

An Overview

THE  
#SHECURITY  
INDEX

Edition 2020

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Based on data collected in a joint effort  
of European Parliament Research Service,  
UN Women, NATO and others.

**Access to full dataset here:**

[www.shsecurity.info/index2020](http://www.shsecurity.info/index2020)

# FOREWORD



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I have been working in peace and security for 15 years now. There was rarely an event, a field trip or a panel, where I was not in the minority; sometimes even the only woman in the room. During the first years, this didn't bother me. I was fine, having found my own place in the field. But the longer I worked in crisis regions, the more I realised how this lack of diversity compromises our ability to take the best decisions possible. Political decisions get better, the more diverse the people are who make them. This simple realisation is of special importance when we talk about deeply divided societies and decisions about war and peace. Yet, foreign and security policy remains a male domain, and the speed at which things are changing is painfully slow.

When I started to work on gender equality in foreign and security policy in a more systematised way, as member of the European Parliament, I was looking for numbers to verify and quantify this impression of mine of being in a minority. I wanted to know, based on numbers, how bad it was, how quickly we progress and how things may differ between fields or nations. Yet, I had to find out that such data is poor, scattered in many different documents, or does not exist at all. That was how

the idea of the #SHEcurity Index was born in early 2020. The idea behind this Index, and the corresponding database, is to collect all data available in one place, to do everything possible to fill (the many) gaps, to share the index with everyone and to run a few analyses myself. My favourite one: How many years does it need to reach parity, if we continue at the current pace? And the results are telling: some countries are moving quickly ahead, others incredibly slow, and in some areas we even see a backlash.

I hope the publication of the first #SHEcurity Index will encourage governments to gather and share more data and will fuel the debate on the role of women in peace and security. This overview and the corresponding data set can only be a start towards this end and I want to thank everyone who contributed to it.

There are many amazing women active in the field of peace and security. I was honoured to have met and worked with some of them. We need to celebrate their achievements – and pave the way for many more to join us by changing the structures that keep them from doing so until today. This is about representation, about resources and about rights. Resolutions, Action Plans and Strategies are important tools towards this end. Data and knowledge about the progress we make are equally important. Now it's time to really speed things up and change the reality out there. Because peace needs women, more and fast.

*Hannah Neumann*

# KEY FINDINGS

In the year of the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, it is time to take stock of participation and representation of women at all levels of decision-making in foreign and security policy.

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For the #SHEcurity Index, we collected data from the EU, its member states and the G20 in six different categories, namely politics, diplomacy, military, police, civil and military missions, and business.

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Our aim was to track the progress since these countries committed themselves to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda 20 years ago. Tellingly, the most striking finding has been the absence of data to actually measure these developments.

The data collected reveal immense disparities regarding the progress made in different countries and categories. Key findings across the six categories are:

- **Politics:** Women are increasingly represented in national parliaments, but equal representation on foreign and defense committees is nearly 100 years away.
  - **Diplomacy:** Women only make up around 25% of ambassadors in the EU and G20, even though their average representation in the diplomatic corps lies at around 43%.
  - **Military:** Currently, women make up for about 11% of military staff, however, their numbers are increasing slowly; equal representation will take between 325 (EU) and 465 (NATO) years based on progress made between 2009 and 2018.
  - **Police:** The average representation of women in police forces is 25%, based on the progress between 2009 and 2017, parity may be reached in 58 years.
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— **Civilian and military missions:** While we are approx. 5 years away from achieving gender parity in leadership positions in UN peacekeeping missions, the percentage of women in the military staff of those missions is under 5%. The outlook for EU missions is even worse: No woman has ever been commander and/or deputy commander of a military CSDP mission.

— **Business:** Women only make up between 6% (Germany) and 23% (USA) of board members of arms manufacturers; this number is much lower than the numbers for boards of companies in other business sectors.

These numbers are just some examples of the slow and unequal development towards gender parity and meaningful participation of women in the field of foreign and security policy. One thing should be clear — waiting another century to achieve gender parity is unacceptable. We know how it works: We need to gather comprehensive and reliable data for every field, every nation, and every region to make a plan on how to achieve parity faster.

Towards this end, we have three main hopes for the #SHEcurity Index.

- (1) Firstly, that the data of the #SHEcurity Index and even more so its blank spaces will raise awareness and inspire governments and ministries to collect the missing information or initiate a more thorough data collection process.
- (2) Secondly, that this collection will be used by other researchers for more in-depth analysis and research, and create a space for exchange, since we seek to continuously update the public database.
- (3) And lastly, that the index will initiate a discussion about concrete actions on how to speed up the journey towards gender parity.

All of this should help make foreign and security policy, as well as domestic peace-making, reflect the diversity inherent in our societies.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

2020 marks an important year in the fight for gender equality in foreign and security policy – the 20th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by war and conflict, while at the same time being key players for their sustainable resolution and long-term peace.

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Science shows that gender discrimination is a threat to peace.

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(1) The discrimination of and lack of security for women and girls is a root cause of many conflicts,<sup>1</sup> (2) data suggest that peace agreements last longer if women are substantially involved<sup>2</sup> and (3) gender-equal societies are on average more peaceful.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, women all around the world are systematically excluded from decision-making processes on all levels of politics, diplomacy, police, military – a circumstance that UNSCR 1325 set out to improve. The resolution provides a new holistic approach to security and in the twenty years that followed, an additional nine resolutions were adopted, constituting what is today known as the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

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While the adoption of the resolutions is in itself a crucial step and signals the importance that the international community attaches to this issue, the actual success of these resolutions should be measured in their implementation.

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As of 2019, 19 out of 27 EU member states have adopted one or several National Action Plans (NAP). Separate from these national efforts, the European Union developed its first Regional Strategy on UNSCR 1325 in 2008,<sup>4</sup> publishing an update in

2016.<sup>5</sup> In 2018,<sup>6</sup> the Council of the European Union adopted the Council conclusion on Women, Peace and Security and in it called for the EU Action Plan (AP) on WPS, which was adopted in 2019.<sup>7</sup>

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The goal of this report is to establish how successful the EU, its member states and the G20 have been in achieving the foundational objective of the WPS agenda: equal participation of women and men on all levels of decision-making.

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The report also highlights which progress still needs to be made to ensure equal representation of women and men in the sector in these countries. The selection of these countries is in no way representative of the overall global development towards gender equality. However, the EU and G20 countries are internationally relevant leaders that have officially declared their support for gender equality within their shared institutions and forums and, together, make up for the biggest international donors and diplomatic powers. Highlighting their progress and shortcoming provides a comprehensive insight into the estimated developments for gender equality in the future.

