis; none of these concerning foreign policy⁷⁹. In this sense, the government is paradoxically a step ahead, having a *Strategy* with a separate section on foreign relations. On the other hand, some progress has been achieved by development CSOs, either individually through such steps as the institutionalization of gender policies or gender equality indicators, or in cooperation with the development platform Czech Forum for Development Cooperation (FoRS). The platform has engaged in gender training, awareness raising and some limited policy work, including through its Gender working group. However, the UNSCR 1325 in particular has been still peripheral to these initiatives.

⁷⁰ See e.g. the work of leading scholars such as Ann J. Tickner, Carol Cohn, Cynthia Enloe, Laura J. Shepherd, Laura Sjoberg, Christine Sylvester, and Jacqui True.

⁷¹ Nyklová, B., Cidlinská, K., Fárová, N. 2018. *International Relations in the Czech Republic: Where Have All the Women Gone? Ústav mezinárodních vztahů*.

⁷² Ibid., 1.

⁷³ Nyklová, B., Cidlinská, K., Fárová, N. 2019. *International Relations in the Czech Republic: Where Have All the Women Gone? Mezinárodní vztahy/Czech Journal of International Relations*, VOL. 54, NO. 2/2019, 5.

⁷⁴ There are a few exceptions such as the work of Blanka Knotková Čapková.

⁷⁵ Horký, O. 2008.

⁷⁶ Interview with an employee of a development NGO, 7 March 2019; see also Vochovcová 2018.

⁷⁷ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

⁷⁸ Shadow reports *Ženy a česká společnost*, 2010 (Beijing + 10) and *Ženy a česká společnost*, 2016 (Beijing + 15)

⁷⁹ Smetáčková I. (ed.) 2015.

The gendering of Czech foreign policy has been a continuous process unfolding over the last decade, affected by the peripheral nature of the gender equality issue in Czech politics, as well as the absence of a systematic and effective civil society advocacy, together with academia's marginal engagement in the little if any discourse that has taken place. In such a situation, impetus for gender equality and women's empowerment in the dimensions covered by UNSCR 1325 have largely failed to emerge. Particularly surprising is the gender community's silence on gender equality and women's empowerment in foreign relations, particularly from its academia and CSOs constituents that have otherwise been driving domestic gender policy reform. Although the limited advocacy and academic critique that has taken place have provided some impetus for including gender in several key policies, these can be seen as largely declaratory commitments, still insufficient and lacking the policy implementation measures or efficacy to bring changes on the ground. It was under these complex circumstances that the drafting of the first Czech NAP started in 2016.

The First Czech NAP 2017 - 2020

The NAP Drafting Process

Understanding the institutional history of gendering Czech foreign policy is key to comprehending and explaining the drafting process of the first Czech NAP and its content. In a situation of limited gender sensitivity in foreign policy, non-existing research and an absence of civil society engagement, the drafting of the NAP was very much a top-down, non-inclusive process aimed at fulfilling the UN's commitment 17 years after the resolution came into existence. On the other hand, the genesis of the NAP itself assisted in spreading awareness of UNSCR 1325 in the Czech Governments' ministries and in preparing ground for the WPS agenda.

Recommendations for developing a NAP were repeatedly put forward in civil society shadow reports and became officially one of the governmental assignments in the *Priorities for 2016* document, the year when the drafting process took place. There were several impulses leading to the actual decision to draft a NAP. Some pressure was evident at the EU level, as questions about the number of states having a NAP were raised during the EU Task Force on Women, Peace and Security's regular meetings⁸⁰. Another important push was the growing number of states with a NAP, advancing since 2010 from 18 to more than 60 countries⁸¹, and the fact that the resolution has already existed for almost 17 years⁸². Another trigger was the existence of the MD action plan 2015, placing the MFA in a bad light⁸³. This document deserves closer attention, as it is the first Czech policy on 1325 providing some starting points for the NAP.

⁸⁰ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 20 July 2018.

⁸¹ Amling, A and M. O'Reilly. 2016. *From Global Promise to National Action: Advancing Women, Peace, and Security in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Philippines, Serbia, and Sierra Leone*. Inclusive Society, Washington, DC. Available at <https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/publication/global-promisenational-action/>

⁸² Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 20 July 2018.

⁸³ Interview with representatives of the Office of the Government, Prague, 18 January 2019.

The *Defence Ministry Action Plan to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325, on Women, Peace and Security* (MD AP) was approved in 2015 as a response to the NATO Action Plan on UNSCR 1325⁸⁴, passed in 2014⁸⁵. The MD AP was composed by representatives from the ministry only, although the Government's initial promise, stated in the Government Report on Beijing + 20, was to have a consultation with the Government Council for Equality for Women and Men⁸⁶. The document itself is lacking basic attributes of an effective action plan, such as clear priorities, goals and activities, indicators, a monitoring and evaluation system and a budget for implementation⁸⁷. Most notably, the plan largely overlooks the international dimension, which is most evident from the example of the document's 'Protection' principle. This principle focuses on protection against discriminatory behaviour in the MD's workplace, rather than on the international protection of women and societies in conflict-affected areas. This first Czech policy thus seems to misunderstand the WPS agenda. In fact the document's purpose is questionable, especially since it replicates the tasks already covered in *Priorities* and explicitly includes the list of these tasks in the plan⁸⁸. Nonetheless, the drafting team's effort in drawing attention to this topic is noteworthy, as it is a challenging task to undertake within the MD's highly masculine environment. Moreover, as already noted, the MD AP's creation provided impetus for the formulation of a national action plan.

The NAP was from the start a top-down MFA initiative, contrasting to the internationally more common bottom-up processes with CSOs as catalysts. The first steps in the NAP's preparation were made at the end of 2015, followed by a March 2016 MFA workshop "Drafting the National Action Plan on 1325 UNSC resolution"⁸⁹. The event's main purpose was to share experiences from the Austrian and Swedish government representatives on how to draft a NAP in terms of its structure, responsibilities and the stakeholders involved. While some CSOs participated in the workshop, they were not represented in the workshop's panel, comprised entirely of government officials. In the event's concluding remarks, the MFA representative clearly stated that the Czech NAP would be drafted in 2016, underlining the importance - conveyed by the Austrian and Swedish experiences during their first NAP formulations - of beginning modestly and within existing resources, the benefits of building awareness throughout the drafting process, and the benefits of regular consultations with civil society⁹⁰.

⁸⁴ NATO/EAPC Action Plan for the Implementation of the NATO/EAPC Policy on Women, Peace and Security, 2014.

⁸⁵ O'Sullivan, M. and Šimůnková, B. 2018.

⁸⁶ *Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. Czech Republic – National Review, 2015, p. 23 as cited in O'Sullivan, M. and Šimůnková, B. 2018, 39.

⁸⁷ O'Sullivan, M. and Šimůnková, B. 2018.

⁸⁸ Defence Ministry Action Plan to Implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325, on Women, Peace and Security. Available at <http://www.mocr.army.cz/assets/informacni-servis/povinne-informace/1-rovne-prilezitosti/defense-ministry-action-plan-to-implement-un-security-council-resolution-1325--on-women--peace-and-security.pdf>

⁸⁹ Vláda České republiky. 2017. Akční plán České republiky k implementaci rezoluce Rady bezpečnosti OSN č. 1325 (2000), o ženách, míru a bezpečnosti a souvisejících rezolucí na léta 2017 - 2020, 9. 1. 2017, 5. (hereafter referenced as "Czech NAP 1325 (2017-2020)"). Available at https://www.mzv.cz/jnp/cz/udalosti_a_media/tiskove_zpravy/x2017_01_11_akcni_plan_cr_k_implementaci_rezoluce.html

⁹⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. 2016. The Workshop "Drafting the National Action Plan on 1325 UNSC Resolution", 2 March 2016.

Notwithstanding this, the political decision was made to have the NAP finalized by the end of 2016,⁹¹ providing limited time for the drafting process. For this reason, the NAP was to be drafted without any preceding analysis⁹². This contradicted the recommendations made by civil society and sent to the MFA at the time of the workshop⁹³. Civil society emphasized the importance of research as a foundation for the NAP, an inclusive process allowing sufficient time for consultation, and the flaws of the MD AP to be avoided during the NAP's formulation. During the workshop, there was a strong openness to have a participatory drafting process, with civil society and academia invited to join the contact list for consultations, although the MFA did not set up a working group for this purpose,⁹⁴ which was later problematic in terms of the processes' lack of inclusivity.

The MFA's UN department was in charge of drafting the NAP and designating human resources for this purpose. The MFA's key role in driving this process should be praised, considering it was a challenging task to be completed within several months, while dealing with staff rotation issues mid-way through the process. A newly appointed MFA coordinator brought together materials prepared by the MFA, Ministry of Interior (MI) and MD, while also receiving significant support from the Department of Gender Equality. The coordinator utilized the outcomes of the workshop, and included well-elaborated groundwork prepared by the UN department itself in 2010, following the above mentioned Czech Women's Lobby conference which, however, were back in 2010 put to rest again due to the staff rotation⁹⁵. What this indicates is that due to the nature of the MFA's work, focused on diplomatic postings, the NAP agenda became highly dependent on the personal initiatives of individuals working within the Ministry and even once some collaboration between Ministry, civil society and academia emerged, it was difficult to maintain it or deepen it due to the change of staff. This problem reoccurred during the NAP's drafting.

The staff turnaround at the MFA had a significant impact on the Ministry's coordinating and drafting performance, with the drafting process being compromised due to the lack of adequate handover of key roles and responsibilities. This was most evident in terms of the CSO contact list, as communication with CSOs stopped with the staff rotation process. While the CSOs, on behalf of the FoRS Gender working group, had the opportunity to comment on the very basic structure of the NAP during an early drafting stage in June 2016,⁹⁶ they were largely excluded from that point onwards. The NAP includes a statement that civil society was included in the preparation through its participation in the Council for Equality of Women and Men, a Council consisting of NGO representatives promoting gender equality⁹⁷. But due to their exclusive focus on domestic issues, these civil society representatives unsurprisingly provided no comments or suggestions on the NAP's final draft⁹⁸. The FoRS Gender working group

⁹¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. 2016. The Workshop "Drafting the National Action Plan on 1325 UNSC Resolution", 2 March 2016.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ The recommendations were based on the shadow report *Ženy a česká společnost II (Beijing + 20)*, 2016.

⁹⁴ The Workshop "Drafting the National Action Plan on 1325 UNSC Resolution", 2 March 2016.

⁹⁵ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 20 July 2018.

⁹⁶ Czech Forum for Development Co-operation (FoRS). 2016. *Komentáře k navržené struktuře osnovy Národního akčního plánu (NAP) ČR k implementaci rezoluce RB OSN 1325 o ženách, míru a bezpečnosti*, Pracovní skupina Gender, May 2016.

⁹⁷ Czech NAP 1325 (2017-2020), 5.

