

WOMEN IN MULTILATERAL PEACE OPERATIONS IN 2021: WHAT IS THE STATE OF PLAY?

In the year 2000, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) stressed the importance of the full and equal participation of women in all efforts towards the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, including peace operations. Following the resolution, organizations and member states involved in multilateral peace operations affirmed their commitment to increasing women's participation in such activities. More than 20 years after its adoption, some progress has been achieved in improving women's representation in multilateral peace operations, but much remains to be done. While the UN and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) secretariats have launched gender parity strategies, establishing specific targets and deadlines for women's participation in their respective personnel, the European Union (EU) has affirmed its political commitment to increasing women's representation.

The objective of this overview is to support the efforts of multilateral organizations and their member states to increase the representation of women in peace operations. The data and descriptions aim to strengthen the dialogue and foster the debate on the future of the WPS agenda within the context of peace operations. They illustrate to what extent organizations deploying multilateral peace operations and their member states are making progress towards gender parity in them. Having a better perspective on the status quo of women's participation in peace operations contributes to identifying strategies that facilitate gender parity within this context. Finally, this overview enhances transparency and provides insights into recent trends and developments in peace operations.

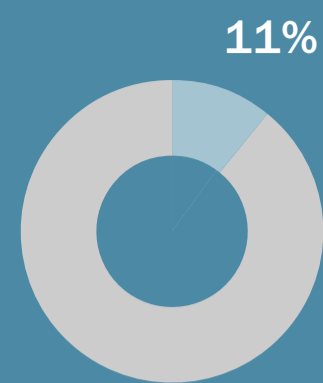
The overview presents data on aggregate personnel trends, annual snapshots of data on women's representation in leadership, and annual averages of women personnel in operations and in member state contributions. It looks at UN peace operations (peacekeeping operations and field-based special political missions), EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations, and OSCE field operations.

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

Following the commitment presented in UN Security Council Resolution 2242 in 2015 of doubling the number of women in uniformed components by 2020, the UN's 2018 Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy established the goal of reaching 25 per cent women among military experts and staff officers and 15 per cent among troops by 2028. In addition to the strategy, the Action for Peacekeeping Initiative, launched in 2018, recommitted to increasing the number of uniformed women. In UN peace operations, the proportion of women among military experts and staff officers has grown at a faster pace than the proportion of women among troops, with the latter still far from reaching the strategy's target.

Women in leadership

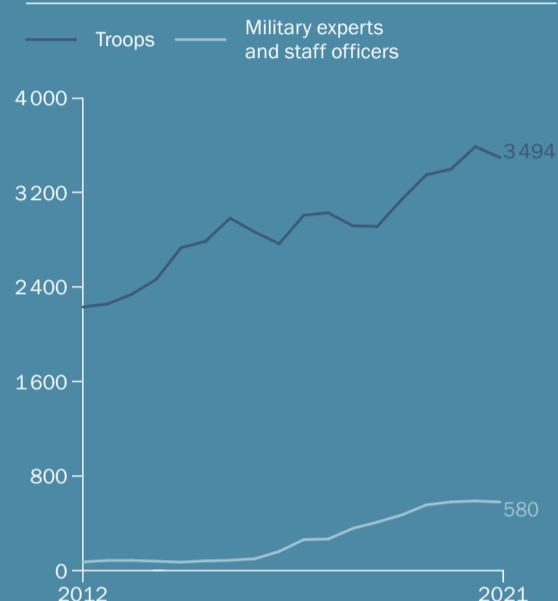
On 1 October 2021, 11 per cent (1 out of 9) of force commanders in UN peacekeeping operations were women.



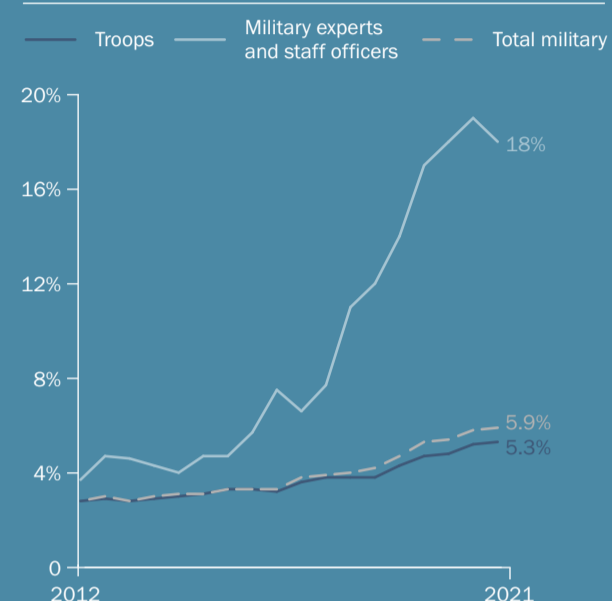
Women in UN military: Totals

In 2021, the number of women in the military personnel of UN peace operations declined for the first time since the launch of the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy. However, the proportion of women continued to increase in line with the trend of the past 10 years (2012–21), particularly following the strategy, and reached 5.9 per cent in June 2021. The figures follow similar patterns at the level of troops and the level of military experts and staff officers. The proportion of women military experts and staff officers has increased significantly since the strategy, except for in 2021 when it decreased one percentage point in comparison to December 2020. Overall, the numbers and proportions of women in the military personnel of UN peace operations show little difference compared to last year.

Number of women in the military personnel of UN peace operations, Dec. 2012–June 2021



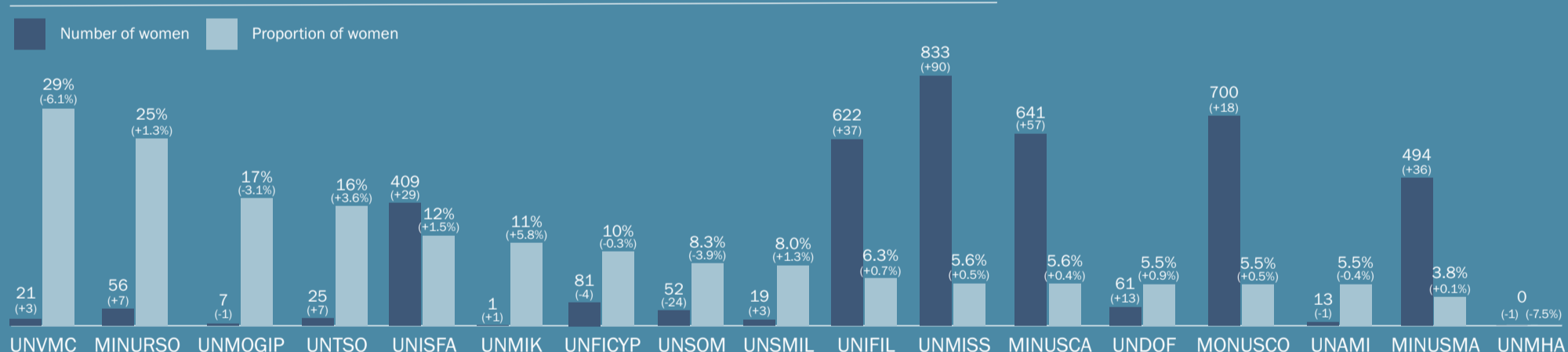
Proportion of women in the military personnel of UN peace operations, Dec. 2012–June 2021



Women in UN military: Operations

UN missions with relatively high proportions of women military personnel tend to be relatively small in terms of deployment. Among the 7 peace operations that deployed more than 1000 military personnel in 2021, only 2 (UNISFA and UNIFIL) had a proportion of women larger than 6 per cent. In most operations, however, this proportion has increased over the past year.