The #SHEcurity database collects data from all EU and G20 countries in a publicly available database. This report uses the data gathered to evaluate the development in the fields of politics, diplomacy, police, military, civil and military missions and business to take stock and make a forecast on how long it will take to achieve meaningful and equal participation of women on all levels of decision-making.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST%2015671%202008%20REV%201>

<sup>5</sup> <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12525-2016-INIT/en/pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/37412/st15086-en18.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-11031-2019-INIT/en/pdf>

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### → DATA COLLECTION:

The foundation of the database is the collected data on women's participation in the field of foreign and security policy in the EU and G20. To obtain a comprehensive overview of the current situation, six key areas were chosen:

- **Politics:** % of women in the European Parliament, national Parliaments, national Foreign and Defense Committees and women serving as Foreign and Defense Ministers
- **Diplomacy:** % of women in the European External Action Service (EEAS), as ambassadors, in the diplomatic corps and in peace negotiations
- **Military:** % of women in national armed forces
- **Police:** % of women in national police forces
- **International missions:** % of women in UN peacekeeping missions, as head and deputy-heads of missions and in Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) missions
- **Business:** % of women as board members of arms manufacturers in Germany, France, UK, and USA

For each key area and sub-sections we gathered annual data from 2000-2019. A key source for relevant data was the European Parliamentary Research Service. Further, we contacted all permanent representations to the EU of EU member states and G20. This was at times a painstaking effort, clearly showing how weak our knowledge on improvements and set-backs is. We followed up several times over the course of 3 months, including by making phone calls to representations and foreign ministries directly, went through WPS Action Plans and related evaluations, checked annual reports... We obtained data (though never complete samples) from a total of 43 national sources. Additionally, the database was built on and expanded

through publicly available data from international organisations such as the UN (especially UN WOMEN) and NATO, as well as research institutes such as the Council on Foreign Relations. The source of each piece of data is indicated in the overview of the raw data.

### → STRUCTURE:

The main part of the #SHEcurity index is divided into five chapters: Politics, Diplomacy, Military & Police, International Missions and Business.

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The #SHEcurity Index builds on the collected raw data and attempts to extrapolate a forecast regarding how many years it will take to reach full gender parity in the respective field — if we continue at the same pace as we have done in the past 20 years since the adoption of UNSCR 1325.

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The Index was calculated based on the yearly progress in women's representation in each field (for each country and EU and G20 averages if possible). To establish the #SHEcurity Index for an entire field (politics, military...), we factored the data available in equally (e.g., we did not weight the countries by size). In the annex, we included additional information of interest regarding women's representation in EU and G20 foreign and security policy.

### → LIMITATIONS:

The biggest limitation for the calculation of the #SHEcurity Index is the (non-)availability of data. While some areas, such as political representation, are well documented, others, such as women's participation in diplomacy, are severely lacking in comparable data. These limitations need to be considered when evaluating the #SHEcurity Index and should be a motivation for the EU and each country to ensure better documentation in

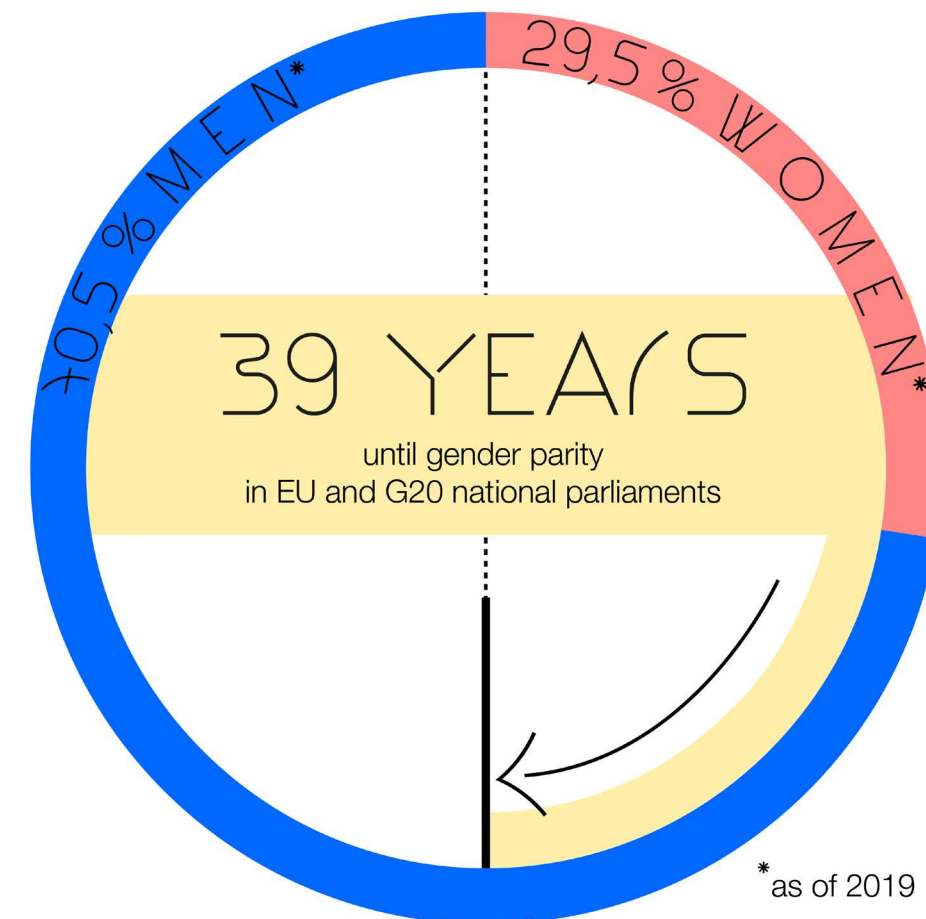
the future. Organisations/persons with access to more or better data are asked to share them with us so we can continuously update and improve the public database.

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Only through reliable data can the situation be adequately understood, and effective and sustainable policies be adopted.

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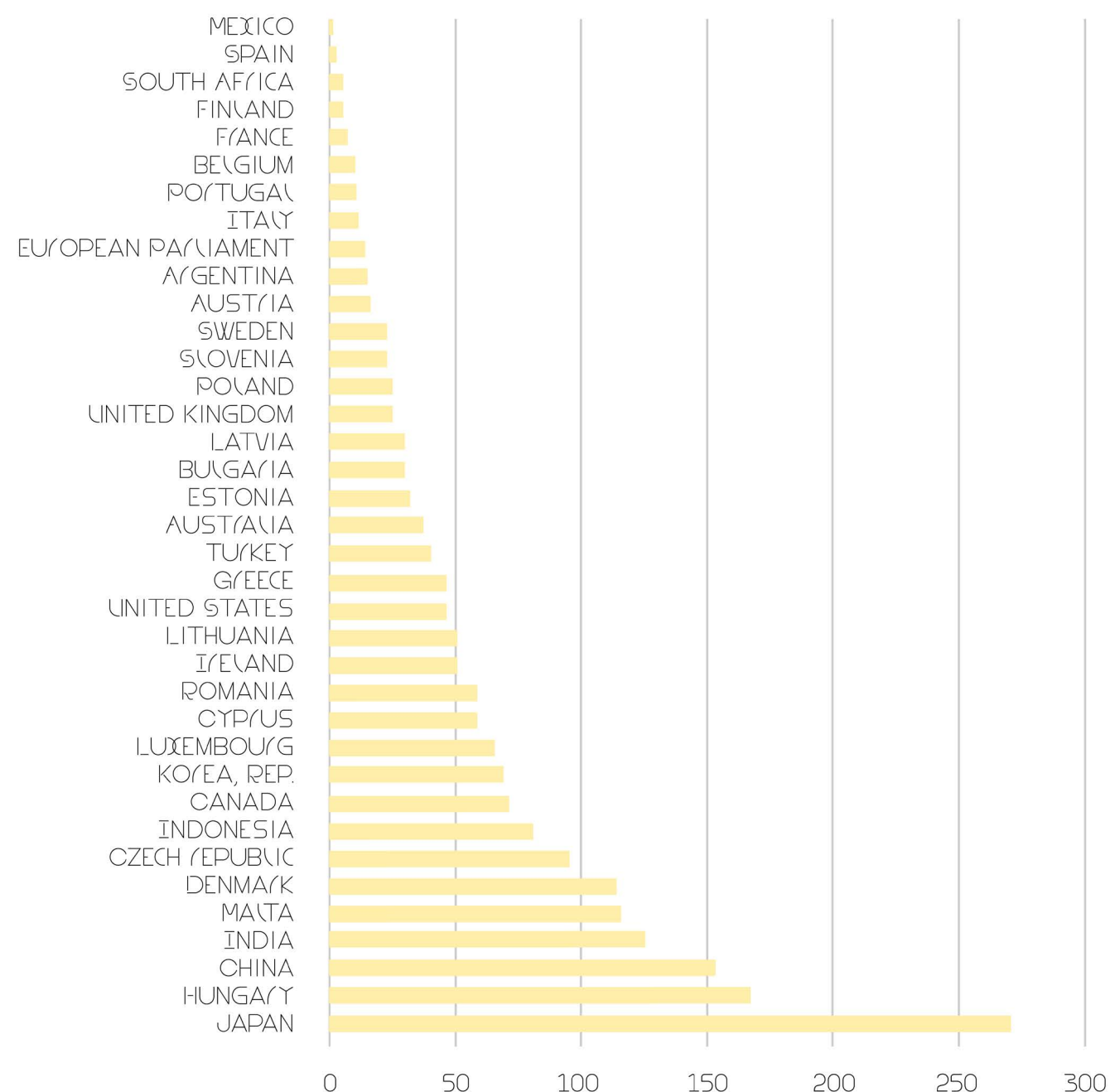
### 3. POLITICS