⁹⁸ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 20 July 2018.

received the NAP just before the government's approval of the document, having only several days for comment. This made it impossible to undertake fundamental changes to the document or to engage CSOs from the field in the process⁹⁹.

NAP's Focus

Compared to international experiences captured in numerous publications, the drafting of the first Czech NAP can be regarded as rather non-standard. The procedural deficits, and in particular the lack of inclusivity, foundational research and sufficient preparation time, have resulted in a NAP that has some substantial content weaknesses. However, at the same time, it is apparent from the content that some government parties involved in the drafting invested much effort and consideration into the NAP, putting together a rather ambitious and extensive document.

The purpose of the NAP is to set the framework for the effective implementation of the WPS agenda at national and international level¹⁰⁰. The NAP is a fairly extensive document of 42 pages, structured into two main parts – the general part and the activity part containing 25 objectives, while the last 10 pages consist of Annexes. The general part outlines the key actors and responsibilities and the annual monitoring mechanism. This part opens with a brief introduction of the WPS framework, including a description of the four pillars of UNSCR 1325 in a footnote (Prevention, Participation, Protection, Relief and Recovery), the list of the seven subsequent resolutions, and the 2015 Global Study. The document includes two paragraphs dedicated to CEDAW and General Recommendation Number 30 (GR 30) on women in conflict prevention and conflict and post-conflict situations, as an important obligation strengthening WPS mechanisms (p. 3-4). Although this NAP section is generally well elaborated and provides a list of the UNSC's seven subsequent resolutions, it lacks a compact summary of the evolution of the WPS framework over the last 17 years, particularly with reference to the follow-up resolutions. Moreover, the starting points that are provided in the introduction such as the four pillars and the GR 30 are largely abandoned throughout the remaining document. The GR 30 is not incorporated throughout the text, with the exception of one task number 13. The document also largely departs from the four pillars, although it does state that the following seven areas of the NAP are based on the structure of the resolutions and on international experiences (p. 4):

1. Balanced representation of women and men in decision-making positions in relation to the WPS agenda
2. Reconciliation of work and private life in relation to the WPS agenda
3. Education and training in relation to the WPS agenda
4. International cooperation in promoting the WPS agenda
5. Dignity and integrity of women in relation to the WPS agenda
6. WPS agenda and current global challenges
7. Institutional support of gender equality in relation to the WPS agenda

⁹⁹ O'Sullivan, M. and Šimůnková, B. 2018, 40.

¹⁰⁰ Czech NAP 1325 (2017 – 2020), 3.

These seven thematic areas form the structure of the document's activity section, with each theme including a narrative section and a table of activities. The missing research foundation is apparent from the selection of the seven areas noted above, as four out of the seven areas (1, 2, 3, and 7) concern the better known national level priorities which are already largely dealt with in other policy documents. The narrative content section includes lengthy general texts on work-life balance, gender pay gap or women in decision making positions in the national context, which are at times translated into redundant activities such as in objective number 7: Wage equality, included in the second thematic area. Nonetheless, there is some effort to advance the national priorities by linking them directly to WPS, as in the case of the first thematic area's objective number 1: Increasing representation of women in military and civilian missions, international organizations, including in decision-making positions. But many objectives, such as objectives 3 and 4, repeat measures from other government documents, while failing to logically match their tasks and indicators. For example, while objective number 3 is to support increasing the representation of women in the army and police, the tasks required to achieve this goal is to collect statistics on the number of women entering the army and police¹⁰¹ and follows objective number 2 concerning the positions of heads of diplomatic missions. In addition, while this first thematic area seems to be based on the Participation principle, it only deals with the national level, entirely omitting participation in the conflict and post-conflict context, which could include emphasis on women as mediators or women's economic participation.

While the national level should not be avoided in NAPs, it should reflect WPS principles. Indeed, there is a tendency for "domesticating" NAPs¹⁰², especially among countries which are not in conflict or post-conflict phases. However, issues with international overlap remain, such as in granting asylum to refugees and emerging issues such as terrorism or arms exports. The Czech NAP is to some extent addressing these in the sixth thematic area, focusing on current global challenges with an effect on domestic policies, particularly terrorism and migration.

There are two thematic areas with a clear international emphasis (i.e., 4 and 5). The fourth area of international cooperation is fairly broad, covering bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, development cooperation, humanitarian aid, and programmes of medical evacuation. The development cooperation section is arguably a weaker part of the NAP, as it only repeats vague narratives from other government materials, as seen from the objective number 14: "Continue to take into account the principle of gender equality, including WPS issues in the implementation of the Development Cooperation and the Humanitarian Aid and Transition Promotion Program". More information is nonetheless available from Tables 10 and 11 in the NAP's Annex which provide lists of projects of international development cooperation and humanitarian aid "with a significant gender aspect". While it can be assumed that the lists of projects are based on the gender equality policy marker of the OECD Development Assistance Committee¹⁰³, it would deserve clarification in the text, otherwise it may appear as misleading since all projects should incorporate gender as a cross cutting principle. Overall, this part deserves much more attention and specification of measures, considering that many countries receiving Czech

¹⁰¹ O'Sullivan, M. and Šimůnková, B. 2018, 40.

¹⁰² LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security, *UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security: Consultation Response*, 2017, 6.

¹⁰³ See <https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/dac-gender-equality-marker.htm>

development cooperation are in conflict and post-conflict¹⁰⁴ phases. The fifth thematic area covers very relevant objectives concerning gender-based violence, trafficking in human beings, and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) which, however, could be significantly strengthened and reformulated into more concrete tasks and measurable indicators, requiring the collection of disaggregated data in the above areas. Indeed, the collection of disaggregated data is a critical priority if the plan's implementation is to be adequately monitored and evaluated.

Several conceptual challenges arise in the NAP's narrative. These include an adherence to the formulation "equality of women and men", a concept politically preferred to "gender equality". However, gender equality would be the proper term in this context. The word gender is nonetheless used throughout the document, especially in relation to gender-based violence. There is also an apparent instrumentalization of the gender equality agenda, as well as a narrative following traditional security values in the following sentence of the opening paragraph: "International community's efforts to develop WPS agenda is based on the philosophy of inseparable connection of the principle of equality of women and with global peace and security" (p. 3). However, the human rights perspective is nonetheless later emphasized in the statement that the WPS agenda focuses not only on the situations in which peace settlement are directly threatened, but covers the area of women's rights in its entirety (p. 3).

Concerning visual representation, only the printed version of the NAP contains imagery. With the exception of one image of a kindergarten within the text on work-life balance activities of the ministries, the images exemplify international cooperation. Selecting a photograph of a woman with child for the front cover is unfortunate, considering it reproduces stereotypes of gender roles and supports the stereotype of women with children as a vulnerable group in need of protection¹⁰⁵. Other images represent women having agency, such as a woman giving a lecture or female soldiers or medics in the field. Although these photographs lack description, it is apparent that they are taken during implementation of development projects or programmes abroad. The images are thus mainly outward focused and may give the impression that the security problem is elsewhere, abroad¹⁰⁶.

Overall, the NAP gives a perception of a half-cocked compilation of what is already happening, without concrete specification of what is to be accomplished. As such, it is more of a declaratory pro forma commitment rather than an impact-oriented NAP. Most importantly, it is too broad in scope with too many objectives. Since there was no baseline analysis, the tasks and indicators are very general, failing to provide some practical guidance to NAP implementers about what is to be achieved within the Plan's three-year period. The NAP is also not responsive to the evolution of the WPS agenda or any academic critique, arguably due to the lack of preparation time. It is also obvious that some government parties spent time researching the WPS agenda, uncovering many new areas of concern in the Czech context, while others just re-used existing texts.

¹⁰⁴ The priority countries of the Czech Development Cooperation for 2018 – 2023 include: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Moldova and Zambia. The Transition Promotion Program has the following priority countries: Armenia, Burma / Myanmar, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Cuba, Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine.

¹⁰⁵ See e.g. Shepard, L. J. 2008.

¹⁰⁶ See this critique of outward-facing NAPs in Shepard, L. J. 2016.

Implementation of the First Czech NAP 2017- 2020

With the launching of the first NAP in January 2017, the Czech Republic has officially implemented the WPS agenda for over two years. These first years have signified a symbolic breakthrough, setting off the WPS agenda and raising awareness about it in general, even at times of rising hostility to gender issues, both domestically and internationally. At the same time, the operationalization of such a pro-forma NAP has proved challenging, if not unfeasible, as revealed in the two implementation reports and acknowledged by some government stakeholders themselves. The following section critically examines the two years of NAPs implementation, drawing especially on the two annual reports and interviews with key stakeholders.

The government representatives engaged in the WPS agenda agree that having a NAP in place is very important, as it immediately generates new initiatives¹⁰⁷. More precisely, suggestions for cooperation soon came from the European External Action Services in Brussels and from embassies in the Czech Republic, while the Slovakian government requested consultation on the NAP¹⁰⁸. For instance, in 2018, several events were focused on 1325 such as a government workshop on sharing experiences on NAPs with Sweden, a side event on 1325 during the 2018 Commission on the Status of Women or debate on Gender and NATO organized by the Canadian embassy and Institute of International Relations. The Czech Republic was also invited to present its NAP at the meeting of the EU Task Force on Women, Peace and Security¹⁰⁹. The existence of the NAP has been generally welcomed by international partners who have aimed to have 1325 high on the agenda in recent years, including those from the EU, NATO and the UN. Further, the Czech Republic developed NAP 1325 as the first Central European country to do so, sending a signal that it can be counted on as a partner when it comes to women's rights, highly important given the anti-gender mobilization in the region.

The two years have thus contributed to raising awareness and ownership among NAP implementers, while also assisting, to some extent, in mapping the situation through the two implementation Reports for 2017 and 2018. The Reports seem rather impressive at first sight, containing a lot of new information and forming useful instruments for engaging officials in collecting data. The first implementation Report effectively formulates suggestions for improvements and ways forward by highlighting these in boxes at the end of each chapter. The Reports also reveal the areas where implementation is lacking entirely. However, these are often addressed with vague formulations that are repeated in other reports. The texts provided are also very descriptive, instead of analysing how the activities contributed to fulfilling the NAP's indicators. These problems are directly linked to the NAP's vague targets and activities, as elaborated in more detail in the following sections.

Further problematic aspects arising in the Reports include their imagery and to some extent their language. The images are limited to two photographs on the front cover and a few inside the Reports. Neither of the two front page photographs are the best choice. The picture of a woman with a child on

¹⁰⁷ Interview with employees of the Office of the Government, Prague, 18 January 2019; Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 20 July 2018.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 20 July 2018.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 20 July 2018.

the cover of the 2017 Report (Image 1) again represents the well-known women and children syndrome, while the 2018 Report's cover photograph of a female soldier pointing a rifle at the camera (Image 2) may be perceived as militarizing the agenda. There are many NAPs which take into consideration these problematic aspects and can thus provide an inspiration for a more balanced imagery¹¹⁰. Meanwhile the language is at times victimizing and does not reflect a broader understanding of gender. These limitations were also apparent in many of this study's key informant interviews. The language and imagery used, the coordination of the gender equality agenda, the individual work by ministries in implementing the NAP, and cooperation with and between civil society and academia all comprise key issues requiring critical attention and corrective action if the NAP's implementation is to effectively meet its objectives.