Number and proportion of women in the military personnel of UN peace operations, 2021 monthly averages

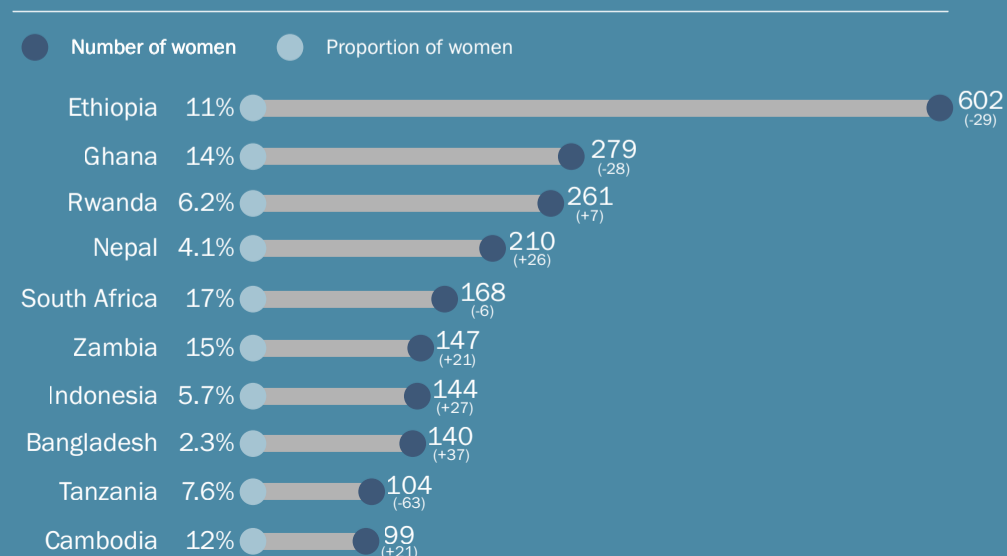


Notes: The 2021 annual average of women personnel per month was calculated based on the months from Jan. to July (when the data was last available). Values in parentheses indicate the variation in women personnel compared to the previous year.

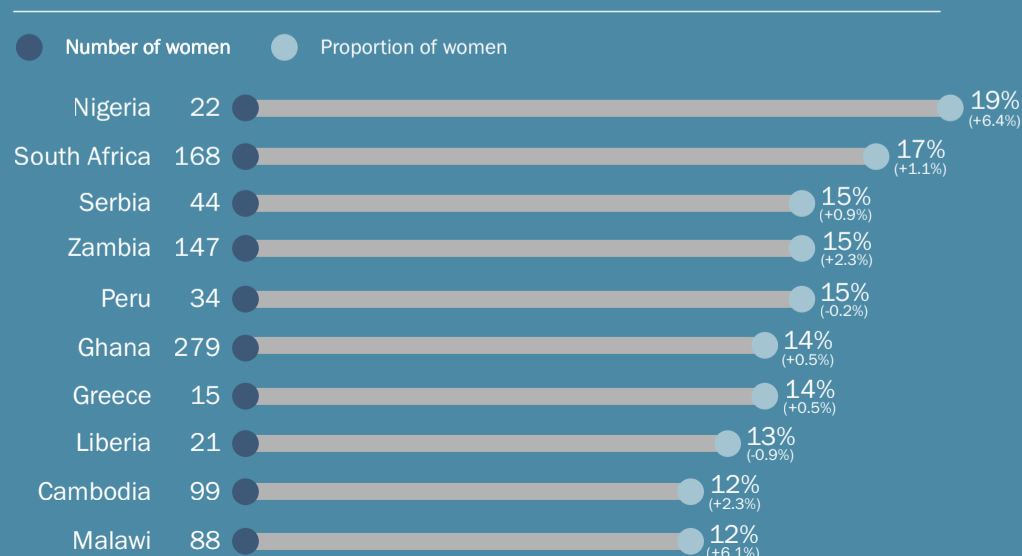
Women in UN military: Contributors

Six of the top 10 contributors by number of military personnel also feature in the top 10 contributors by number of women in the military personnel of UN peace operations. Four of the top 10 contributors by number of women are also among the top 10 contributors in terms of proportion. However, the list of main contributors by proportion of women is dominated by countries that deploy smaller numbers of personnel. Six of the top 10 contributors both by number and by proportion of women personnel are sub-Saharan African countries. Seven of the 10 countries that contributed with the highest proportion of women in the military personnel of UN peace operations in 2021 also ranked in the list of the top 10 contributors by proportion of women in 2020.

Top 10 contributors of women to the military personnel of UN peace operations, by highest number of women, 2021 monthly averages



Top 10 contributors of women to the military personnel of UN peace operations, by highest proportion of women, 2021 monthly averages



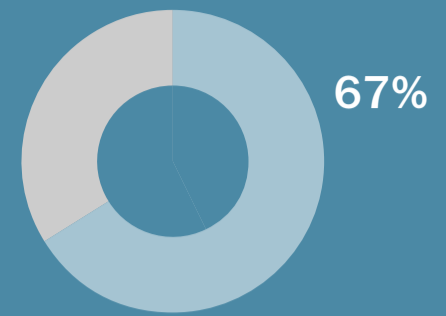
Notes: The 2021 annual average of women personnel per month was calculated based on the months from Jan. to July (when the data was last available). The average numbers of women personnel were rounded to the closest integer. Countries deploying fewer than 100 military personnel in total per month have not been included. Values in parentheses indicate the variation in women personnel compared to the previous year. Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, accessed Nov. 2021.

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

The 2018 UN Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy established the target of women representing 20 per cent of formed police units and 30 per cent of individual police officers by 2028. The Action for Peacekeeping Initiative, launched later the same year, reaffirmed the commitments of the UN and its member states. In 2021, the UN reached its first goal for women's participation, as the proportion of women among individual police officers reached 30 per cent. The proportion of women in formed police units also increased in comparison to 2020, reaching 16 per cent.

Women in leadership

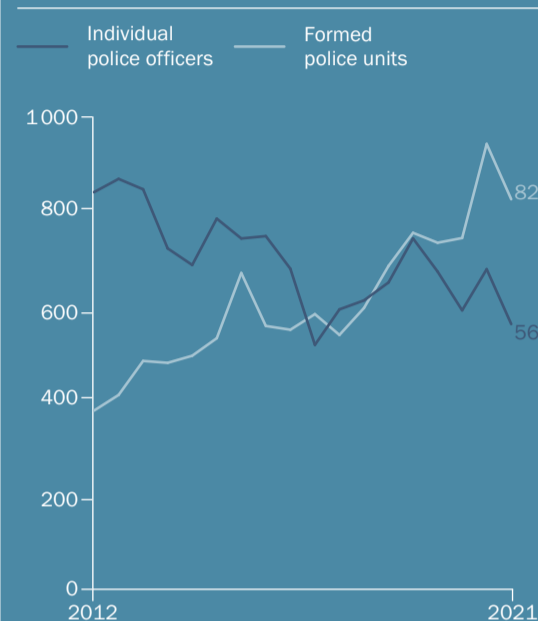
On 1 October 2021, 67 per cent (4 out of 6) of all chief police officers (4 police commissioners and 2 senior police advisers) were women. Half of them held the position of police commissioner and half that of senior police adviser.