Taking a closer look at the field of politics at EU level, women currently make up 41 % of members of the European Parliament, approx. increasing by 3.3 percentage points per election, or 0.67 percentage points per year. However, when comparing this trend with the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee (AFET) and the Subcommittee on Security and Defense (SEDE), one thing becomes clear: The overall increasing representation of women in the European Parliament is not reflected in these committees, where achieving the same increase takes twice as long (0.35 percentage points per year in AFET and 0.29 percentage points per year in SEDE). Hence it will take approx. 74 (AFET) or 103 (SEDE) years to achieve gender parity in these committees, based on current trends.



## YEARS UNTIL GENDER PARITY IN EU AND G20 NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS



When looking at the national data, we can observe an overall upwards trend in nearly all EU and G20 countries in the last twenty years. On average, the representation of women in national parliaments is progressing equally in the EU countries, with an estimated 37 years until parity, and the G20 with an

average of 38 years. The countries with the highest percentage of women in parliament are Mexico, Spain, and Finland, with Mexico also showing the most rapid progress (1.69 percentage points increase per year). Negative trends can be observed in Croatia and the Netherlands, while the numbers in Germany are on average stagnant.

Looking at the national Foreign Affairs Committees, the numbers are slightly better than they are on European Parliament level: Women make up for 25.51% of members in foreign affairs committees in 2019 and it will take another estimated 48 years to reach parity. The situation in national defense committees is much worse. Currently, the representation of women there is only 19.2% at average and it will take approx. 103 years to reach parity in all national defense committees of EU member states.

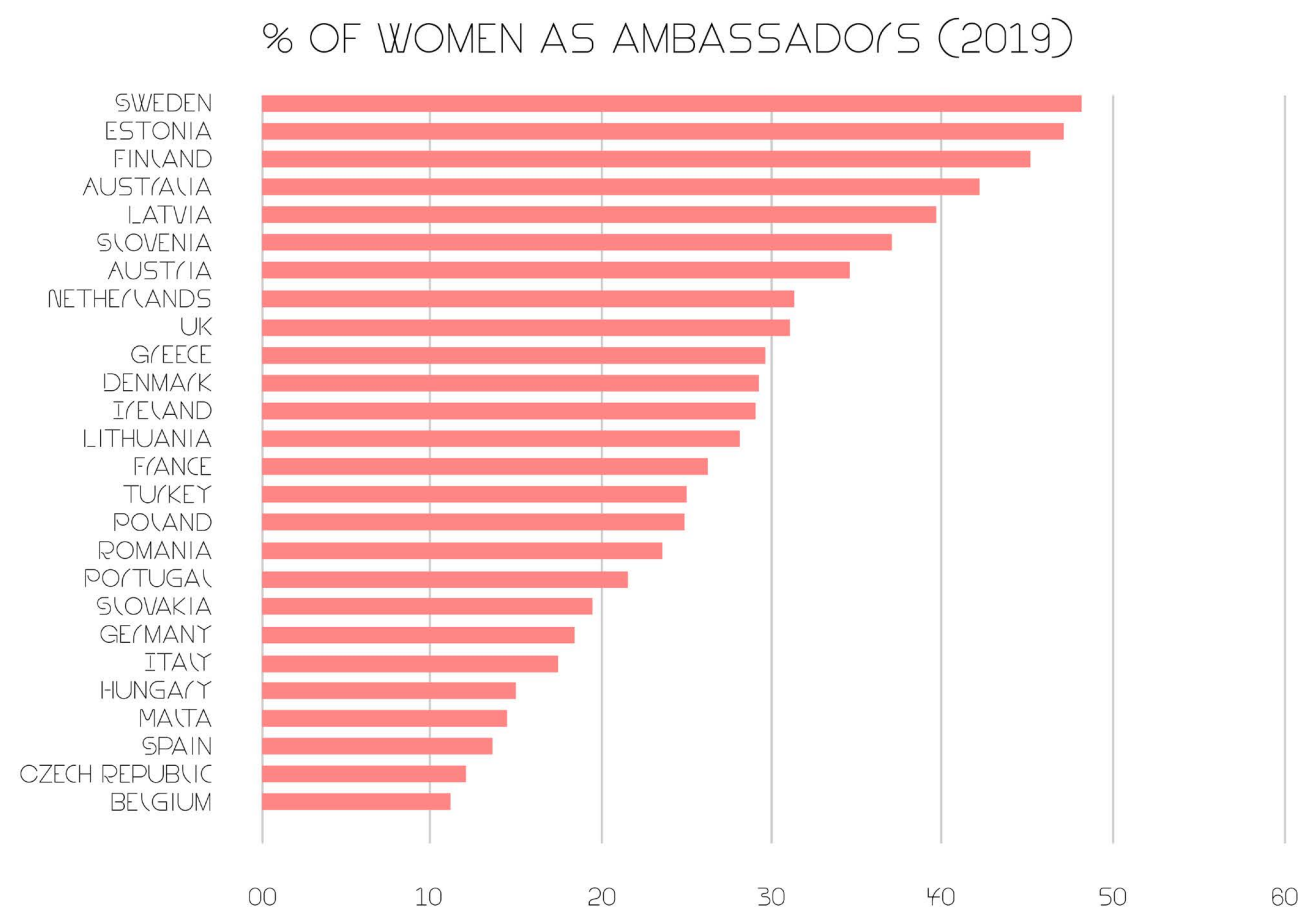
In 2019, around 25% of all foreign ministers in EU and G20 states have been or are women. However, the numbers are unequally distributed among the states. While South Africa always has had women as foreign ministers in the last 20 years, 19 countries in the EU and G20 have never had a woman holding this position. Similarly, 23.3% of defense ministers were women in 2019, but a total of 24 EU and G20 states have never seen a woman at the top of the defense ministry.