Image 1



Image 2



¹¹⁰ See e.g. The Norwegian Government's Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2019 – 2022. Available at https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/departementene/ud/dokumenter/planer/actionplan_wps2019.pdf; The UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2018-2022: Annual Report to Parliament 2018. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/765743/UK_National_Action_Plan_on_Women_Peace_and_Security_2018_-2022_annual_report_to_Parliament_2018.pdf

Coordination and Implementation by the MFA

Institutional Support

The coordinating role of NAPs implementation and its monitoring is designated to the MFA in the document's thematic area number 7: Institutional support of gender equality in relation to the WPS agenda¹¹¹. This ministry is also in charge of the all-government Working Group on WPS, established in 2017 as part of this area's goal number 23. The research shows that the Czech institutional grounding is in place, but with fragile roots. Although the MFA has allocated human resources in WPS coordination within its UN Department, it still forms only about one third of the full-time position's agenda¹¹². The MFA staff in this position also serves as the WPS national focal point in terms of foreign cooperation, participating in the EU Informal Task Force on WPS and in drafting key EU documents. The occupant is also a member of the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network, and related UN bodies, while also preparing the national materials for the UN WPS debate and the annual UN Commission on the Status of Women. This limited capacity certainly restricts the potential of the WPS agenda in the Czech context, compared to countries with full-time personnel or even fully staffed units or departments. In addition, the agenda requires building knowledge and collaborating with other key players within the MFA, as WPS cuts across many departments.

Besides the UN Department, there are some capacities dedicated to "gender" in the Human Rights and Transition Policy Department and the Department of Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, while there is also a Gender Focal Point in the State Secretary Section, dealing mainly with work-life balance issues. The MFA's internal gender equality matters concern the NAP's priority area number 1: Balanced representation of women and men in decision-making positions in relation to the WPS agenda and number 2: Reconciliation of work and private life in relation to the WPS agenda. At this level, there are many gender issues to be tackled ranging from overtime, pre-school childcare when abroad, and selection procedures for ambassador positions, to the status of spouses¹¹³, as revealed by the 2016 gender audit¹¹⁴. Some issues have been solved through the new Foreign Service Act¹¹⁵ such as childbirth abroad, but it would be essential to conduct a new certified gender audit in order to make progress in the remaining problematic areas¹¹⁶. As for externally-oriented gender issues, the internal Gender Working Group has existed for several years, dealing with gender in foreign policy and practice, but it has not met in the last two years. However, the Gender Working Group has lacked adequate representation from MFA departments¹¹⁷. This can be explained by the rather low support of gender from Ministry management. Key informants from within the Ministry have admitted that there have been interventions from above "not to do anything" with regards to gender or even orders to avoid

¹¹¹ Czech NAP 1325 (2017 – 2020), 30.

¹¹² Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 20 July 2018.

¹¹³ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 17 January 2019.

¹¹⁴ A certified gender audit was carried out by the IIR in 2016 and its findings were unclassified in 2018.

¹¹⁵ Act No. 150/2017 on the Foreign Service and to Amend Certain Other Acts (the Foreign Service Act). Available at: https://www.mzv.cz/file/2566251/zakon_zahranicni_sluzba_EN_01032019.pdf

¹¹⁶ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 17 January 2019.

¹¹⁷ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 17 January 2019.

defending particular issues internationally such as LGBTQI+¹¹⁸. The existence of the working group is nonetheless perceived positively by the MFA staff interviewed, but it is still to utilize its potential.

The WPS Working Group

The WPS Working Group (WPS WG) has also demonstrated unused potential. The Working Group involves MFA representatives together with those from the MI, MD, CSOs and academia. The group, chaired by the MFA, met three times in 2017 and twice in 2018. Although the group remains open to new participants,¹¹⁹ some public servants dispute the advantages of a participatory working group¹²⁰. For instance the response by MI's official has been that neither CSOs, nor academia are among the implementers accountable for the agenda's fulfilment, as stated in the NAP, and thus should not task the ministries¹²¹. According to this respondent, the Working Group should be solely inter-ministerial, involving government officials only, as having more than twenty people from different institutions is counterproductive¹²². Nonetheless, such perception and approach to the WPS agenda is in sharp contrast with the very foundation of the resolution as a bottom up, grassroots initiative aimed at improving women's lives in conflict and post-conflict contexts and which has been grounded in the UN's fundamental principle of participation.

In the WPS WG, CSOs and academia are currently still significantly underrepresented compared to other working groups or committees under the Council for Equality of Women and Men. Government officials admit that the WPS agenda has much smaller academic and civil society representation in contrast to other government advisory bodies on gender equality, and greater involvement of CSOs in the WPS WG is essential for further progress¹²³. The question is whether there is such potential among development and gender CSOs and academia, since an active advocacy element has been so far lacking in this area, being limited to a few individuals. During the first two years, the WPS WG has not really been "working" but rather served as a meeting point for sharing and updating information. Simply put, the working group is "summarizing rather than creating"¹²⁴. Some confess it is disappointing, as there are so many themes and issues the group could try to address and solve¹²⁵. Others emphasize that the WPS working group lacks conception and more efficient communication¹²⁶. One civil society representative mentioned that the group currently focuses attention on security ministries and their internal or domestic foci, while any focus on civil society and projects abroad is missing¹²⁷. Again, this goes hand in hand with the need for a more active civil society advocacy. The diverse perceptions

¹¹⁸ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 17 January 2019.

¹¹⁹ Zpráva k Akčnímu plánu České republiky k implementaci rezoluce Rady bezpečnosti OSN č. 1325 (2000), o ženách, míru a bezpečnosti a souvisejících rezolucí na léta 2017 – 2020 za rok 2017, 2018, 27.

¹²⁰ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 20 July 2018.

¹²¹ Interview with representatives of the MI, 18 February 2019.

¹²² Interview with representatives of the MI, 18 February 2019.

¹²³ Interview with employees of the Office of the Government, Prague, 18 January 2019.

¹²⁴ Interview with employees of the Office of the Government, Prague, 18 January 2019.

¹²⁵ Interview with employee of the MD, Prague, 8 March 2019.

¹²⁶ Interview with representatives of the MD, 20 February 2019.

¹²⁷ Telephone interview with NGO representative, 14 February 2019.

about how the WG should function have not worked in its favour, and this remains one of the key challenges for the second NAP, along with attracting more civil society participation.

Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid

In addition to providing institutional support to the WPS agenda, the MFA's key implementation role is defined in the NAP's external focus areas number 4: International cooperation in promoting the WPS agenda and 5: Dignity and integrity of women in relation to the WPS agenda. These include particularly the Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid and Human Rights and Transition Promotion Policy, the latter two discussed in the next section.

According to an MFA representative, during the NAP's implementation years the Czech Republic was one of the countries actively promoting gender equality policies at the EU or UN level or other international forums or donor conferences¹²⁸. At the Czech foreign policy level, the MFA adopted a new Strategy for Development Cooperation for 2018-2030, which includes a commitment to "place emphasis on the development of democracy and respect for human rights, including gender equality and empowerment of women and girls" in the first paragraph of the "Cross-cutting priorities"¹²⁹. Furthermore, several important initiatives have been taken by the MFA to improve the process, in particular the development of the Methodology for Evaluation of Cross-cutting Themes in Development Cooperation, which was certified by the ministry in January 2018,¹³⁰ and which provides the evaluators with 186 pages of gender and gender equality indicators¹³¹. The MFA further prepared a Czech Development Cooperation Methodology and a Matrix of Responsibilities,¹³² which should, according to the MFA representatives, allow for a very participatory and open identification of project themes, providing opportunities for CSOs and academia to identify topics relevant, for example, to the WPS agenda¹³³. With regard to WPS, the embassies were already instructed to emphasize the link to the WPS framework when identifying and evaluating small local projects¹³⁴. However, since all these initiatives that are expected to improve the gender aspect of development cooperation processes are rather recent, their effects in practice still remain to be seen.

Next to these new opportunities for progress, there are signs that some policy and implementation instruments could be more advanced regarding gender and WPS in particular. Although the programming materials should deal more explicitly with gender equality¹³⁵, this seems to be

¹²⁸ Electronic communication with the MFA, 15 July 2019.

¹²⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. 2018. *Development Cooperation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2018–2030*, 10. Available at http://www.czechaid.cz/wpcontent/uploads/2016/09/CZ_Development_Cooperation_Strategy_2018_2030.pdf

¹³⁰ Zpráva k Akčnímu plánu České republiky k implementaci rezoluce Rady bezpečnosti OSN č. 1325 (2000), o ženách, míru a bezpečnosti a souvisejících rezolucí na léta 2017-2020 za rok 2018, 32.

¹³¹ Inesan. *Methodology for Evaluation of Crosscutting Themes in the Czech Development Cooperation: Gender and Gender Equality Indicators Fiches*. Available at http://www.inesan.eu/files/o_gender-indicator-fiches.pdf

¹³² Metodika ZRS ČR. Available at <https://www.mzv.cz/file/3191646/MetodikaZRS.pdf>

¹³³ Electronic communication with the MFA, 15 July 2019.

¹³⁴ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 5 April 2019; Electronic communication with the MFA, 15 July 2019.

¹³⁵ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 18 January 2019.

questionable. Concerning post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina for instance, in the Development Cooperation Programme of the Czech Republic for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018 – 2030 document,¹³⁶ gender issues are mentioned in the country needs analysis, based on secondary sources but limited to a small paragraph in connection to its crosscutting nature and reference to the SDGs, with no further elaboration throughout the rest of the document. Considering that these programming materials are detailed documents, having a short reference to gender in them can give a perception of proclamatory commitment. Moreover, although the two NAP Reports for 2017 and 2018 provide the lists of supported projects and their budgets, these say little about the actual projects and their impacts or outcomes. In fact, the recent analysis of project documentation from 96 Czech development cooperation projects revealed that the gender equality dimension is either ignored, avoided or used randomly without any clear framework or the possibility of verifying individual claims¹³⁷. Furthermore, the project documentation glosses over gender equality with its phrases on gender neutrality and antidiscrimination¹³⁸.

In terms of development cooperation, some progress is expected to result from the project Gender Equality in Czech Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation, undertaken by the Institute of International Relations in cooperation with the Czech Development Agency. The project has focused on systematic mainstreaming of gender equality into the project cycle and on developing a system for optimizing data collection and storage in the field of gender statistics¹³⁹. The Czech Development Agency has nonetheless suffered from staff shortage, a deficiency recognized recently also by the OECD team¹⁴⁰. Therefore, the outcome in this area is still to be seen, considering that when there is a lack of resources, the work on 'gender' is typically dropped first¹⁴¹.