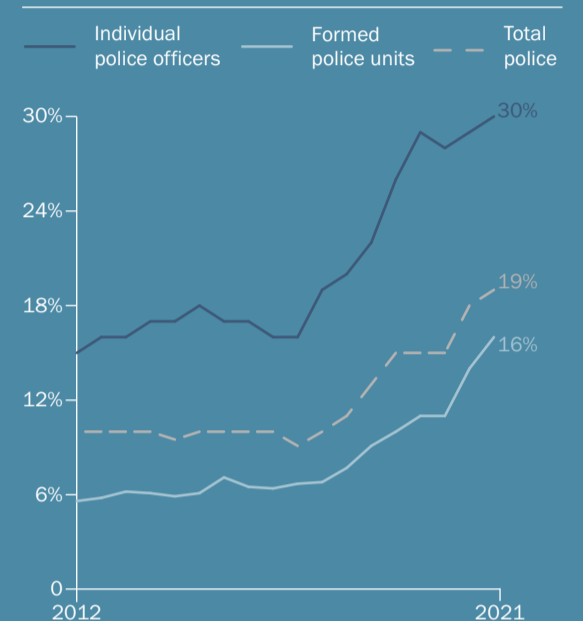
Women in UN police: Totals

Despite a decrease in the number of women in the police personnel of UN peace operations, the proportion of women police personnel has increased, reaching 19 per cent in June 2021. Since the launch of the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy, the participation of women in this category of personnel has increased by 8 percentage points. In 2021, the proportion of women individual police officers in UN peace operations reached the strategy's goal of 30 per cent. Following an increase of 5 percentage points compared to last year, the proportion of women in formed police units reached 16 per cent in June 2021 and is closer to achieving the strategy's target of 20 per cent.

Number of women in the police personnel of UN peace operations, Dec. 2012–June 2021



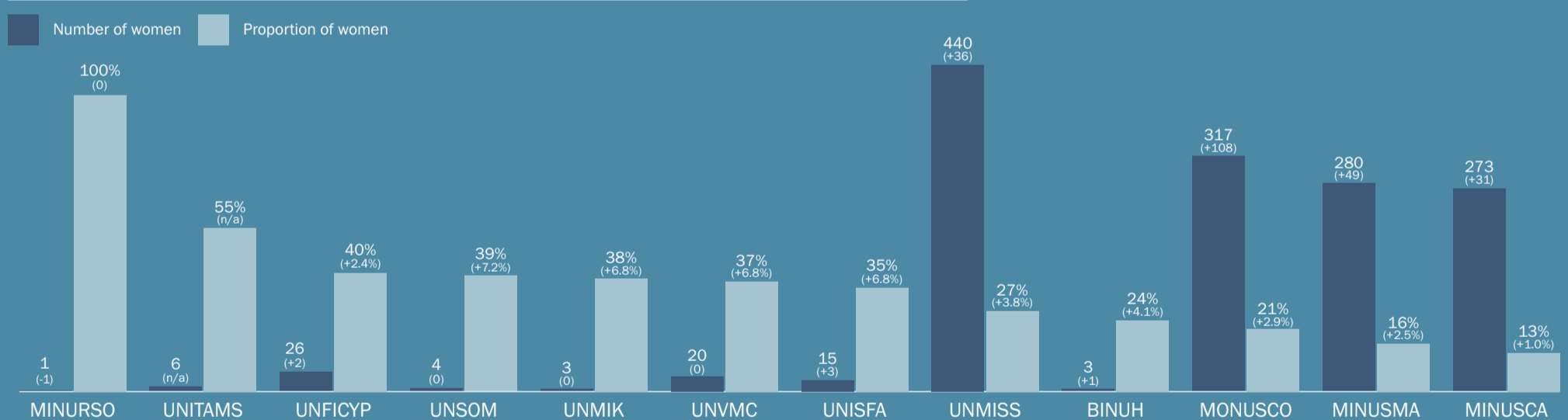
Proportion of women in the police personnel of UN peace operations, Dec. 2012–June 2021



Women in UN police: Operations

UN missions deploying smaller numbers of police personnel tend to perform better in terms of the proportion of women. The UN peace operation with the lowest proportion of women in the police personnel in 2021 was also the operation with the largest total police deployment (MINUSCA). The proportion of women police personnel in each of the 4 missions deploying more than 1000 police personnel remained below 30 per cent.

Number and proportion of women in the police personnel of UN peace operations, 2021 monthly averages

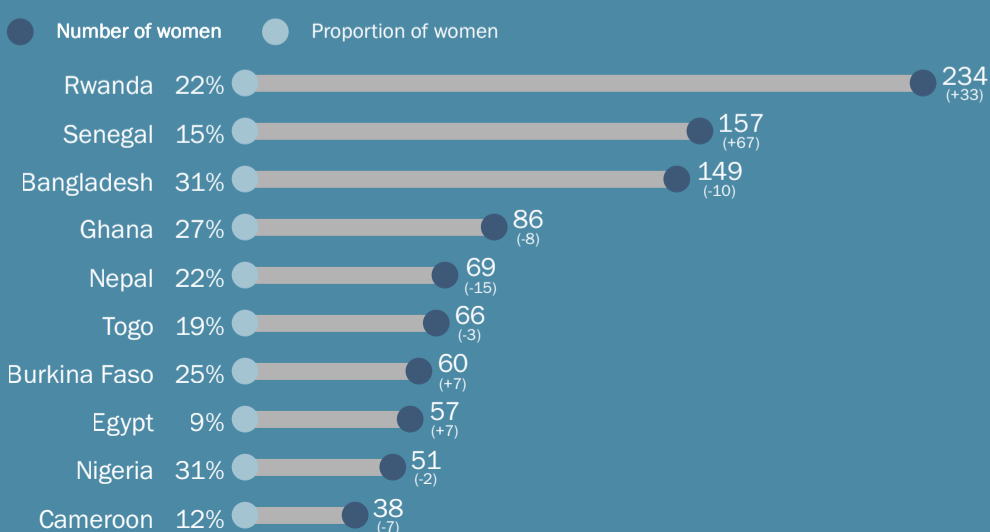


Notes: The 2021 annual average of women personnel per month was calculated based on the months from Jan. to July (when the data was last available). The average numbers of women personnel were rounded to the closest integer. UNITAMS was established in 2021, so there is no comparison to 2020. Values in parentheses indicate the variation in women personnel compared to the previous year.