<sup>8</sup> Note that this includes the 20% increase in the Saudi-Arabian Consultative Assembly that has been induced through a quota and will most likely not see a yearly increase.



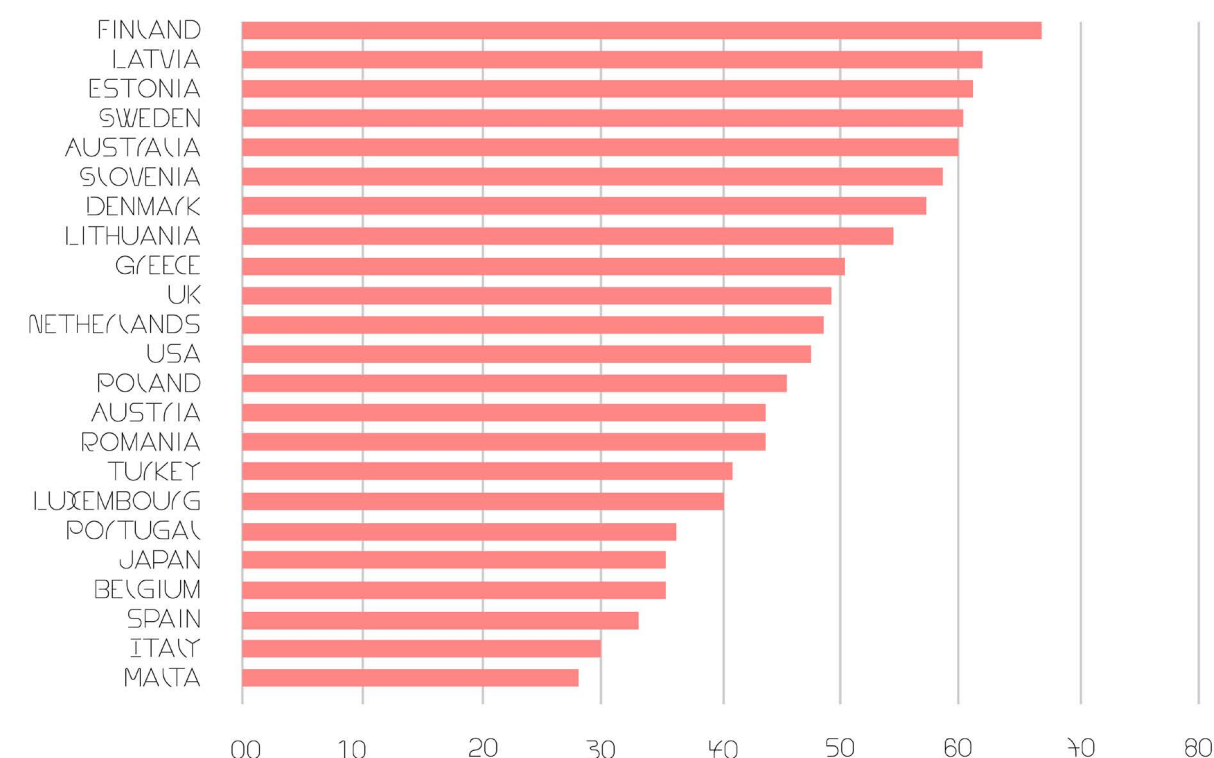
## 4. DIPLOMACY

The data collection in the field of diplomacy (EEAS, ambassadors and diplomatic corps) revealed that there is a significant lack of reliable and comparable data for the years 2000-2019 in nearly all EU and G20 states. Only Finland, Greece and Poland were able to provide reliable data on their ambassadors for the last 20 years. While the numbers for 2019 show that women take up about a fourth of all ambassador posts and represent approx. 43.5% of the diplomatic corps, there is no possibility to calculate an average increase or estimated future progress.



Comparing gender equality in diplomacy as of 2019 between countries shows clear differences. Whereas countries such as Sweden, Estonia and Finland are only 5% away from reaching parity between male and female ambassadors, Belgium and the Czech Republic have only 10% female ambassadors. And while

% OF WOMEN IN THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS (2019)

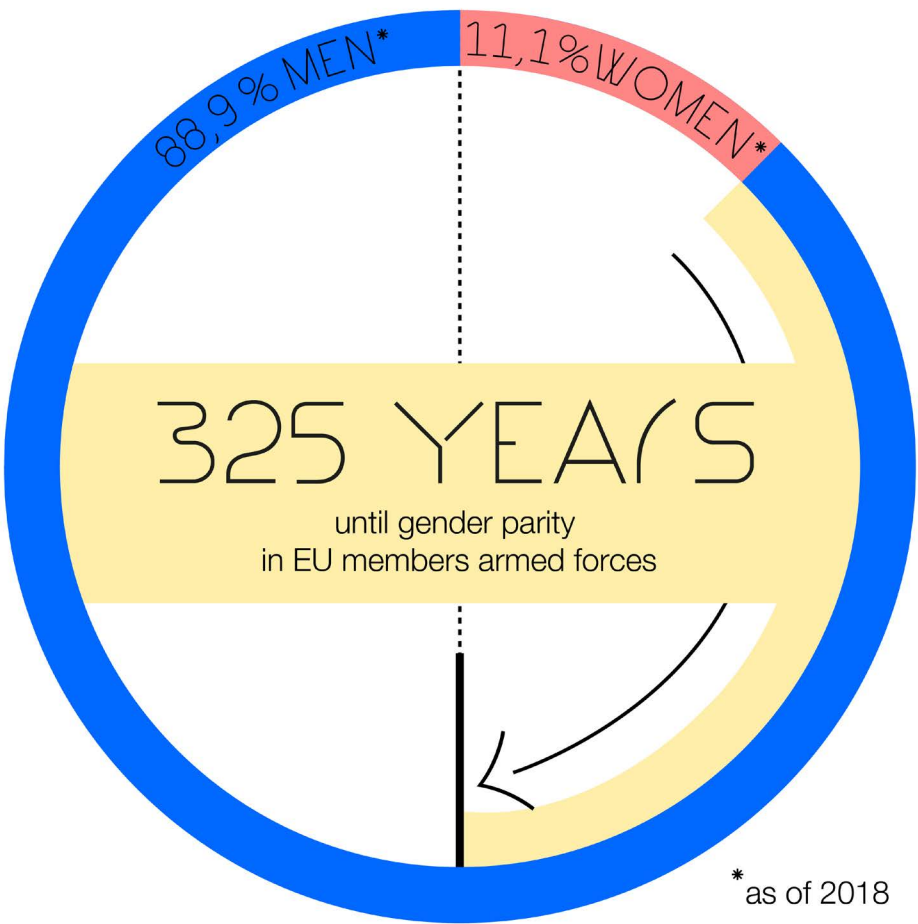


some countries such as Finland, Latvia and Estonia employ more women than men in their diplomatic corps, countries like Malta and Italy have not even reached a quarter.