Concerning Czech Humanitarian Aid, gender has been part of this dimension from its beginning, according to an MFA representative¹⁴², suggesting there is an understanding about the role of gender in conflict and its stabilization, and particularly with regard to sexual violence in conflict, an issue that is apparently addressed through Czech humanitarian projects¹⁴³. Still, neither the calls for proposals nor project proposals themselves include gender as a cross-cutting principle, although the second Report states that the method of ensuring this priority is checked from the projects' monitoring and final reports¹⁴⁴. It is therefore questionable that gender sensitivity and women's empowerment can be ensured in the preparatory assessment and project planning. The only evaluation report available from this period is on five humanitarian projects focusing on supporting schools for Syrian refugee children

¹³⁶ Bilateral Development Cooperation Programme of the Czech Republic Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2023. Available at https://www.mzv.cz/file/2795737/program_BaH_CRA_2018_A4_EN_05.pdf

¹³⁷ Dopita, T., Pešková, Žaloudková, J. (2018): *Analýza zjistitelnosti dat o fyzických osobách a genderově důležitých informacích v činnosti ČRA, ÚMV*, 9.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Information about the project is available at: <https://www.iir.cz/article/rovnost-zen-a-muzu-v-ceske-zahranicni-politice-a-rozvojove-spolupraci>

¹⁴⁰ OECD. 2019. Czech Republic Mid-term Review, 16 July.

¹⁴¹ This was also apparent from the interview with a CSO representative who noted that the budget cuts affected their internal gender coordinating position. (Interview with CSO representative, 7 March, 2019)

¹⁴² Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 18 January 2019.

¹⁴³ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 18 January 2019.

¹⁴⁴ Zpráva k Akčnímu plánu České republiky k implementaci rezoluce Rady bezpečnosti OSN č. 1325 (2000), o ženách, míru a bezpečnosti a souvisejících rezolucí na léta 2017-2020 za rok 2018, 2019.

in Lebanon and on providing financial assistance for medical services for Syrian refugees shows that a gender-sensitive approach is lacking in these cases, and this appears to affect girls' rights to equal access to education. The evaluation report concludes that the projects had a very low impact on cross-cutting principles, especially in the area of women's empowerment and gender equality, failing to utilize the opportunity to support the participation of girls in education by not tackling gender-specific barriers such as the safety of older girls on the way to and from school¹⁴⁵. It should be also added that such detailed evaluation is exceptional, with the level of gender analysis in evaluation reports varying considerably in quality, in spite of the common guidelines¹⁴⁶ prescribing how evaluations should take place¹⁴⁷. While it is important that the MFA carries out evaluations, it is apparent that the system is still in its infancy.

More careful consideration should be also given to the language used, as the NAP Reports' short descriptions of each project literally represent women as victims rather than emphasizing the need of women to participate in and have influence over humanitarian responses¹⁴⁸. Overall, there are advances as well as deficiencies and it is important to continue improving and demanding significantly higher gender standards, from calls for proposals to the project evaluation. Training on gender and humanitarian crises is essential, and should include MFA employees themselves¹⁴⁹, together with CSO representatives who, as with their MFA counterparts, have admitted that they do not always feel competent in applying gender sensitive approaches to development cooperation and humanitarian aid projects¹⁵⁰.

The Transition Promotion Program and Human Rights

The WPS agenda also cuts across the Czech human rights promotion and the Transition Promotion Program, where most priority countries are post-conflict countries, such as Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Georgia, and countries currently in conflict such as Ukraine. The NAP refers to this part of foreign policy specifically in focus areas number 4 (International cooperation in promoting the WPS agenda) and 5 (Dignity and integrity of women in relation to the WPS agenda).

The MFA work in this area draws on the *Human rights and transition promotion policy concept of the Czech Republic 2015* and its thematic priority No 7: "Promoting equality and non-

¹⁴⁵ Závěrečná zpráva z vyhodnocení. "Vyhodnocení projektů humanitární pomoci ČR poskytnuté syrským uprchlíkům v Libanonu". Available at

https://www.mzv.cz/file/2582504/Evaluace_HP_Libanon_2017_final_vc_priloh.pdf

¹⁴⁶ Methodology for Evaluation of Crosscutting Themes in the Czech Development Cooperation

¹⁴⁷ The MFA explained that the evaluation in Lebanon took place in 2017 as part of the pilot testing of the Methodology for Evaluation of Cross-cutting Themes in Development Cooperation. (Electronic communication with the MFA, 15 July 2019)

¹⁴⁸ Such an approach is pursued, for instance, in Norway's NAP 2019–2022.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 20 July 2018.

¹⁵⁰ Vochovcová, L. 2018. Analýza genderových aspektů komunikace České rozvojové agentury a realizátorů zahraniční rozvojové spolupráce, ÚMV.

discrimination”¹⁵¹. This document progressively links women’s economic insecurity with violence against women and girls by emphasizing that “[i]n the area of equality of men and women, it will promote women’s economic empowerment and participation in public life as a matter of priority concern. The Czech Republic considers it especially important to combat violence against women and girls, including in situations of armed conflict”¹⁵². The policy concept can be seen as rather advanced, since it refers in detail to equality and non-discrimination areas of concern ranging from sexual violence in conflict to the rights of LGBTI.¹⁵³ According to an MFA respondent, this strong conceptual foundation affects everyday diplomacy, with ‘gender’ being a cross-cutting issue everywhere¹⁵⁴.

At the multilateral level, there is an ongoing support for women’s rights through, for example, speeches, events, sponsorship of resolutions, and recommendations for the Universal Periodic Review as summarized in the two NAP Reports under the task numbers 13 and 18¹⁵⁵. Currently, the Czech Republic is a member of the UN Human Rights Council for the period 2019 – 2021, having among its main priorities “Support to equal participation in political and public affairs”¹⁵⁶. In 2019, the Czech Republic also chairs the OSCE Human Dimension Committee, focusing on civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights and tolerance and non-discrimination, among other things, and paying special attention to preventing and combating violence against women¹⁵⁷.

In response to the changing global landscape characterized by the backlash on ‘gender’, some have identified the promotion of reproductive and sexual health rights as a newly emerging opportunity for the Czech Republic¹⁵⁸. The current policy concept, however, lacks a defined position in this regard and for that reason, the Czech Republic supports these rights but is not typically the main initiator of their promotion¹⁵⁹. In this regard, the policy concept could be strengthened during its revision or in the event of a new conception being drafted.

Concerning the Transition Promotion Program, this is a small financial instrument administered by several officials compared to the Development Cooperation Program, which has the Czech

¹⁵¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. 2015. Human Rights and Transition Promotion Policy Concept of the Czech Republic, September 2015. Available at https://www.mzv.cz/file/583273/Human_rights_and_transition_promotion_policy_concept_of_the_Czech_Republic_.pdf

¹⁵² Ibid., 11.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 1 August 2018.

¹⁵⁵ Zprávy k Akčnímu plánu České republiky k implementaci rezoluce Rady bezpečnosti OSN č. 1325 (2000), o ženách, míru a bezpečnosti a souvisejících rezolucí na léta 2017-2020 za rok 2017 a 2018.

¹⁵⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. 2018. “The Czech Republic elected member of the UN Human Rights Council”, Press Release, 15. 10. 2018. Available at https://www.mzv.cz/jnp/en/issues_and_press/press_releases/x2018_10_15_the_czech_republic_elected_member_of_the.html

¹⁵⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. 2019. “Ambassador Šrámek assumed Chairmanship of the OSCE Human Dimension Committee”, 29. 7. 2019. Available at https://www.mzv.cz/mission.vienna/en/latest/ambassador_sramek_assumed_chairmanship.html

¹⁵⁸ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 1 August 2018; Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 20 July 2018.

¹⁵⁹ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 1 August 2018.

Development Agency as an implementation body.¹⁶⁰ During the implementation years of the first NAP, there was a continuous shortage of human capacities, which has affected the NAP reporting¹⁶¹, with the Reports for 2017 and 2018 containing rather limited information. Closer discussion with the MFA staff also reveals that there are initiatives such as the programme's support for women's rights defenders, or small-scale women's empowerment projects, but not all the information from these projects has been made public due to political sensitivities¹⁶². Concerning the MFA's compulsory requirement for an assessment of gender as a sustainability factor in project documentation, some implementers provide more detailed information, such as, for example, an analysis of domestic violence, while others just include percentages of affected or participating women in the information they give¹⁶³.

It is apparent from the interviews and publicly available sources that there are areas which could be significantly strengthened. Both the human rights promotion and the Transition Promotion Program could work more actively with the normative WPS framework in its complexity and utilize it in bilateral and multilateral relations. There is also an absence, within the programme, but also throughout Czech foreign policy in general, of any rigorous gender analysis of conflict or post-conflict environments and its incorporation into human rights reports produced by embassies. These reports currently lack any gender dimension. This can be explained by the fact that civil and political rights traditionally comprise the core of the Czech human rights agenda¹⁶⁴. Nonetheless, human rights reports with gender analysis could be a valuable supporting material for the promotion of human rights and the Transition Promotion Program; they would also give a signal to Czech CSOs in terms of possible project themes. It is also important to provide a clear stance on human rights, and particularly women's rights, at every occasion in times of the global backlash against gender equality and women's rights.

Implementation by the Security Sector

In comparison to the MFA and the Department of Gender Equality as national coordinator, the security ministries have not been drivers of the NAP, but have rather been obliged to contribute to it. More precisely, the MD perspective is that UNSCR 1325 is the UN's agenda and thus falls mainly under the MFA, while the defence ministry deals with the implementation of the points at issue¹⁶⁵. The security ministries have had limited human resources dedicated to WPS, as the NAP has become yet another strategic document to be fulfilled within their existing capacities¹⁶⁶. Hence, it comes without surprise that the NAP has been perceived by many in these ministries as an extra workload, further complicated

¹⁶⁰ Information received via electronic communication with the MFA employees, 14 July 2019.

¹⁶¹ Interview with MFA employees, Prague, 17 January 2019.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 1 August 2018.

¹⁶⁵ Interview with employee of the MD, Prague, 8 March 2019.

¹⁶⁶ Interview with employees of the MD, Prague, 20 February 2019. Interviews with MI employees, Prague, 18 February 2019.

and slowed down by the ministries' bureaucratization processes¹⁶⁷. In spite of these common starting points, the research shows that the MD and MI have each dealt with the WPS agenda in their own ways, with the MD being more proactive.