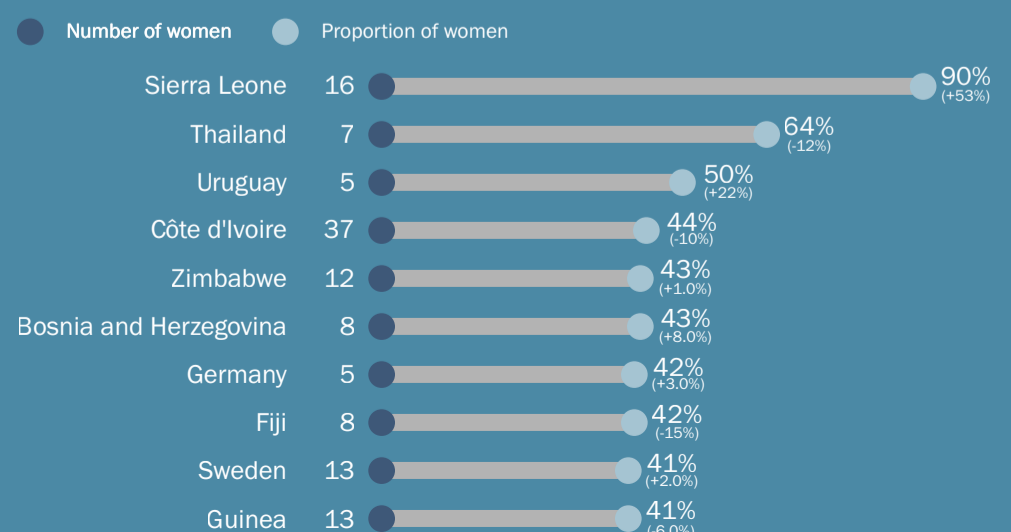
Women in UN police: Contributors

Nine of the top 10 contributors by total number of police personnel are also among the top 10 contributors by number of women in the police personnel of UN peace operations. Eight of the top 10 contributors by number of women and four of the top 10 contributors by proportion of women in UN police personnel are African countries. The top 10 contributors by proportion of women in the police personnel contributed with a relatively smaller number of police personnel (less than 100). Although European countries are not among the top contributors by number of women, three countries from the region are among the top 10 contributors by proportion of women in UN police personnel.

Top 10 contributors of women to the police personnel of UN peace operations, by highest number of women, 2021 monthly averages



Top 10 contributors of women to the police personnel of UN peace operations, by highest proportion of women, 2021 monthly averages



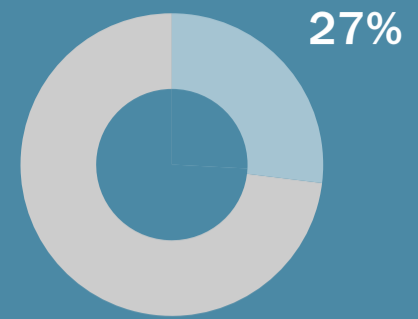
Notes: The 2021 annual average of women personnel per month was calculated based on the months from Jan. to July (when the data was last available). The average numbers of women personnel were rounded to the closest integer. Countries deploying fewer than 10 police officers per month have not been included. Values in parentheses indicate the variation in women personnel compared to the previous year. Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, accessed Nov. 2021.

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

The UN's 2017 System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity set targets for the equal representation of women and men in several areas. This included civilian personnel in UN peace operations, both peacekeeping operations and field-based special political missions. Acknowledging the challenge of achieving and sustaining gender parity, the strategy allows for variation within a range of 47–53 per cent. However, the goal of achieving gender parity for civilian personnel remains distant for most UN peace operations, particularly peacekeeping ones.

Women in leadership

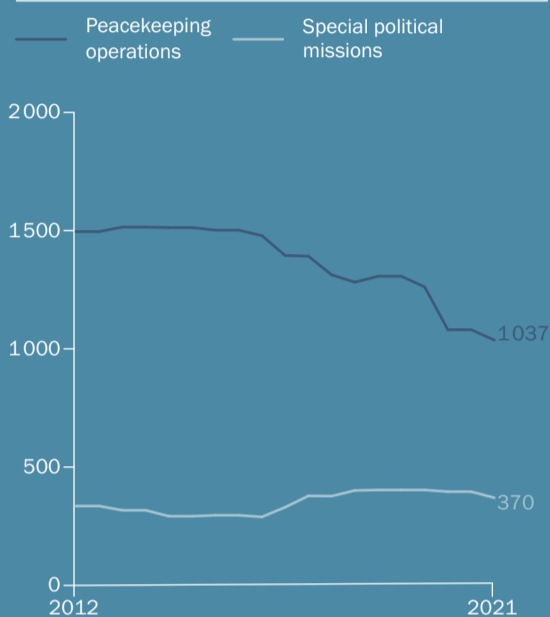
On 1 October 2021, 27 per cent (6 out of 22) of UN heads of peace operations (including field-based special political missions) were women.



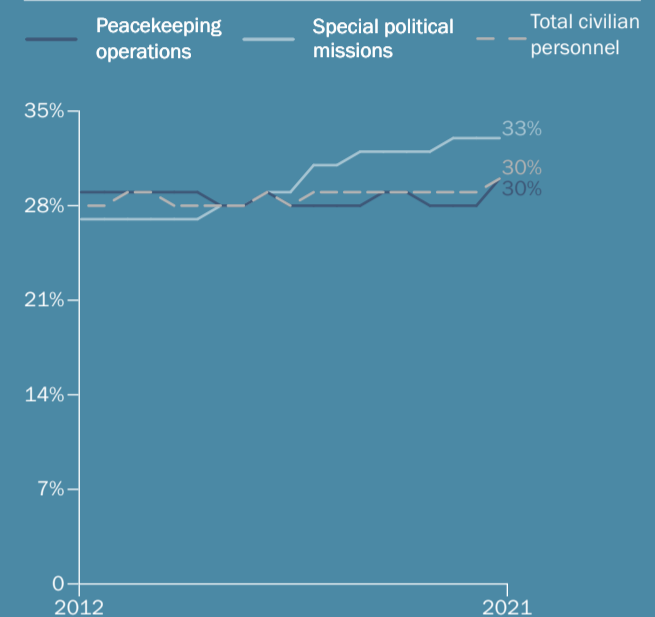
Women in UN civilian personnel: Totals

Over the past 10 years (2012–21), the number of women in the civilian personnel of UN peace operations has declined, reaching its lowest level of 1407 women in June 2021. This decline has been primarily a consequence of the decreasing numbers and sizes of peacekeeping operations. The number of women in special political missions decreased until 2016, after which it started to increase. However, this number declined again slightly in 2021, reaching 370 women civilian personnel. The proportion of women in the civilian personnel of UN peace operations has remained relatively stable over the past 10 years, with a modest increase of 2 percentage points during this period. A slightly more prominent increase of 6 percentage points could be observed among special political missions.

Number of women in the civilian personnel of UN peace operations, Dec. 2012–June 2021



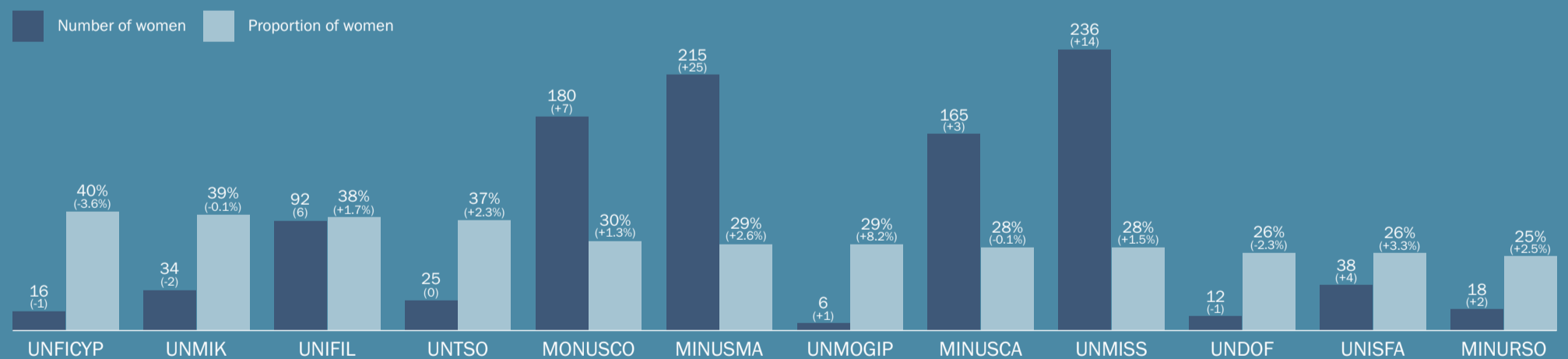
Proportion of women in the civilian personnel of UN peace operations, Dec. 2012–June 2021