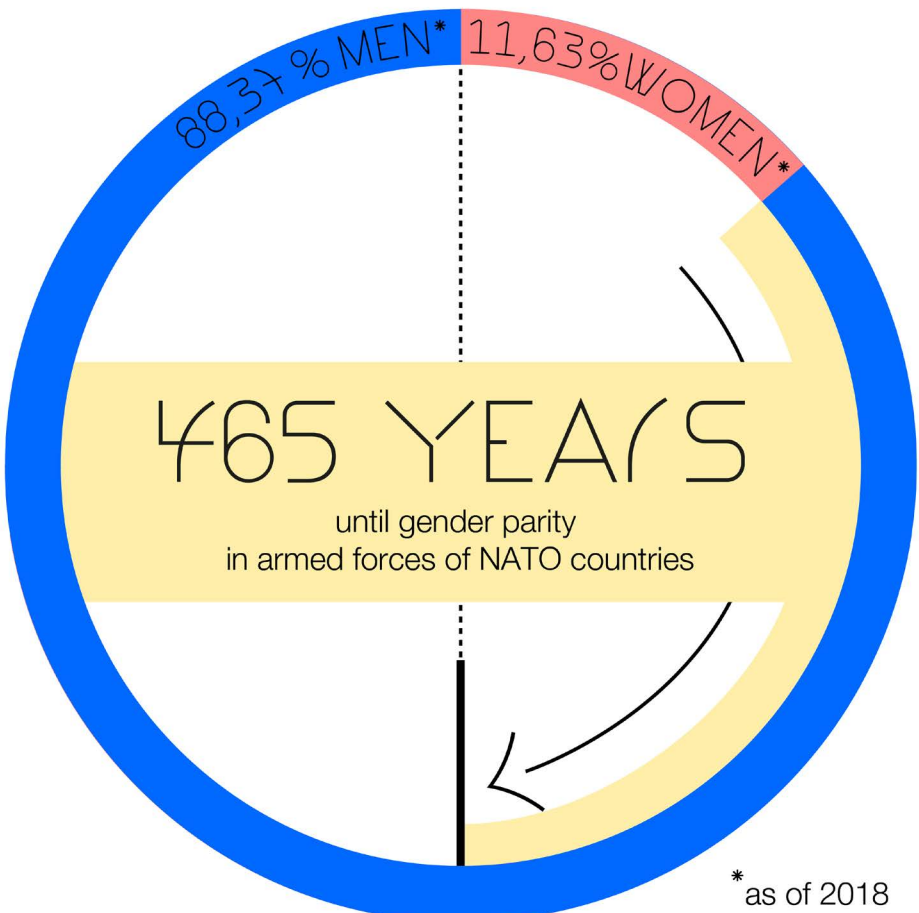
The EEAS also still has a long way to go until it reaches parity. The higher the rank, the lower the percentage of women: Most staff working in AST and AST/SC (assistants) ranks are women (with 65.55%), but the number drops to 34.92% in the highest ranks of AD (management level).

Even though data tells us that women play a crucial role in lasting peace agreements, they are not equally represented in the diplomatic field of negotiations and mediations. The available gender segregated data on major peace negotiations shows that the majority of peace agreements had 0% of women represented as negotiators. The highest numbers of women negotiators were present in West Sahara in 2018 (43%) and 2019 (40%) as well as in Syria in 2019 (41%).