The Ministry of Defence

As mentioned earlier, the MD first engaged with UNSCR 1325 in 2015, adopting its Annual Plan (AP), following NATO's 2014 action plan¹⁶⁸. Indeed, international experiences show that defence ministries are more likely than interior ministries to engage in WPS, especially those receiving pressure from NATO¹⁶⁹. Some say it is the culture of the MD, as a military institution based on hierarchy and orders that allows changes to take a deep root once they happen¹⁷⁰. NATO has embraced WPS instrumentally, linking it with the agenda to increase women's representation in armed forces and with an operational effectiveness that is understood to have added value for the Alliance¹⁷¹. This approach has had an apparent influence in the Czech MD. This means, for example, that the reason for recruiting more women into the Czech army is not driven by a gender equality and human rights perspective, but it is merely practical and effective¹⁷². Increasing the number of Czech women in UN peacekeeping missions is similarly seen as an instrument that brings added value to the Czech Republic as it improves its visibility and credit internationally¹⁷³. The WPS agenda is thus seen primarily as a benefit for the Czech Republic and as an instrument to be more effective on the ground. MD representatives explain that if a request comes from the UN, we should prioritize women for missions, and even male soldiers see this as adding value, enabling better communication with the local population and thus better evaluation of our participation¹⁷⁴.

In this regard, the MD has carried out concrete measures in 2018 to meet the 15 percent quota for female military staff officers and observers in peacekeeping missions, the UN's target set for 2020¹⁷⁵. In order to generate interest among women for these positions, the MD published articles in the military magazine's column on UN presenting experiences from missions from both male and female perspectives¹⁷⁶. Accordingly, when the Chief of the General Staff asked for nominations for the course for military observers carried out once a year, he explicitly prioritized women¹⁷⁷. As a result of these steps, 30 women applied for the course in 2018, six of them were accepted and successfully passed

¹⁶⁷ Interview with employees of the MI, Prague, 18 February 2019.

¹⁶⁸ NATO/EAPC Action Plan for the Implementation of the NATO/EAPC Policy on Women, Peace and Security, 2014.

¹⁶⁹ Telephone interview with employee of the MFA, 10 April 2019.

¹⁷⁰ Interview with employees of the MD, Prague, 20 February 2019.

¹⁷¹ Wright, K.A.M. 2016. NATO's Adoption of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security: Making the Agenda a Reality. *International Political Science Review* 37(3): 350–361.

¹⁷² Interview with employees of the MD, Prague, 20 February 2019.

¹⁷³ Interview with employee of the MD, Prague, 8 March 2019.

¹⁷⁴ Interview with employee of the MD, Prague, 8 March 2019.

¹⁷⁵ United Nations, Note to Correspondents: UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial Communique. Available at <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2017-11-16/note-correspondents-un-peacekeeping-defence-ministerial>

¹⁷⁶ Interview with employee of the MD, Prague, 8 March 2019.

¹⁷⁷ Interview with employee of the MD, Prague, 8 March 2019.

the course¹⁷⁸. As stated in the NAP Report, although fulfilling this policy still remains a challenge, particularly concerning having enough women available for rotation, at the end of 2018 women accounted for 37 percent of the national contribution to UN missions¹⁷⁹. Although this progress can be seen as a success story, some would argue that it still concerns only few individuals and can be seen as taking advantage of low hanging fruit¹⁸⁰. According to the Report, there were, in total three women in peacekeeping missions in 2018, namely in MONUSCO Kongo, UNMIK Kosovo, and MINUSCA SAR¹⁸¹. When it comes to more complex, large-scale missions involving military operations, the situation is less optimistic¹⁸². Concerning involvement in UN missions, the Czech Republic has lacked a clearly defined long-term strategy enabling a systematic approach, with currently an ad hoc response to existing opportunities¹⁸³. It is clear that the WPS perspective should be an inherent part of such a strategy, clearly acknowledged by MD representatives, admitting that there is a political ambition to be more active in UN missions, while also affirming that we have to focus on sending more women¹⁸⁴.

Concerning the two NAP Reports, the MD provided elaborated data on women's representation in the army and participation in various missions abroad. Still, the quantitative data dominating the MD's text in the Reports provide only a partial picture of the overall situation, as these do not tell us what these women do or what the impact of their participation is. Detailed paragraphs are dedicated to education within the MD, but explicit training on issues directly linked to WPS seems to be rare. Instead, the Reports list a general, introductory seminar on equal opportunities in the workplace, gender stereotypes, language and sexual harassment. WPS is mentioned only briefly in relation to pre-deployment training. The MD interviews nevertheless revealed that the civilian pre-deployment training has received negative feedback, the main reason being that it was provided by an outside expert who did not speak NATO's language or have regard for the institution's nuances¹⁸⁵. However, over the last year, the training on gender in operations has been delivered by military personnel, reaching the level of NATO training, and the response has since been more positive¹⁸⁶. Another problematic aspect when the Czech Republic is compared with other NATO countries is the non-existence of reported cases of harassment or assault in the MD workplace. The former Gender Advisor of the NATO Committee for Gender Perspectives has indicated that this is untrue, based on her personal experience as a member of the force¹⁸⁷. She has stated that she believes that the overall message about harassment and abuse is lacking in the Czech context, and the sexual assault/harassment reporting mechanism should therefore be revised¹⁸⁸.

¹⁷⁸ Interview with employee of the MD, Prague, 8 March 2019.

¹⁷⁹ Zpráva k Akčnímu plánu České republiky k implementaci rezoluce Rady bezpečnosti OSN č. 1325 (2000), o ženách, míru a bezpečnosti a souvisejících rezolucí na léta 2017-2020 za rok 2018, p. 30.

¹⁸⁰ Interview with an academic, Prague, 11 March 2019.

¹⁸¹ Zpráva k Akčnímu plánu České republiky k implementaci rezoluce Rady bezpečnosti OSN č. 1325 (2000), o ženách, míru a bezpečnosti a souvisejících rezolucí na léta 2017-2020 za rok 2018, p. 4

¹⁸² Interview with an academic, Prague, 11 March 2019.

¹⁸³ Daniel, J., and Wittichová, M. 2016. *Česká republika v mírových operacích OSN: Komplikovaný návrat*. Policy Paper, ÚMV.

¹⁸⁴ Interview with employee of the MD, Prague, 8 March 2019.

¹⁸⁵ Interview with employees of the MD, Prague, 20 February 2019.

¹⁸⁶ Interview with employees of the MD, Prague, 20 February 2019.

¹⁸⁷ Crema, J. 2018. Gender and NATO. *Mezinárodní politika*, 16. 7. 2018. Available at <https://www.iir.cz/article/gender-and-nato>

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

What looks promising are the newly established positions of two Gender Advisors within the MD, who were signed up to undergo a specialized course in Sweden¹⁸⁹. The Czech Republic has therefore followed the example of other NATO countries where Gender Advisors are increasingly being adopted as a mechanism to help militaries to implement WPS agenda commitments¹⁹⁰. While even such steps do not guarantee success, recent research points at the “small wins” Gender Advisors can achieve inside the established military institutions¹⁹¹. Besides the Gender Advisor positions, becoming a standard for militaries, there are considerably more lessons the Czech MD can adopt from NATO. For instance, although research on gender and the military has flourished in recent years, including that focusing on NATO, it is almost non-existent in the Czech Republic, as the MD has still to open its doors to cooperation with broader academia and civil society. NATO is generally more open to such cooperation, having set up the NATO Civil Society Advisory Panel which includes NGOs and academics. Some countries are more progressive, such as Canada, launching the Elsie Initiative in 2019, a pilot project on increasing meaningful participation of women in peace operations¹⁹². It was also apparent from the 2018 Annual Conference of NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives that some countries are a step ahead, trying to problematize the instrumental framing of the WPS agenda by NATO; an issue largely brought up by academics¹⁹³. At this event, there were many areas identified for potential research, including for the Czech army, among them mixed or gender-based teams, and the subject of gender and early warning mechanisms¹⁹⁴.

NATO’s 1325 action plan also serves as an illustration on how to move forward with the second Czech NAP. The MD admits that the second NAP should be more concrete, shorter and achievable, arguing that we have to be able to evaluate if we are meeting the indicators and, if so, to what percentage, as in the case of NATO action plan¹⁹⁵. Overall, NATO plays an important role for the Czech MD in advancing the WPS agenda on national levels throughout the alliance. This is especially obvious when compared to the MI, which lacks such international pressure and is much less proactive.

The Ministry of Interior

At the MI, the WPS agenda covers a broad scope from migration and trafficking in human beings, to terrorism and it is therefore perceived as being rather scattered across the ministry¹⁹⁶. At the same time, as already mentioned, no new capacities were dedicated to implementing the agenda, which has been problematized by those involved. While this may be a reason why the MI seems to be less active than the MD or the MFA, this follows a general trend internationally. The experiences with WPS

¹⁸⁹ An MD representative shared this news at the meeting of the WPS WG on 4 December 2018.

¹⁹⁰ Bastick M. and Duncanson, C. 2018. Agents of Change? Gender Advisors in NATO Militaries, *International Peacekeeping*.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Further information on Elsie Initiative is available at: https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/gender_equality-egalite_des_genres/elsie_initiative-initiative_elsie.aspx?lang=eng

¹⁹³ See Wright, K.A.M., 2016.

¹⁹⁴ 2018 Annual Conference of NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives.

¹⁹⁵ Interview with employees of the MD, Prague, 20 February 2019.

¹⁹⁶ Interview with employees of the MI, Prague, 18 February 2019.

implementation at the European level by interior ministries shows that these ministries are more rigid, limiting their work to executing orders, while generating no initiatives themselves¹⁹⁷. Furthermore, compared to NATO's defence ministries, there is no pressure from NATO¹⁹⁸ on Ministries of the Interior. Neither there is any encouragement from NATO when it comes to cooperation with civil society and academia. Such cooperation would, however, demonstrate that even security actors, limited as they are by classified information, can in reality apply openness and a participatory approach.

Concerning the current NAP, this study's interviewees objected to its proclamatory goals for being impossible to achieve, leading to a general consensus among them concerning the need to simplify and concretize the next NAP¹⁹⁹. Indeed, some of the MI's tasks are very ambitious and broad, such as Task number 22: Take into account the specific needs of women and girls in setting national priorities and strategies for countering terrorism. On the other hand, the NAP Reports include several vague sentences on the implementation of this task, suggesting no progress has been achieved in this area. The Reports indicate that it is apparent that the MI's input was compiled by several people, some having more gender sensitivity than others. Some MI-sourced sections of these Reports are thus rather thorough, while others are gender-blind or demonstrate a lack of gender equality understanding.

On one hand, in comparison to the MFA, the MI provides much more detailed information on Czech development cooperation²⁰⁰ projects, even though the text is still descriptive and victimizing. In other cases, however, the MI appears to misunderstand Task number 4, concerning informing the public about the study opportunities for women and girls without favouring either men or women. Although this task obviously attempts a gender-sensitive promotion by addressing equally the needs of both women and men, the MI responded in the NAP Report with the statement that favouring women is not possible due to anti-discrimination legislature²⁰¹.

It is apparent from the MI's inputs for the NAP Reports and from this study's interviews that the second NAP should be more specific, realistic and serve as a practical tool. The Reports map the MI's NAP implementation, even though much more internal research would be needed for the MI to provide a solid foundation for the next NAP's formulation.