Women in UN civilian personnel: Operations

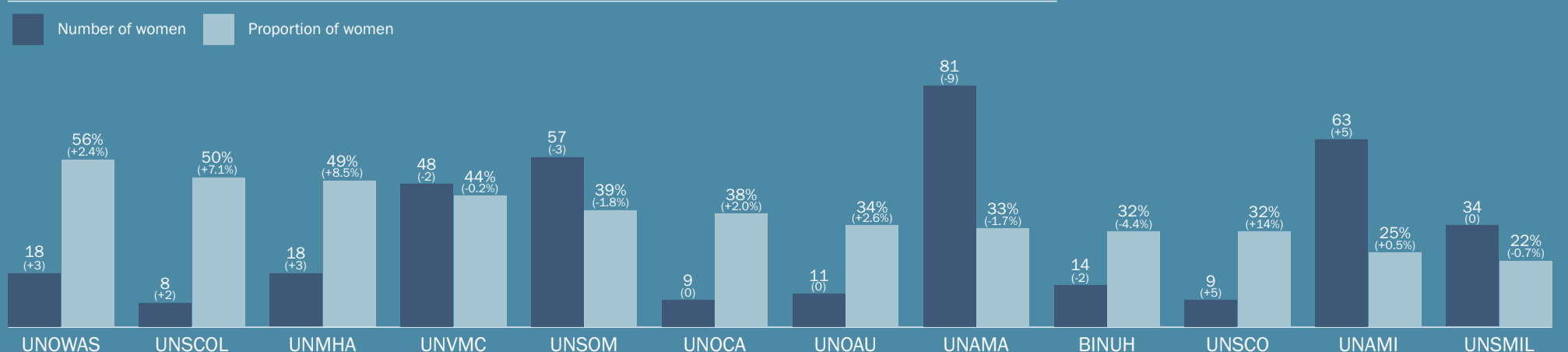
Although UN peacekeeping operations tend to deploy larger numbers of women in their civilian personnel than special political missions, the proportion of women in the civilian personnel is higher in the latter. Peacekeeping operations deploying a smaller number of civilian personnel tend to perform better in terms of the proportion of women than larger operations. In 2021, none of the UN peacekeeping operations reached the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity's goal of having between 47 and 53 per cent women in the civilian personnel. As for special political missions, 3 out of 12 missions had at least 47 per cent women in the civilian personnel. The proportion of women in the civilian personnel was the highest in UNOWAS, reaching 56 per cent (an increase of about 2 percentage points in comparison to 2020).

Number and proportion of women in the civilian personnel of UN peacekeeping operations, 2021 monthly averages



Notes: The 2021 annual average of women personnel per month was calculated based on the months from Jan. to July (when the data was last available). Values in parentheses indicate the variation in women personnel compared to the previous year.

Number and proportion of women in the civilian personnel of UN special political missions, 2021 monthly averages



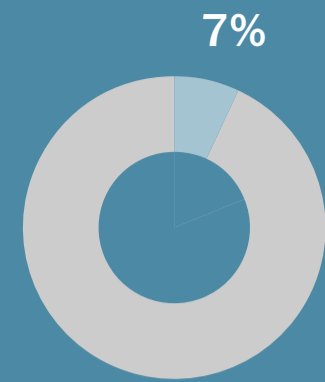
Notes: The 2021 annual average of women personnel per month was calculated based on the months from Jan. to July (when the data was last available). Values in parentheses indicate the variation in women personnel compared to the previous year.
Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, accessed Nov. 2021.

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

The OSCE Secretariat's 2019-26 Gender Parity Strategy has set the goal of gender parity across all levels of personnel in its field operations by 2026. Even though only 1 of 16 field operations reached at least 50 per cent women in the personnel in 2021, there were 5 field operations with a proportion of women higher than 40 per cent.

Women in leadership

On 1 October 2021, 7 per cent (1 out of 15) heads of mission of OSCE field operations were women.



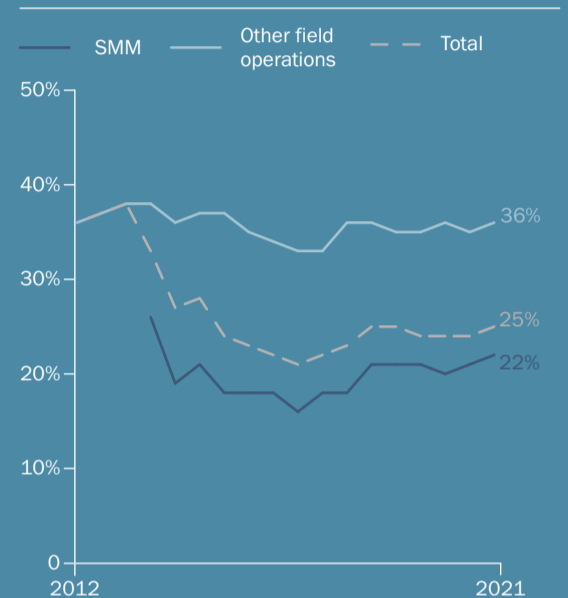
Women in OSCE field operations: Totals

For most of the past 10 years (2012-21), variations in the numbers and proportions of women in the personnel of OSCE field operations have been dominated by developments within the SMM, by far the OSCE's largest field operation. The number of women has consistently increased during this period, except for in 2020. It peaked in 2019 at 292, due to a rise in the number of women in the SMM's personnel. The proportion of women started to decrease already before the SMM, but intensified with the operation's establishment in 2014. This proportion started to increase again in 2017, but it remains far below the levels prior to the SMM. Excluding the SMM, the proportion of women in the personnel of OSCE field operations has remained relatively stable over the past 10 years, varying between 33 and 38 per cent.

Number of women in the personnel of OSCE field operations, Dec. 2012-June 2021



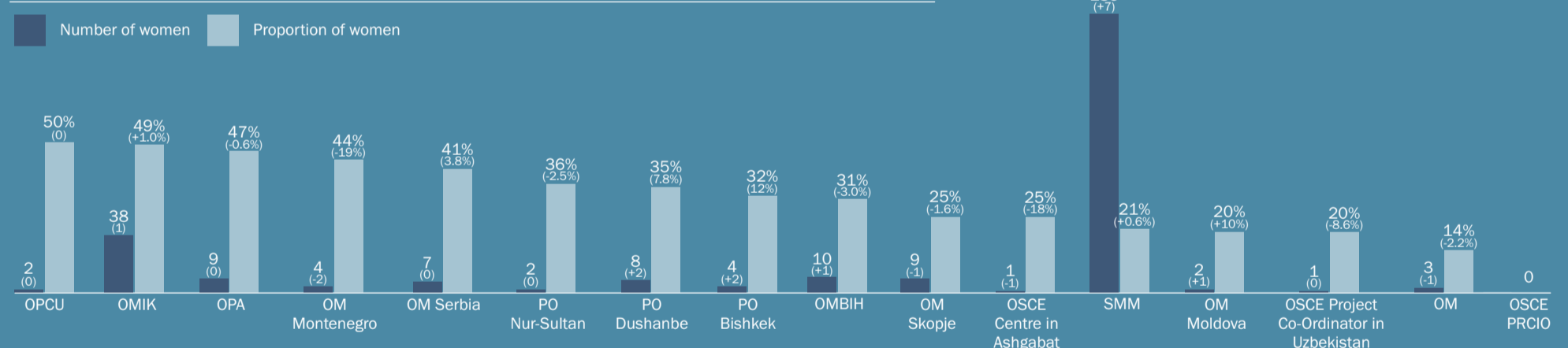
Proportion of women in the personnel of OSCE field operations, Dec. 2012-June 2021



Women in OSCE field operations: Operations

Most OSCE field operations have a relatively small number of personnel. Therefore, slight variations in the number of women can have a large impact on the proportion of women in an operation. In 2021, 14 out of 16 OSCE field operations had between 20 and 50 per cent women in their personnel. Even though only 4 of 16 operations decreased their numbers of women personnel in 2021, half of the operations declined in their proportions of women in relation to 2020.