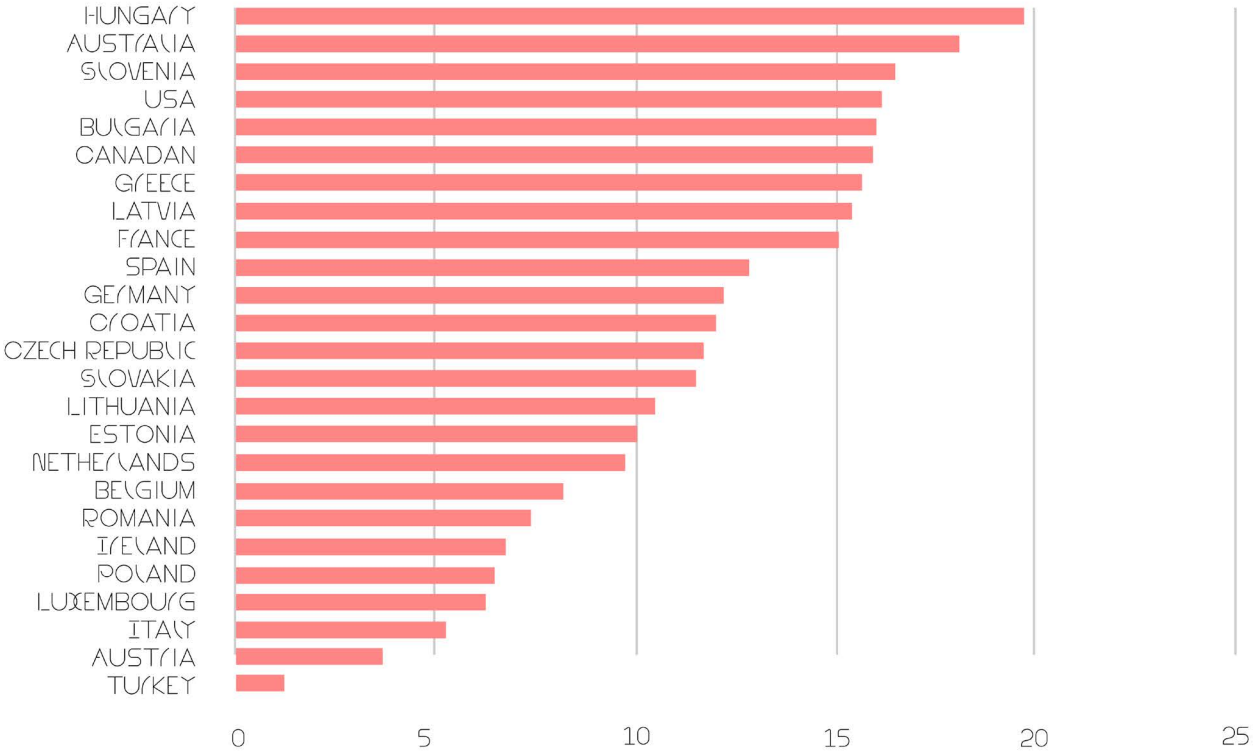
5. MILITARY



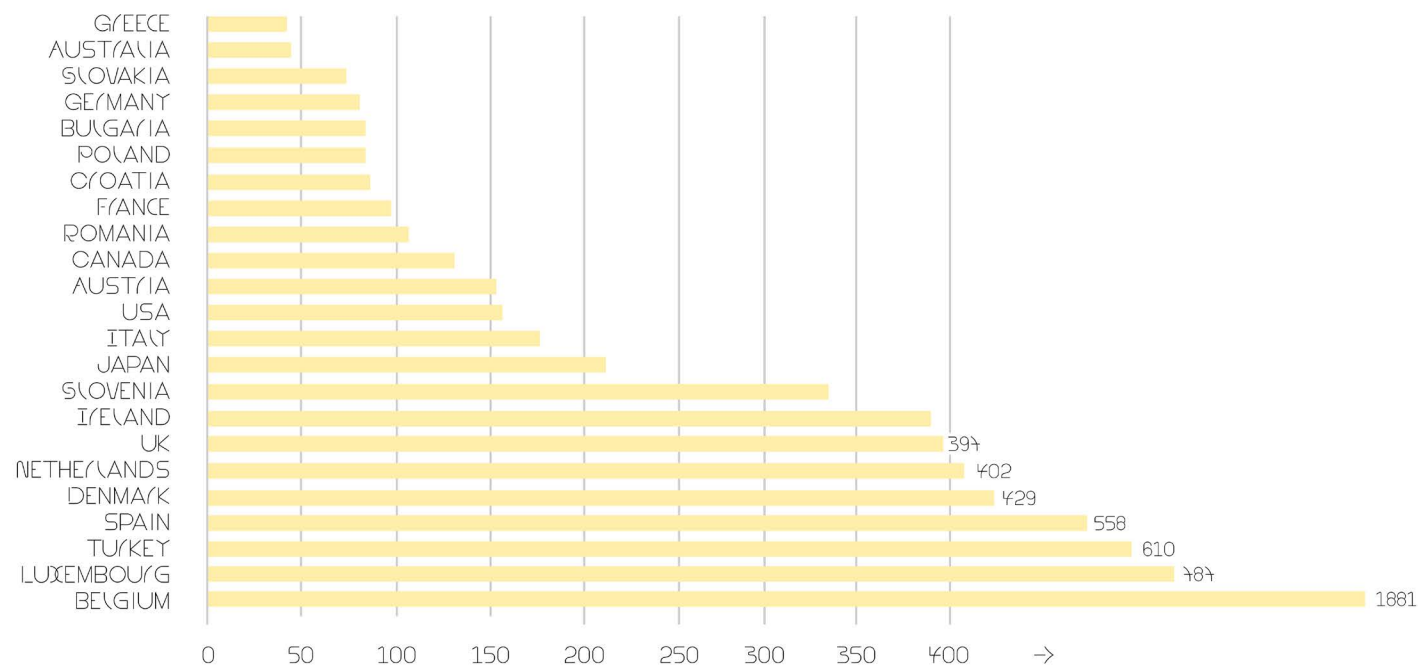
The data on women’s representation in the military for the period between 2000 and 2008 is poor. Thanks to the data collection of NATO, there are comprehensive numbers for women’s representation in NATO member states available between 2009 and 2018. Based on this, as well as data provided by the permanent representations, a somewhat reliable overview can be made. Women make up around 11% of members of the armed forces on average, however numbers differ widely between Turkey (1,2%) and Hungary (19,9%). The average increase in women’s representation in the military is slow; the EU countries on average only present a yearly increase of 0.12 percentage points. Consequently, it will take another 325 years until gender parity in the armed forces of EU member states will be achieved. Amongst NATO members, based on the development since 2009, it will take an estimated 465 years to reach gender parity.



% OF WOMEN IN NATIONAL ARMED FORCES (2018)

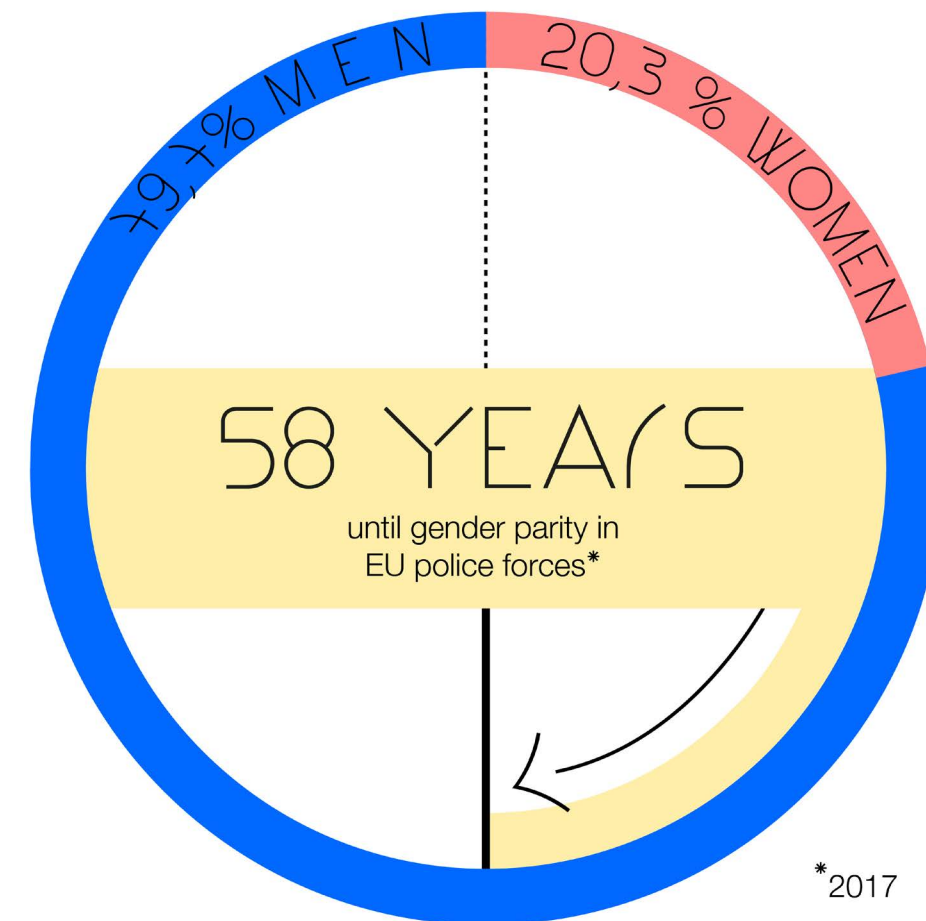


## YEARS UNTIL PARITY IN EU AND G20 ARMED FORCES



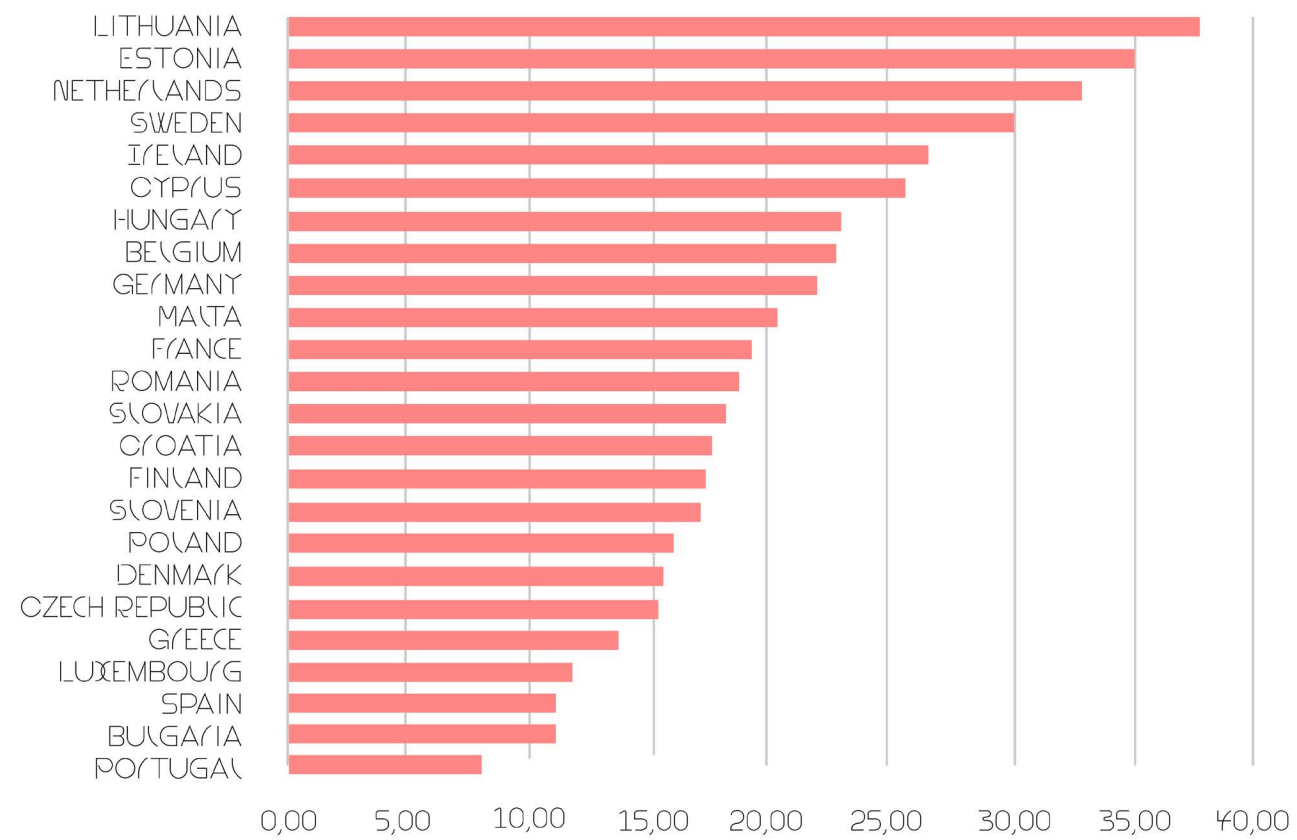
\*For some countries, the data was too unreliable for meaningful calculation. For example, Sweden was excluded from this calculation for this reason. Others were not included, because they showed negative development namely Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Portugal.