Department of Gender Equality at the Office of the Government

The role of the Department of Gender Equality in the NAP's implementation is limited to two tasks in the NAP's area number 7: Institutional support of gender equality in relation to the WPS agenda. Task number 23 outlines the monitoring role of the Department of Gender Equality and Task number 25

¹⁹⁷ Telephone interview with employee of the MFA, 10 April 2019.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Interview with employees of the MI, Prague, 18 February 2019.

²⁰⁰ Zpráva k Akčnímu plánu České republiky k implementaci rezoluce Rady bezpečnosti OSN č. 1325 (2000), o ženách, míru a bezpečnosti a souvisejících rezolucí na léta 2017-2020 za rok 2018, 2019, p. 34.

²⁰¹ Zpráva k Akčnímu plánu České republiky k implementaci rezoluce Rady bezpečnosti OSN č. 1325 (2000), o ženách, míru a bezpečnosti a souvisejících rezolucí na léta 2017-2020 za rok 2018, 2019, 15.

concerns the collection of statistics. Based on the last two years of implementation experience, some clear suggestions can be made for strengthening the role of the Department of Gender Equality as the national gender equality coordinator.

The NAP monitoring role belongs to the Council for Equality of Women and Men, possessing the voting right to agree on the NAP Reports before they are passed to the government. The 2017 Report was introduced at the meeting of the Council for Equality of Women and Men on 15 May 2018. During the short discussion that followed, two Council members, both from civil society, made several relevant remarks suggesting some parts of the Report are slightly vague, while there is no apparent gender impact traceable to some of the listed projects²⁰². Questions were also raised about the involvement of civil society, the work of the MFA on conflict prevention and resolution, and the support of peace initiatives in the Czech Republic and abroad²⁰³. While confirming the importance of civil society's involvement, the monitoring mechanism vested in the Council is still rather insufficient, as it is limited to providing a few comments and approving the Report without reservations.

The monitoring framework could certainly be strengthened through greater participation of all relevant actors ranging from government, to civil society and academia specializing on gender and external relations. The current informal participatory Working Group on Gender Equality in External Relations for the preparation of the Government Gender Equality Strategy could provide such space, should it have the opportunity to continue as an institutionalized working group or, preferably, upgraded as a Committee for International Gender Equality Agenda under the Council. Such a Committee could engage in processing the outputs of the MFA-coordinated WPS Working Group after revising the WPS Working Group concept itself. The original idea was to have the WPS WG under the Council, as assigned in the NAP's Task number 23. However, the last two years have shown that the WPS Working Group cannot be expected to work differently unless it takes on the formal procedures adopted by other bodies under the Council, be it under the MFA or under the Council. Any of these steps would, however, require more human resources from the Department of Gender Equality and the MFA.

Concerning the second NAP, there are many domestic issues with international overlap awaiting attention by the Department of Gender Equality. During 2018, the Department was preoccupied with preparations for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention²⁰⁴, generating an anti-gender mood in the Czech Republic. Although this international treaty has been discussed largely in the context of domestic issues, there is a clear interconnectedness between its internal and external dimensions, including the WPS agenda. The ratification of the Istanbul Convention is essential for securing women's rights at home, and therefore women's rights promotion abroad, including the area of gender-based violence. As recently emphasized by Minister Petříček in relation to the Czech Republic's UN Council on Human Rights membership, in order to have a trustworthy foreign policy on human rights, it is important to

²⁰² Úřad vlády ČR. Záznam z jednání Rady vlády pro rovnost žen a mužů konaného dne 15. května 2018. Available at https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/cinnost_rady/ZAPIS_Rada_2018_05_15.pd

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

monitor their status also at home²⁰⁵. Similarly, it is rather problematic to talk about gender equality with partner governments, if we have gender equality problems at home²⁰⁶.

Emerging Issues for Implementation

The Department of Gender Equality at the Office of the Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Trade and Industry

Some themes of the WPS agenda are not limited to one but to several government actors. This is the case with the granting of licences for arms exports, an important emerging area which is not explicitly mentioned in the first Czech NAP. This text therefore elaborates on this topic as one of the emerging domestic issues which deserve attention in the second NAP (see also the part “Emerging areas of concern” in the recommendations).

With the tendencies to domesticate²⁰⁷ NAPs, especially among European states, the question of granting of licences for arms exports has come to be rather high on the WPS agenda. The impact of conventional arms on gender-based violence has been a serious concern for women’s rights advocates, reflected by the international community in the CEDAW General Recommendation 30 (2013), the UNSCR 2106 (2013), UNSCR 2467 (2019) and the Arms Trade Treaty (2013), and by the EU in the Common Position on Arms Exports (2008). Based on the Arms Trade Treaty’s article 7, the Czech Republic is legally obliged to assess the potential of arms exports to undermine peace and security or violate human rights, taking into account the risk of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children²⁰⁸.

Within the current licensing process, decisions on granting or not granting a licence for arms exportation are taken by the Ministry of Industry and Trade after receiving binding opinions from the MFA, the MI and the MD. The MFA assesses the likely impact of arms exports according to a number of criteria, including with respect for human rights, but the evaluation of individual arms export applications is confidential and no information is publicly available on these exports and any human rights or gender-impact assessments²⁰⁹. The Czech Republic is required, through the Arms Trade Treaty, to take measures ensuring that all authorizations for the export of conventional arms are detailed and issued prior to the export²¹⁰. However, under the current system, the MFA provides no

²⁰⁵ Petříček T. 2019. “Pro důvěryhodnou zahraniční politiku lidských práv je důležité sledovat jejich stav i u nás. S veřejnou ochránkyní práv Annou Šabatovou jsme mluvili i o možné spolupráci v rámci probíhajícího členství ČR v Radě #OSN pro lidská práva a předsednictví Výboru lidské dimenze #OBSE [Tweet]”. 9. 4. 2019. <https://twitter.com/TPetricek/status/1115599210693312515>

²⁰⁶ Interview with MFA employee, Prague, 18 January 2019.

²⁰⁷ See LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security. 2017. *UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security: Consultation Response*, p. 6.

²⁰⁸ For the full text see <https://thearmstradetreaty.org/treaty-text.html>

²⁰⁹ Telephone interview with NGO representative, 14 February 2019.

²¹⁰ For the full text see <https://thearmstradetreaty.org/treaty-text.html>

justification of individual arms exports decisions; the only information available to the public and to the parliament is the annual report, which lacks transparency and detail ²¹¹.

The commitments for greater transparency and detailed reporting on arms exports can be included in the second Czech NAP, particularly reporting overlapping with the CEDAW monitoring reports. As the principal monitoring mechanism of State compliance with the CEDAW Convention, State reporting to the CEDAW Committee is critical to reinforcing CEDAW's General Recommendation 30 and the WPS resolutions frameworks²¹². The Department of Gender Equality could productively request the MFA to establish a mechanism for addressing the gender impact of arms exports²¹³ and include it as part of CEDAW reporting.

Implementation by Other Stakeholders

Civil Society and Academia

Civil society and academia have been engaged in the WPS agenda through their participation in the WPS Working Group. Nonetheless due to the local circumstances mentioned earlier, in particular the lacking feminist IR scholarship, the exclusively domestic focus of gender CSOs and the limited gender focus of development CSOs, the participation has been restricted to only a few individuals. With the top-down approach to the NAP, civil society has had little ownership of the agenda, although it is not entirely absent from it. Some clear effort has been made on the side of the MFA to develop links with civil society and academia, in particular through the joint events such as the workshop with Sweden in 2018 or the side event at the UN Commission on the Status of Women in 2018. Academic representatives have provided their expertise to the MFA when commenting on the EU Strategic Approach to WPS and the EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2019-2024 throughout 2018 and 2019. Even this paper is another example of the MFA's cooperation with academia.

Nonetheless, more cooperation is needed especially in the area of development cooperation. The Gender Working Group of FoRS could become one of the key partners, as it has great interest in these issues, although it has encountered limitations such as limited capacities and fluctuation of staff²¹⁴. It is also clear that some more effort has to come paradoxically from top-down. As CSOs have limited capacities and their activities are shaped through grant system, more development cooperation and

²¹¹ See Eberle, J. 2019. *České zbrojní exporty potřebují silnější demokratickou kontrolu a vyšší transparentnost*. Policy Brief. ÚMV. Available at http://www.dokumenty-iir.cz/Publikace/PB/2019/Policy_Brief_Eberle_leden19.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1Zslh8G4N6oM0CKVVGxlbPNVjrqn1KXwSYe0S4JpezDOmGvS-p5SdgZXU

²¹² Swaine, A. and C. O'Rourke. 2015. *Guidebook on CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30 and the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security*, UN Women, 2015, 22. Available at <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/8/guidebook-cedawgeneralrecommendation30-womenpeacesecurity>

²¹³ Guidelines for assessing the risk of gender-based violence in relation to arms exports are, for instance, available at: <https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/preventing-gbv.pdf>

²¹⁴ Information received during the meeting of the FoRS Gender Working Group, 5 April 2019.

transition promotion grants targeting specifically gender equality and women's empowerment issues would help to increase their engagement in these issues²¹⁵. Currently, development CSOs view the MFA's requirements on gender as a cross-cutting issue as insufficient²¹⁶, and even tokenistic, especially when compared to the much higher standards of more advanced international donors²¹⁷. According to development CSOs, the Czech Development Agency should lead by example and show that gender equality and women's empowerment is not only a formality requiring incorporation throughout project phases, but it should be part of the logical framework design as one of the key elements²¹⁸.

With the change of the global landscape and increasing emphasis on domesticating NAPs, the Czech WPS agenda would also benefit from the expertise of gender CSOs, especially as the domestic and external part of the agenda are closely interlinked. At the time of global anti-gender movements, strengthened through social media and disinformation campaigns, there is also a continuous need for awareness raising, as has been demonstrated on the case of the planned ratification of the Istanbul Convention by the Czech government.

²¹⁵ Telephone interview with NGO representative, 14 February 2019.

²¹⁶ Vochovcová, L. 2018.

²¹⁷ Interview with NGO representative, Prague, 7 March 2019.

²¹⁸ Vochovcová, L. 2018, 48.

Considerations for the Second Czech NAP: from Symbolic Commitment to Real Progress

The experience with the first Czech NAP from the drafting process to implementation and monitoring provides some important considerations for the second Czech NAP, likely to be prepared in 2020. This assessment indicates some progress and many challenges, especially in terms of measurable progress. While the first NAP has undeniably served as a symbolic breakthrough, the second NAP's role will be to move from declaration to real actions leading to positive changes on the ground. To further advance the WPS agenda, the second Czech NAP should utilize the first NAP's lessons, while reflecting the global development of the WPS framework, foreign practices, and the extensive good practice research now available in this field.