Number and proportion of women in the personnel of OSCE field operations, 2021 monthly averages

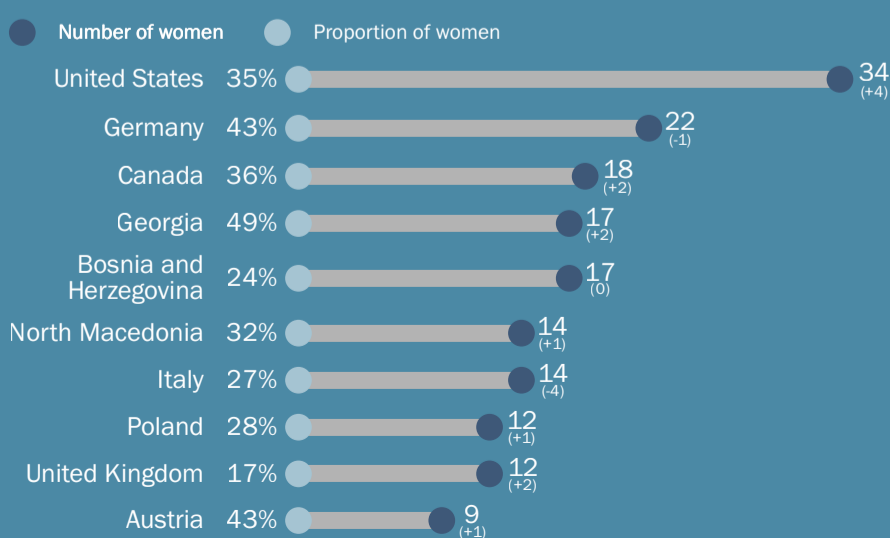


Notes: The 2021 annual average of women personnel per month was calculated based on the months from Jan. to June (when the data was last available). The OM was discontinued on 30 Sep. 2021. Values in parentheses indicate the variation in women personnel compared to the previous year.

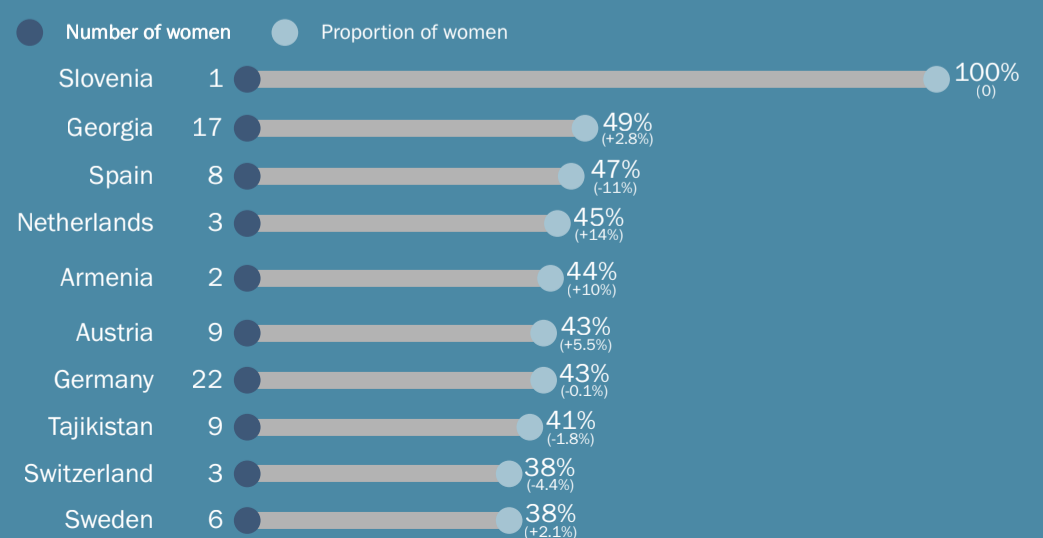
Women in OSCE field operations: Contributors

The countries contributing the highest numbers of personnel to OSCE field operations also contribute the highest numbers of women personnel. However, only 3 out of the top 10 contributors by number of women personnel also feature in the list of the top 10 contributors by proportion of women personnel, namely Germany, Georgia and Austria. Nevertheless, in 2021 most of the top 10 contributors of personnel to OSCE field operations increased their proportion of women in comparison to 2020.

Top 10 contributors of women to the personnel of OSCE field operations, by highest number of women, 2021 monthly averages



Top 10 contributors of women to the personnel of OSCE field operations, by highest proportion of women, 2021 monthly averages



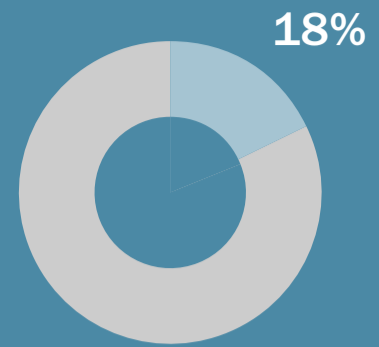
Notes: The 2021 annual average of women personnel per month was calculated based on the months from Jan. to June (when the data was last available). Values in parentheses indicate the variation in women personnel compared to the previous year. Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, accessed Nov. 2021.

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

The EU does not have a gender parity strategy or specific targets for its CSDP missions and operations. However, in November 2018 the EU established the Civilian CSDP Compact to strengthen its civilian missions. One of the compact's political commitments is to actively promote the increased representation of women in civilian EU CSDP missions, but no specific target has been set.

Women in leadership

On 1 October 2021, 18 per cent (3 out of 17) of heads of EU CSDP missions and operations were women.¹

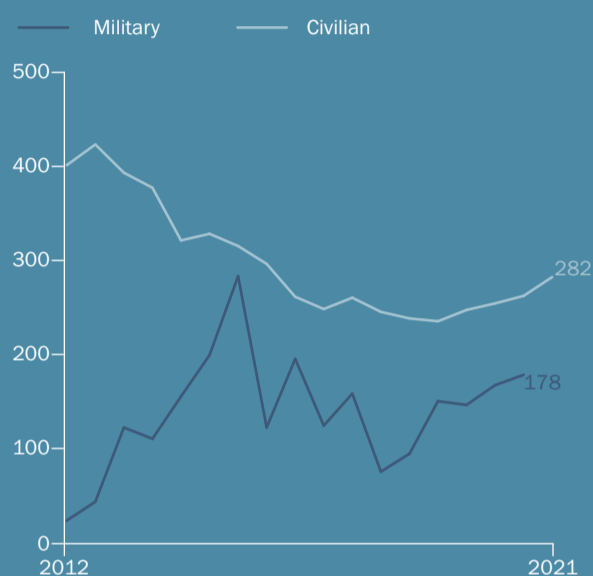


¹ EUTM Mozambique was launched on 15 Oct. 2021 and is therefore not included in this overview.