## 6. POLICE

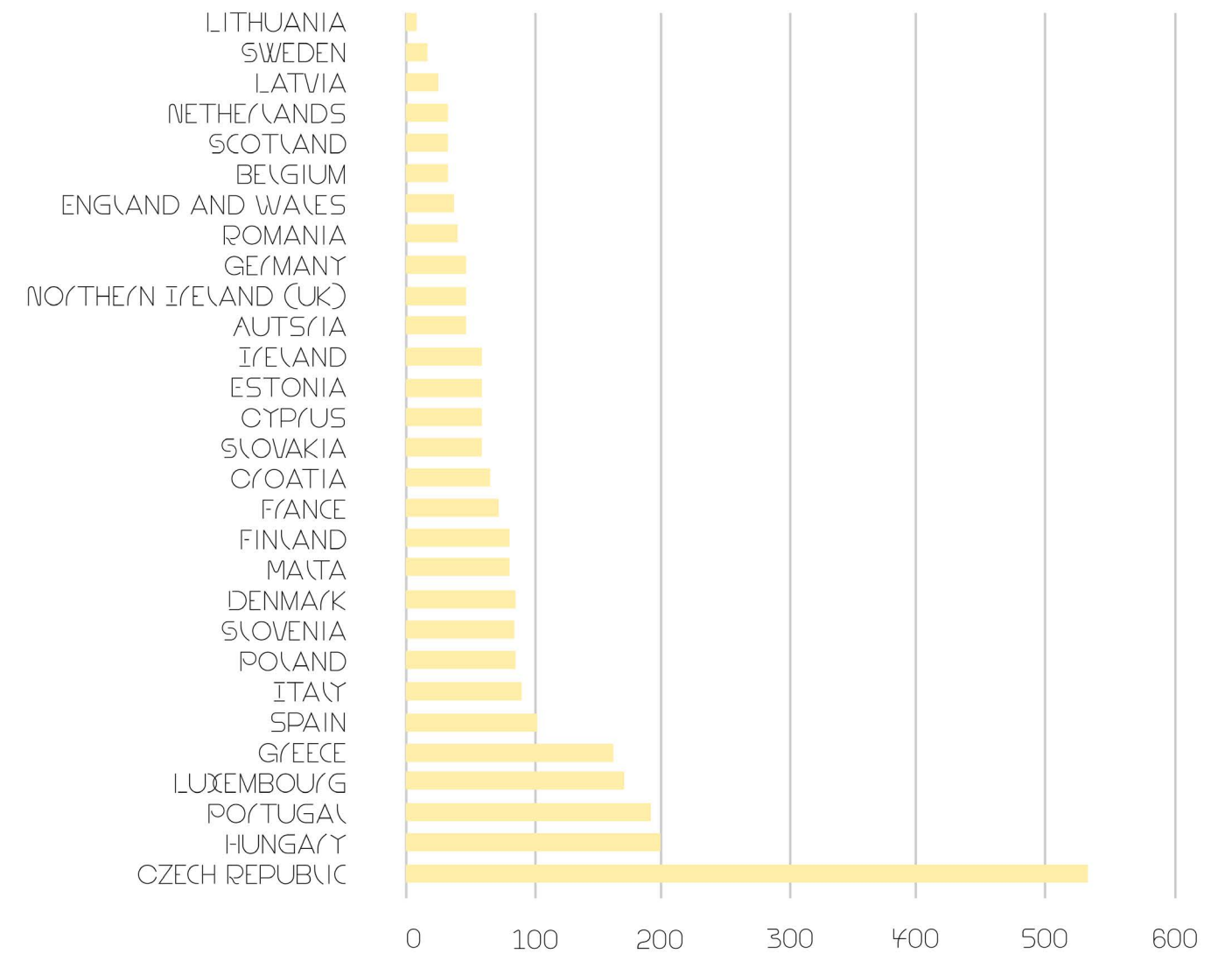


Similarly to the military, reliable data for Women's representation in the police only exists between 2009 and 2017. The average percentage of women in police amounts to approx. 25% in all EU states. Nevertheless, progress is slow and inconsistent, amounting to an estimated 58 years until parity will be achieved in member states' police forces. Lithuania is estimated to reach parity the fastest with approx. 9 years to go. Lithuania also shows the highest increase, with an average of 1.36 percentage points per year. The slowest increase among EU states can be observed in the Czech Republic, with only 0.07 percentage points increase per year. Overall, however, a positive trend towards gender parity emerges when looking at all available data. For the G20 countries which are not EU members, we were unable to obtain data, despite several requests.