On the positive side, there has been self-reflection on the first NAP among some government officials and there is, so far, political support for the second NAP, along with a group of committed individuals to pursue this agenda further. In view of the many government officials interviewed as part of this study, the second NAP should be simpler, realistic, modest, concrete, measurable and less declaratory²¹⁹. Indeed some of those contributing to this paper's analysis admit that the current NAP is a declaratory summary of what is already happening rather than an action plan and in this mode, the second NAP should be significantly different to the first one²²⁰.

From the global WPS perspective, there is much to consider from the emerging issues tackled by the follow-up resolutions, such as counter-terrorism, an emphasis on economic empowerment, and aligning the NAP to reflect EU commitments or UN indicators. The broad empirical research on the WPS agenda places emphasis on its many dimensions, from the role of language and images and the NAP's framing of security, to the need to domesticate NAPs or increase the focus on participation and long-term prevention. The change of global political scenery and anti-gender tendencies also demonstrates that the WPS agenda cannot be taken for granted, but instead requires continuous efforts.

The purpose of the following recommendations is to provide starting points for the discussion on the second Czech NAP. The proposals are based on the assessment of the current Czech NAP, as well as academic findings, and a review of foreign practices and policy recommendations for advancing the WPS agenda.

²¹⁹ Interview with employees of the MI, Prague, 18 February 2019; Interviews with employees of the MD, Prague, 20 February 2019; Interview with employees of the Office of the Government, 18 January 2019; Telephone interview with employee of the MFA, 10 April 2019.

²²⁰ Interview with employees of the Office of the Government, 18 January 2019.

1. General recommendations for the second NAP

Make the NAP practical, realistic and impact-oriented

- Build the NAP on a theory of change that can track progress. See the Dutch and UK NAPs^{221 222}.
- Create a shorter and more compact document, with fewer measurable and attainable goals.
- Focus on impact on the ground, thus avoiding unrealistic and immeasurable tasks.
- Include all the essentials of a NAP such as a clear time frame, accountability mechanism, a budget, together with risks, assumptions and risk mitigation measures.

Strengthen commitments to monitoring and evaluation

- Continue with annual monitoring reports. Strengthen the monitoring mechanism by preparing a template for reporting, requiring the assessment of activities against the objectives they are designed to achieve. Such a template can help to minimize the often vague descriptive texts of activities in the existing NAP Reports.
- Include a mid-term review of the NAP.
- Schedule an independent overall evaluation of the NAP for its final year and include this in the NAP's budget. See for example, the external assessment of Finland's NAP 2012 – 2016²²³.

Use participatory approaches and institutionalize consultations

- Make the drafting participatory from the start, engaging representatives from ministries and agencies, together with, importantly, civil society and academia, producing broad-based NAP ownership. The benefits of inclusive processes are well known, exemplified by the UNSCR 1325 as a bottom up community-based initiative, with the primary aim to improve the daily lives of conflict-affected societies.
- Ensure that consultations are inclusive using a participatory Working Group with fair representation of government, civil society and academia, as with the Working Groups used for the preparation of the Government Gender Equality Strategy for 2021 – 2027. The Working Group can serve as an effective single platform for collective consultation. The Working Group will enable the process to institutionalize the consultations, which is very important given that this mechanism was missing during the first NAP's drafting, leading to civil society's exclusion.
- Involve existing civil society platforms in the Working Group, among them those with gender expertise (Czech Women's Lobby), with field experience (FoRS), or CSOs working with refugees, migrants or asylum seekers, both abroad and domestically. Engaging civil society from the start of the drafting process provides the needed expertise, knowledge of the conflict-affected areas as well as links to the local CSOs, which should be also part of the consultations.

²²¹ The Netherlands National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2016-2019. Available at https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/Dutch_NAP_2016-2019.pdf

²²² The UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2018-2022. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/677586/FCO1215-NAP-Women-Peace-Security-ONLINE_V2.pdf

²²³ The Institute for Inclusive Security. 2016. *Assessment of Finland's National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 "Women, Peace, and Security" 2012-2016*. Available at <http://www.1325.fi/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/FINAL-Finland-NAP-2-Assessment-Report.pdf>

- Consult the public with a draft by placing it on the website. The recent detailed document *Public Consultation Paper for Ireland's Third National Action Plan Women, Peace and Security* can serve as a model for this process²²⁴.

Allocate budget for NAP implementation

- Dedicate at least 15 % of the Czech development cooperation budget to WPS, as recommended by the Global Study which concludes that the lack of progress in implementation globally is the result of insufficient funding for WPS²²⁵.
- Support specific projects on women's empowerment and gender equality, particularly projects focusing on women's economic empowerment, participation and long-term conflict prevention by addressing the root causes of conflict, including socioeconomic inequalities.
- Support WPS projects including, but not limited to, small-scale local projects that can be very productive for local women's rights organizations seeking to start with smaller grants or struggling to access larger grants²²⁶.

Apply a human rights-based approach

- Build the NAP using a human rights-based approach, based on women's right to participate in peacebuilding, and to enjoy their political, economic and social rights. Avoid instrumentalizing the agenda by using the NAP as a tool to achieve political ends or to fulfil UN or EU commitments in a tokenistic way.
- Avoid instrumentalizing the agenda for security purposes, particularly by subordinating women's rights to security issues in the area of countering terrorism and violent extremism (CVE). The WPS agenda should not be used as a vehicle for promoting CVE objectives; rather, the principles of WPS should be applied as a check on CVE efforts, ensuring that they are gender-sensitive and compliant with human rights standards²²⁷.

Revise the language and imagery

- Replace the wording "equality of women and men" with the term "gender equality" to reflect the rationale underpinning the WPS agenda.
- Include a definition of terms section at the end of the NAP. Besides basic terminology such as gender, gender roles, and gender analysis, add other internationally recognized terms related to WPS such as LGBTQI+, children born from war, sexual and reproductive health rights, etc. (see for example, Canada's NAP 2017-22).

²²⁴ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. 2018. *Public Consultation Paper For Ireland's Third National Action Plan Women, Peace and Security: Open Invitation for Submissions*. Available at <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/ourrolepolicies/peaceandsecurity/Third-National-Action-Plan-Consultation-Document.pdf>

²²⁵ Coomaraswamy, Radhika et al. 2015. *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, New York: UN Women, p. 386.

²²⁶ Telephone interview with employee of MFA, 10 April 2019.

²²⁷ LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security. 2017. *UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security: Consultation Response*, p. 7.

- Recognize in the NAP that women are not a uniformed group but their gender will intersect with other identities such as race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and age, among many others, exacerbating their inequalities which can, in turn, limit their participation in peacebuilding.
- Acknowledge in the NAP that gender is not only about women and highlight the need to focus on men and boys as well, and the role of masculinities in relation to conflict. Acknowledge the presence of women combatants and those actively engaged in conflict as auxiliary personnel or in actively supporting the conflicts' parties.
- Make a careful choice of language and images for the NAP and its reports. Avoid using victimizing language and imagery such as associating women with children and vulnerability and as a group, in need of protection. Instead, use the language and imagery of women as agents, emphasizing their empowerment and participation across all of the WPS areas.
- Avoid using language and images that militarize the agenda or using neo-colonial discourse²²⁸, such as, for example, terms like helping/saving the insecure world or lessons from best instead of good practices²²⁹.

Interconnect the WPS agenda with other national and international commitments

- Align the WPS policy with other international and national frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Government Strategy for Gender Equality, EU and NATO WPS action plans, UN indicators and other domestic and international commitments.
- Mainstream gender and WPS perspectives in all relevant government materials, such as guidelines for the deployment of Czech specialists abroad, and the MEDEVAC programme.

2. Institutional support

Ensure continuity within each ministry

- Develop a mechanism ensuring continuity of the WPS agenda at the MFA as the lead ministry by, for example, creating a WPS agenda website including contacts, the agenda's overview and history, the WPS Working Groups' outputs, events, calls for proposals, etc. Such a mechanism can also demonstrate openness and provide visibility, as well as inspiration for new staff and the public.
- Ensure continuity within each ministry through, for instance, work plans that can be passed on in case of staff changeover. Since the current level of commitment varies and the agenda is driven primarily by several committed individuals, plans that are systematically handed over to new appointees will ensure the agenda will continue with appointment of new staff. While staff rotation is a distinctive feature of the MFA's work, high staff mobility is also observable among the MI's staff overseeing the WPS agenda.

²²⁸ See also the discussion on the Orientalistic approach of the Czech development cooperation in Vochovcová, p. 15.

²²⁹ See Shepherd, L. 2016.

Strengthen institutional capacity

- Ensure a sufficient and continuous human capacity for the systematized positions responsible for the WPS agenda and gender mainstreaming in individual MFA Departments and Units, the Czech Development Agency, and MI and MD Departments and Units.

Institutionalize the WPS Working Group

- Institutionalize the WPS Working Group in a similar way to the bodies under the Government Council for Equality of Women and Men. The recommendation is to:
 - Define the Terms of Reference for the Working Group and set annual plans.
 - Make publically available full minutes from the meetings, lists of members, contact person etc.
 - Select a Deputy Chair of the Working Group from civil society or academia.
- Make the WPS Working Group a “working” group in reality by engaging its members in progressing particular aspects of the WPS agenda. One of the tasks the group could also engage in, is providing comments to the NAP’s draft implementation report prior to the Council’s approval, using the same principle applied to other policy formulation work, which are discussed or prepared by Committees or Working Groups and only then passed to the Council.

Create a Committee for International Gender Equality Agenda

- Strengthen the institutional framework for the support of gender equality internationally including through the cross-cutting WPS agenda by:
 - Creating a Committee for International Gender Equality Agenda under the Council for Equality of Women and Men.
 - Strengthening capacities in the Department of Gender Equality for this purpose.
 - Engaging the Committee in mainstreaming the cross-cutting issues of WPS with regards to financial instruments and government policies including the forthcoming government strategy on gender equality 2021-2027.
 - Ensuring equal representation of all relevant actors from government, civil society and academia.
 - Utilizing the Committee for strengthening the monitoring of the WPS agenda in cooperation with the Council.

Become outspoken about WPS

- Speak up for the WPS agenda at every occasion and at the highest political and middle management levels, both domestically and internationally. The commitment to the second NAP or its launching can be a perfect opportunity for Ministers and other government representatives to support the WPS agenda.

Develop guidelines for WPS implementation

- Develop follow-up guidelines for foreign missions, Czech Development Agency staff and staff of the MFA and other ministries to assist with implementing the second NAP, drawing on Norway's example²³⁰.
- The guidelines can serve as a learning manual on implementing policy and refining practice. It can prepare the staff at home and abroad to put into action various aspects of WPS, while also providing space for forming common Czech Republic policy positions.

3. Domestic focus

Apply the WPS framework domestically in all relevant areas

- Focus domestically on issues with international overlap such as, for example, insecurity experienced by asylum seekers, migrants and refugees, and the prevention of sexual abuse by peacekeepers and development workers.
- Avoid repeating verbatim measures found in other policy documents such as work-life balance.