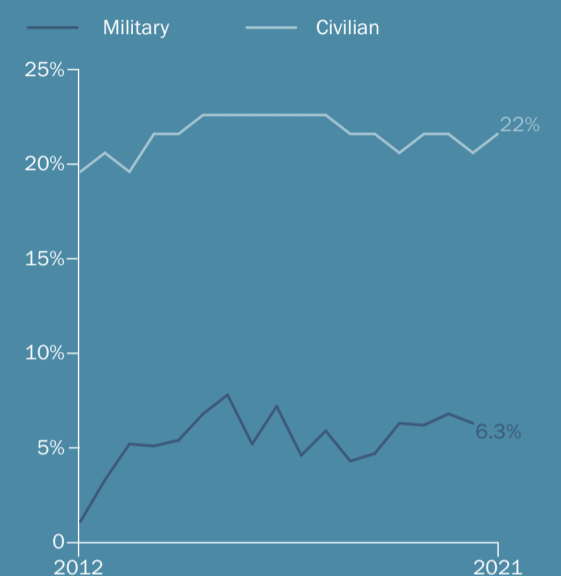
Women in EU CSDP missions and operations: Totals

The number of women in the personnel of military EU CSDP operations declined considerably between 2016 and 2018. The proportion of women in the personnel of military EU CSDP operations peaked in 2015, at approximately 8 per cent, and then started to decline. The proportion of women reached the 6 per cent mark again in 2019, registering 6.3 per cent in December 2020. The number of women in the personnel of civilian EU CSDP missions has also shown a declining trend over the past 10 years (2012–21). However, it started to slowly increase again in late 2019, reaching 282 women in June 2021. In contrast, the proportion of women in the personnel of civilian EU CSDP missions has remained relatively stable, varying between 20 and 23 per cent during the same period.

Number of women in the personnel of EU CSDP missions and operations, Dec. 2012–June 2021



Proportion of women in the personnel of EU CSDP missions and operations, Dec. 2012–June 2021

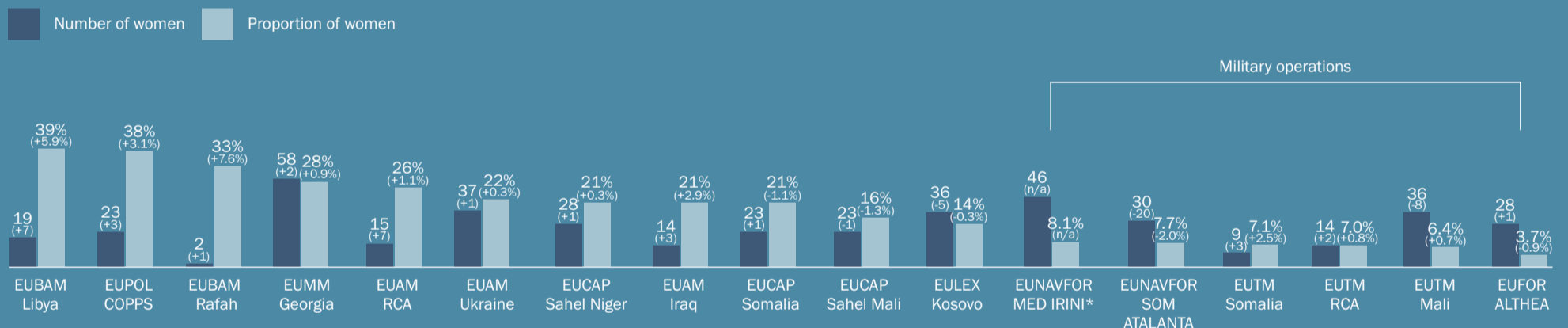


Note: The data for military personnel for June 2021 is not yet available.

Women in EU CSDP missions and operations: Operations

The proportion of women in the personnel of EU CSDP missions and operations is considerably higher in civilian missions than in military operations. In 2021, the proportion of women in civilian missions varied between 14 and 39 per cent, whereas in all military operations it was below 10 per cent. Nevertheless, both the proportion and the number of women increased in the military and civilian personnel of most EU CSDP missions and operations in comparison to 2020.

Number and proportion of women in the personnel of EU CSDP missions and operations, monthly averages

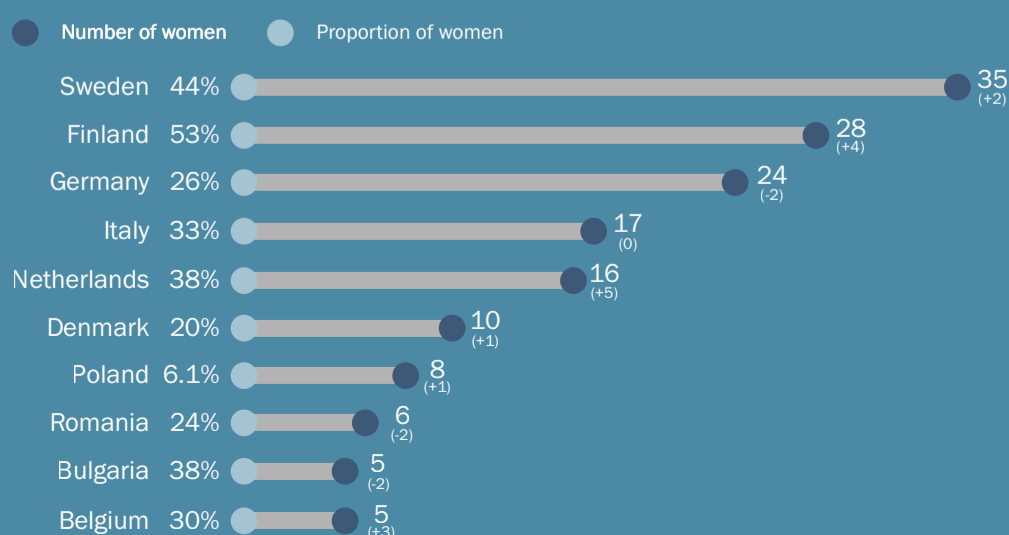


Notes: The 2021 annual average of women personnel per month was calculated based on the months from Jan. to June (when the data was last available). For military EU CSDP operations, the averages were based on the year 2020, since their last available data was from Dec. 2020. EUNAVFOR MED IRINI is not compared to the previous year because it was established in 2020. Values in parentheses indicate the variation in women personnel compared to the previous year.