% OF WOMEN IN  
EU NATIONAL POLICE FORCES (2017)



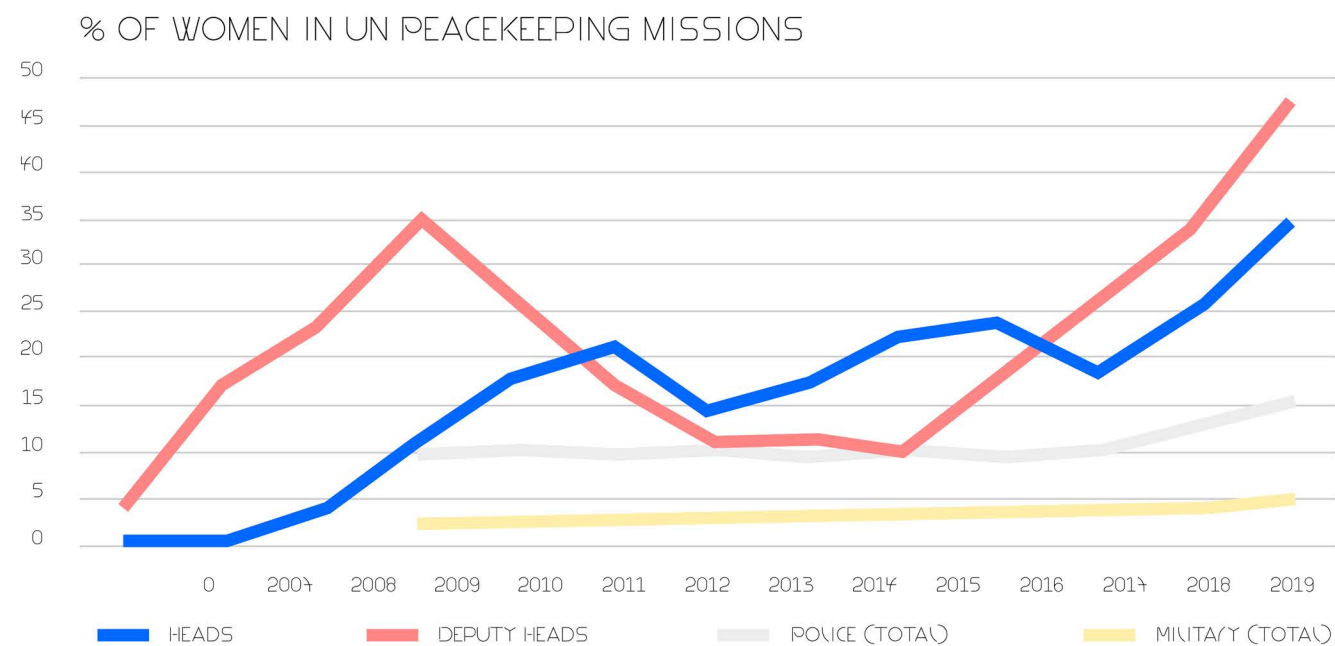
YEARS UNTIL GENDER PARITY  
IN EU AND G20 POLICE FORCES





## 7. INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

The data on international missions provides an insight into the disparities in development between leadership positions and overall staff. The number of women as head or deputy head of UN Missions has risen steadily from 0% and 4.8% in 2007 to 34.6% and 48%, respectively. Based on this development, gender parity should be reached for all leading positions in UN Missions by 2024. On the other hand, however, the number of female soldiers and police officers in UN Missions more closely resembles the national averages, with 15.4% in the police and only 4.8% in the military. Based on this, it will take UN Missions another 54 (Police) to 167 (Military) years to see this parity represented in the field.



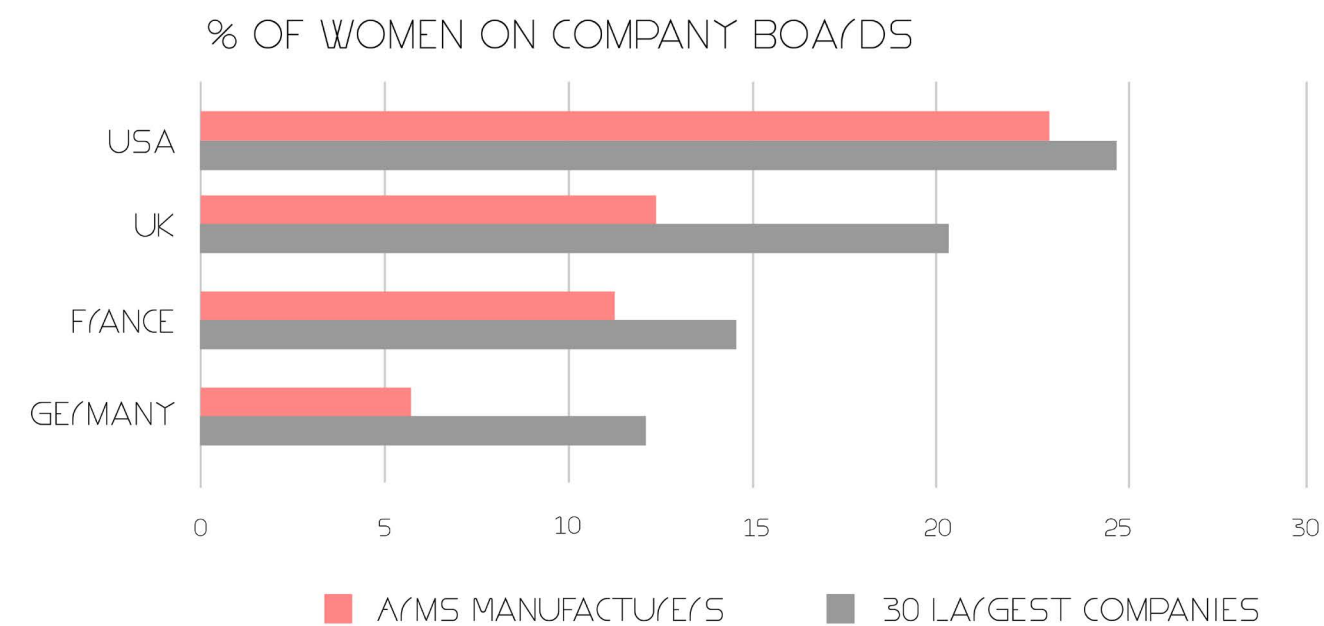
Data on the EU's civilian CSDP missions shows that women make up around a quarter of the mission staff. While the average percentage points of women in contracted staff is decreasing by 0.07 percentage points per year, the numbers for seconded staff are steadily rising by approx. 1.07 percentage points per

years. Based on this trend, gender parity within civilian CSDP missions should be reached in 25 years for seconded and 30 years for overall staff.

The situation in EU's military CSDP missions is different. Depending on the mission, women's representation is between 5% and 9%, with a very tiny upward trend. With regards to the leadership level (Heads of Mission), civilian as well as military missions are lacking in gender parity. By mid-2020, only 6 out of 70 Heads of Civilian CSDP Missions were women (9%). When it comes to Commanders, there has not been a single female commander or deputy commander in any of the Military Operations and Missions to date. In 2020, only one out of 17 CSDP missions is headed by a woman; the newly appointed Nataliya Apostolova.

# 8. BUSINESS

Albeit the business sector is not at the core of foreign and security policy, it is certainly involved in the field of peace and security. To get an idea of the representation of women in the leadership of companies in the security sector, we checked their representation in boards of big arms manufacturers in Germany, France, the UK, and the USA, based on data from the annual report of AllBright Foundation. It can be observed that in Germany, there are only three women on the boards of the 12 businesses we looked at, which translates to 5.8% overall. In US companies, numbers are higher: 29 women are sitting on the boards of the nine companies we took into account, an average of 23%. When comparing these percentages with the average percentage of women on the boards of the 30 largest companies per country, we see that the percentages of women in the foreign and security sector are universally lagging behind the national average in all four countries, with the biggest disparity in British companies and the lowest in US companies.



# 9. CONCLUSION

This is only a brief overview of the status quo and development of women’s representation in foreign and security policy, based on the available data. We will continue this project and hope that by the 21st anniversary of resolution 1325, in October 2021, we will have a better dataset and a more adequate calculation of the SHEcurity-Index ready. The discussion about an equal representation of women in the field of peace and security will not have ceased by then, nor will we have reached full parity.

#SHECURITY