Ensure consistency in human rights support domestically and abroad

- Acknowledge the interconnectedness of domestic and foreign policy issues by strengthening internally focused legislature and policies. In this regard, it is very important to ratify the Istanbul Convention and continue engaging in the debate about its importance at home and abroad, including in conflict-affected areas.
- Aim to "lead by example", ensuring consistency in the promotion of human rights and women's rights, both domestically and in external relations. Condemn anti-gender tendencies domestically, throughout the EU and regionally, as well as globally.

Strengthen domestic knowledge on WPS

- Focus on educational activities to increase WPS knowledge and skills, which are still at low levels in the Czech Republic, and extend this to all levels, including government, academia and civil society.
- Review and revise the current NAP's educational and training activities, making them more WPS specific. The WPS agenda should become integral and a regular part of Ministries' trainings at all levels.

Strengthen research on WPS

- Support academic research on WPS in the context of Czech foreign policy and in WPS developments internationally. Academic research on WPS should inform policy, currently rare in the Czech Republic.

²³⁰ Norwegian Ministries, *Guidelines to the Foreign Service's Work on Women, Peace and Security, 2019 – 2022*. Available at: https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/departementene/ud/dokumenter/planer/wps_guidelines2019.pdf

- Thematically, support research focusing on particular WPS pillars, or specific aspects such as mixed teams or gender-related early warning mechanisms. No Czech-focused research is available on emerging issues such as gender and terrorism, or arms trade and gender-based violence. One example of this can be seen from the long list of publications in Norway's 2018 monitoring report, including articles, policy papers, books, manuals, and films.²³¹ An emphasis on involving academia is also apparent from the first Polish NAP 2018 - 2021²³².
- Announce specific calls to support field research undertaken by civil society organizations working in conflict-affected areas. Domestic experience in other areas such as gender-based violence demonstrates that collaboration with these actors is vital for research-informed policy.

4. Recommendations to WPS Actors

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Addressing WPS in diplomacy

- Provide diplomatic staff at all levels with training on WPS, contextualized into the countries of their postings. Include training on WPS for new staff as well.
- Promote women ambassadors in countries affected by conflict, maintain a register of these countries for the NAP and provide statistics for NAP reporting. While it is unlikely that female diplomats with small children could go to unstable regions, there are many post-conflict states where the WPS agenda strongly resonates, such as Georgia and the Balkan countries.
- Make the WPS agenda a priority issue during the annual meetings of ambassadors, economic diplomats and development diplomats.
- Strengthen the role of foreign missions abroad by providing them with instruction on the WPS agenda every year. These can include instructions on working with local NGOs, lobbying on CEDAW, and reporting on women's rights as part of human rights reports. This study therefore recommends:
 - Including a gender analysis of conflict in reports on human rights in all foreign missions in conflict-affected areas.
 - Developing a template for gender analysis with key issues to report on, such as early warning mechanisms, gender-based and sexual violence.
 - Utilizing the findings of gender analysis as a basis for high-level visits, development and humanitarian project planning and implementation, country programming, and questionnaires such as that informing the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council on women and peace and security.

²³¹ Implementing Norway's National Action Plan 2015-2018, Women, Peace and Security. Annual Report 2018, Available at

https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/departementene/ud/dokumenter/rapporter/wps_report2018.pdf

²³² Polish National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2018 – 2021. Available at

<https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/Polish%20NAP%20WPS%202018-2021.pdf>

- Integrate the WPS perspective as a cross-cutting theme in multilateral and bilateral relations and make it part of the Czech foreign policy's everyday agenda, from planning high level visits, to various candidatures and negotiations at, among others, the UN, EU, and OSCE.
 - Pay special attention to the promotion of women's sexual and reproductive rights, including in conflict-affected contexts.
 - Denounce anti-gender discourse and repressive policies and practices violating women's rights.
- Promote gender-balanced representation in decision-making structures in regional and global governance institutions such as the EU, OSCE, and NATO, specifically in relation to WPS. This can include, for example, lobbying for increasing the proportion of women in leadership positions such as the Chief Monitor of OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine.
- Promote women as mediators and urge their inclusion in peace processes at multilateral levels (e.g. EU meetings concerning Syria) or in bilateral meetings (e.g. state visits to Ukraine).

Development cooperation, Humanitarian aid and Transition Promotion Program

- Define the geographic focus of the NAP by, as with development cooperation, prioritising particular countries. Engage foreign missions in priority countries in reporting on women's rights and gender equality and the overall implementation of the WPS agenda. The role of focus countries in the Swedish NAP 2016-2020²³³ or the annual report on the UK NAP²³⁴ provide coherent examples of information profiling individual focal countries.
- Strengthen the WPS agenda and gender equality as a cross-cutting theme as well as specific themes in policies:
 - Include the WPS agenda throughout the Development Cooperation Strategy 2018-2030 during its mid-term review, during its revision, or in a new drafting of the Czech Republic's Human rights and transition promotion policy concept document.
 - Emphasize in these policies women's agency, economic empowerment and urgent issues such as women's sexual and reproductive rights.
- Strengthen the WPS agenda and gender as a cross-cutting theme in programming, implementation and evaluation, by:
 - Basing new country programmes on a local gender analysis and inclusive civil society consultations. Use the analysis finding in the formulation of subsequent documents.
 - Ensure the entire process of development cooperation, humanitarian aid and transformation cooperation is informed and shaped by gender analyses. Require a gender analysis at each stage from problem identification, to planning, implementation,

²³³ Sweden's National Action Plan for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security 2016-2020. Available at <https://www.government.se/contentassets/8ae23198463f49269e25a14d4d14b9bc/senast-versionen/swedens-national-action-plan-for-the-implementation-of-the-united-nations-security-council-resolutions-on-women-peace-and-security-2016-2020>

²³⁴ The UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2018-2022: Annual Report to Parliament 2018. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/765743/UK_National_Action_Plan_on_Women_Peace_and_Security_2018_-2022_annual_report_to_Parliament_2018.pdf

monitoring and evaluation. Include the requirement of gender analysis in calls for proposals and in the points system to assess these.

- Ensure all projects have both gender segregated data and qualitative data corresponding with the background information of the OECD DAC Gender Marker.
- Demand proper elaborated assessments of gender impact in project evaluations. Take into account proven gender expertise when selecting evaluators. Ensure that the reference group established for each evaluation that reviews the draft reports²³⁵ includes a gender expert.
- Dedicate 15 % of the development cooperation budget to projects with gender equality and women's empowerment as their primary objective, including those in conflict-affected contexts. Reflect on the global research and change of landscape in calls for proposals by accentuating women's economic empowerment, their roles in conflict prevention, and women's sexual and reproductive rights.
 - Respond to the global backlash on women's sexual and reproductive rights by dedicating special funding to this area.

The Ministry of Defence

- Define a long-term strategy for the Czech Republic's participation in UN missions and mainstream the WPS perspective throughout the strategy.
- Map the existing training and education on gender equality and on the WPS agenda, and develop a plan on how to advance the WPS training in the long-term, making it part of training for military and civilian personnel.
- Revise the existing mechanism for reporting on abuse and harassment, and conduct internal research on the subject.
- Develop mechanisms for addressing sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers in line with the UN Secretary General's voluntary compact.
- Elaborate in the second NAP on areas covered by the NATO/EAPC Policy and Action Plan 2018 that are relevant for the national context, from systematic integration of gender perspectives into planning and participation in operations, training and other exercises, the assessment of participation in military missions, and more specific issues such as cyber security²³⁶.

Ministry of Interior

- Conduct internal analysis of all the areas covered by the current NAP to provide a solid foundation for the second NAP.

²³⁵ OECD. 2019. Czech Republic Mid-term Review, 16 July.

²³⁶ NATO/EAPC Policy and Action Plan, 2018. Available at https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_09/20180920_180920-WPS-Action-Plan-2018.pdf

- Map the existing training and education on gender and WPS in the ministry and relevant agencies, and develop a plan on how to advance WPS training in the long-term.
- Ensure continuity of the WPS agenda by developing work plans on WPS to be systematically passed on, in case of personnel changes.
- Ensure the WPS perspective is mainstreamed across the relevant programmes and policies such as MEDEVAC, or in guidelines for deployment of Czech civilian specialists.
- Collect global good practices on the engagement of interior ministries in the WPS agenda through cooperation with other nations or international organizations and attend relevant international forums for this purpose.

Other actors

- This study recommends to the civil society, especially gender CSOs and development CSOs, that they should actively engage in advocacy of the Czech WPS agenda - from domestic issues such as migration and arms exports to outwards-facing issues such as development cooperation in conflict-affected settings. It is also crucial to involve in the process women's groups in conflict-affected areas with knowledge of local everyday realities.
- Participation in the WPS Working Group can provide an important platform for this purpose, as can international networks active in this field.
- CSOs should demand higher gender standards from the governments actors, promote WPS as part of donor funding, and actively work with the WPS normative framework in field projects or shadow reporting.
- This study recommends to academia that it should engage in research on various WPS themes and contribute to the Czech WPS agenda with academic knowledge (see also "Strengthen research on WPS").

5. Emerging areas of concern

Prevention

- Strengthen long-term conflict prevention by making it one of the key areas of the NAP, following the example of the Swedish NAP. Focus on addressing the root causes of conflict, including social, economic, and environmental insecurities, ensuring gender analyses are applied in all policies and programming.

WPS and counter-terrorism, violent extremism, human trafficking

- Analyse the newly emerging areas of the WPS framework in the Czech context for the purpose of effectively addressing these in the second NAP. For more details on the emerging issues, see Norway's NAP 2019-2022.
- Reflect on the concerns that the WPS agenda could be instrumentalized by efforts in countering terrorism and violent extremism in ways that undermine women's rights and the transformative

potential of WPS, keeping in mind that the WPS agenda should be implemented as a human rights agenda²³⁷.

Gender impact of arms exports

- In reference to the CEDAW GR 30, the Department of Gender Equality should include the question of arms exports and its impact on gender-based violence in CEDAW monitoring. This study recommends that the MFA establishes a mechanism including a gender impact assessment of arms exports²³⁸ leading to detailed reporting for the CEDAW. The following questions are recommended for use as a checklist when undertaking CEDAW reporting²³⁹:
 - What measures have been taken by arms-exporting parties to ensure that these arms are not being used to commit or facilitate violations of women and children's human rights including gender-based violence?
 - What measures have been taken to implement the Arms Trade Treaty?
 - Detail efforts by States, through domestic and foreign policy, for the effective regulation of conventional and illicit arms, including small arms.

²³⁷ LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security. 2017. *UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security: Consultation Response*, p. 7.

²³⁸ Guidelines for assessing the risk of gender-based violence are, for instance, available at: <https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/preventing-gbv.pdf>

²³⁹ Swaine, A. and C. O'Rourke. 2015. *Guidebook on CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30 and the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security*, UN Women, 2015, 22. Available at <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/8/guidebook-cedawgeneralrecommendation30-womenpeacesecurity>