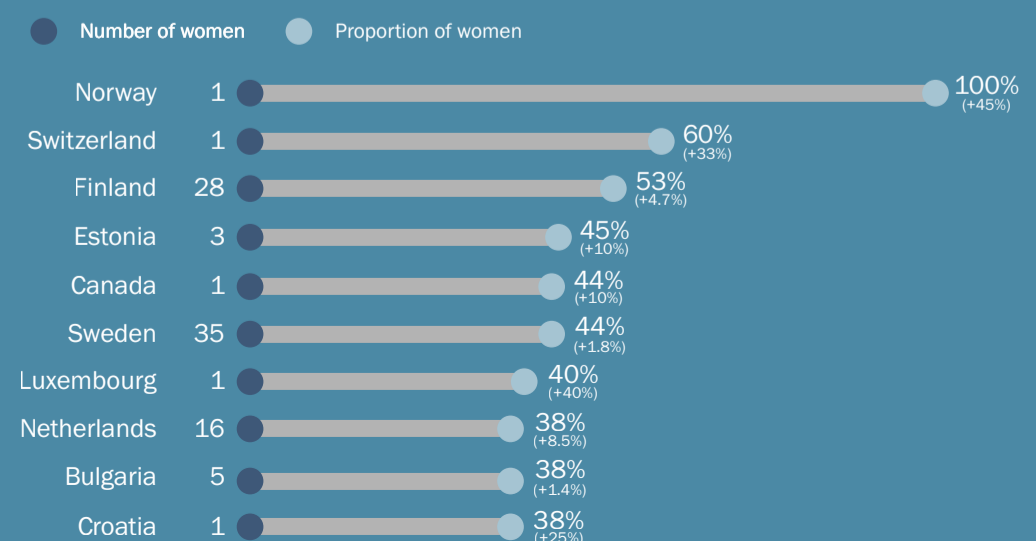
Women in EU CSDP missions: Contributors

Of the top 10 contributors of seconded personnel in civilian EU CSDP missions, 8 are also among the top 10 contributors of women in seconded personnel. However, only 4 of the top 10 contributors by number of women also feature in the top 10 contributors by proportion of women in seconded personnel. Nevertheless, in 2021 the proportion of women increased for all the top contributors by proportion of women in seconded personnel in relation to 2020.

Top 10 contributors of women to the personnel of EU CSDP missions, by highest number of women, 2021 monthly averages



Top 10 contributors of women to the personnel of EU CSDP missions, by highest proportion of women, 2021 monthly averages



Notes: The data only includes civilian EU CSDP missions, since data on the contributions to military EU CSDP operations is not available. The 2021 annual average of women personnel per month was calculated based on the months from Jan. to June (when the data was last available). Values in parentheses indicate the variation in women personnel compared to the previous year. Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, accessed Nov. 2021.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Over the past 10 years, the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on WPS in terms of women's representation in the personnel of peace operations has been slow in most cases. Despite strategies to accelerate the representation of women in UN uniformed personnel, and the proportion of women in military personnel more than doubling from 2.8 to 5.9 per cent during the period 2012–21, this remains far from the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy's goal of 15 per cent. The proportion of women in the civilian personnel of UN peace operations reached 30 per cent in 2021 (2 percentage points more than 10 years ago) and remains far from the minimum goal of 47 per cent established by the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity. The most noticeable improvement during the period 2012–21 has been among the police personnel of UN peace operations, with proportions increasing 15 percentage points among individual police officers and 10 percentage points among formed police units. This year, the UN reached the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy's goal of women representing 30 per cent of individual police officers. Moreover, with women representing 16 per cent of formed police units, it is close to the goal of 20 per cent for this personnel category.

In OSCE field operations, the proportion of women has decreased approximately 9 percentage points over the past 10 years, reaching 25 per cent in 2021. Nevertheless, this decline has been primarily due to a lower proportion of women in the SMM's personnel, the OSCE's largest operation. In fact, most OSCE operations have a proportion of women that is higher than 30 per cent and they have remained relatively stable in terms of women's participation. Finally, the proportion of women in EU CSDP missions and operations has increased 5 percentage points among military personnel, reaching approximately 6 per cent, and 2 percentage points among civilian personnel, reaching 22 per cent, over the past 10 years.

In 2021, the representation of women in multilateral peace operations increased overall, with most of the operations considered in this overview presenting further improvements in women's representation compared to last year. Despite these advancements, women continue to be underrepresented. Gender parity has only been reached in the civilian personnel of 3 UN special political missions (UNOWAS, UNSCOL and UNMHA), and in the police personnel of 2 UN peace operations (MINURSO and UNITAMS). The OSCE has reached gender parity in 1 of its field operations (OPCU). Seven contributing countries have reached parity in their contributions: 3 for police personnel in UN missions (Sierra Leone, Thailand and Uruguay); 3 for civilian personnel seconded to EU CSDP missions (Norway, Switzerland and Finland), and 1 for Slovenia.

Considering the structural challenge of the limited numbers of women in national police and armed forces, UN Security Council Resolution 2538 in 2020 encouraged member states to develop strategies to increase the deployment of women to peace operations and address barriers to their participation. The resolution acknowledged that a discussion on women's representation based merely on their numbers in the personnel of peace operations is limited. The role and the position of women in these missions are also key to enhancing women's representation. In addition to Security Council Resolution 1325, Resolution 2538 therefore emphasized the need to promote the participation of women in senior leadership positions. Nevertheless, leadership positions in peace operations continue to fall short of gender parity. Therefore, the organizations deploying multilateral peace operations and their member states will need to redouble their efforts to fulfil the aspirations of Resolution 2538 to further women's representation at all levels, including in leadership roles.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BINUH	UN Integrated Office in Haiti
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy (of the EU)
EU	European Union
EUAM Iraq	EU Advisory Mission in Iraq
EUAM RCA	EU Advisory Mission in the Central African Republic
EUAM Ukraine	EU Advisory Mission Ukraine
EUBAM Libya	EU Border Assistance Mission in Libya
EUBAM Rafah	EU Border Assistance Mission to Rafah
EUCAP Sahel Mali	EU Capacity Building Mission in Mali
EUCAP Sahel Niger	EU Capacity Building Mission in Niger
EUCAP Somalia	EU Capacity Building Mission in Somalia
EUFOR ALTHEA	EU Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina
EULEX Kosovo	EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo
EUMM Georgia	EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia
EUNAVFOR MED IRINI	EU Naval Force Mediterranean Operation Irini
EUNAVFOR SOM ATALANTA	EU Naval Force Somalia Operation Atalanta
EUPOL COPPS	EU Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories
EUTM Mali	EU Training Mission in Mali
EUTM Mozambique	EU Training Mission in Mozambique
EUTM RCA	EU Training Mission in the Central African Republic
EUTM Somalia	EU Training Mission in Somalia
MINURSO	UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
MINUSCA	UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MINUSMA	UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MONUSCO	UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
OM	OSCE Observer Mission at Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk
OM Moldova	OSCE Mission to Moldova
OM Montenegro	OSCE Mission to Montenegro
OM Serbia	OSCE Mission to Serbia
OM Skopje	OSCE Mission to Skopje
OMBIH	OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina
OMIK	OSCE Mission in Kosovo
OPA	OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
OPCU	OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PO Bishkek	OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek
PO Dushanbe	OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe
PO Nur-Sultan	OSCE Programme Office in Nur-Sultan
PRCIO	Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office
SMM	OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNAMI	UN Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNDOF	UN Disengagement Observer Force
UNFICYP	UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
UNIFIL	UN Interim Force in Lebanon

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UNISFA	UN Interim Security Force for Abyei
UNITAMS	UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan
UNMHA	UN Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement
UNMIK	UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
UNMISS	UN Mission in South Sudan
UNMOGIP	UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan
UNOAU	UN Office to the African Union
UNOCA	UN Regional Office for Central Africa
UNOWAS	UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel
UNRCCA	UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia
UNSCO	Office of the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process
UNSCOL	Office of the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon
UNSMIL	UN Support Mission in Libya
UNSOM	UN Assistance Mission in Somalia
UNTSO	UN Truce Supervision Organization
UNVMC	UN Verification Mission in Colombia
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, accessed Nov. 2021.

The SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database is the only data set on multilateral peace operations in the world that includes gender-disaggregated data on UN and non-UN peace operations. It allows users to track progress on efforts to increase women's representation and achieve gender parity in these operations.