

Women, Peace and Security: The Contribution of Parliaments of NATO Member Countries

AUDREY REEVES, PH.D.



LIBERAL ARTS AND HUMAN SCIENCES

POLITICAL SCIENCE
VIRGINIA TECH.

Background

- NATO PA's ground-breaking perspective on WPS
- Builds on 2011, 2013 and 2015 reports
- Partners:
 - Sarah Ferbach (Sciences Po Bordeaux, France)
 - Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF);
 - 28 NATO PA delegations' who provided responses to our questionnaire in the summer 2018

The Role of Parliaments in Advancing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in NATO Member Countries

A Survey by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (2015)



DCAF
a centre for security,
development and
the rule of law



NATO Parliamentary Assembly

How and to what extent have parliaments of NATO member countries contributed to advancing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in 2015-18?

28 out of 28
delegations or

100%

report that parliamentarians have taken steps to promote the women, peace and security agenda.

An increase from 81% in 2015.

Importance of NAPs

Countries with a National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security remain twice as active as countries without a NAP.

Country	Year of first NAP (year of subsequent NAPs)	Country	Year of first NAP (year of subsequent NAPs)
Belgium	2009 (2013, 2017)	Luxembourg	2018
Canada	2010 (2017)	Montenegro	2017
Croatia	2011	Netherlands	2007 (2011, 2016)
Czech Republic	2017	Norway	2006 (2011, 2015)
Denmark	2005 (2008, 2014)	Portugal	2009 (2014)
Estonia	2010 (2015)	Slovenia	2010 (2018)
France	2010 (2015)	Spain	2007 (2017)
Germany	2013 (2017)	United Kingdom	2006 (2012, 2014, 2018)
Iceland	2008 (2013)	USA	2011 (2016)
Italy	2010 (2014, 2016)		
Lithuania	2011		

Importance of
NAPs

But countries
without NAP
also report a
greater
awareness and
level of activity.

9 out of 9 delegations or

100%

Report some level of
activity, an increase
from 33% in 2015.

Four fields of
activities and
intervention for
WPS

Gender-balanced parliamentary
leadership

Legislation and resolutions

Oversight

Civil society engagement

1. Gender-balanced parliamentary leadership

91% of delegations report that women recently occupied prominent functions related to peace and security in their parliament.

This enhances women's leadership in decision-making and public debate in peace and security, one of the three pillars of the WPS agenda:



Prevention of conflict and gender based violence in conflict-affected contexts



Protection of the human rights of women and girls in conflict-affected contexts



Women's participation in decision-making on peace and security



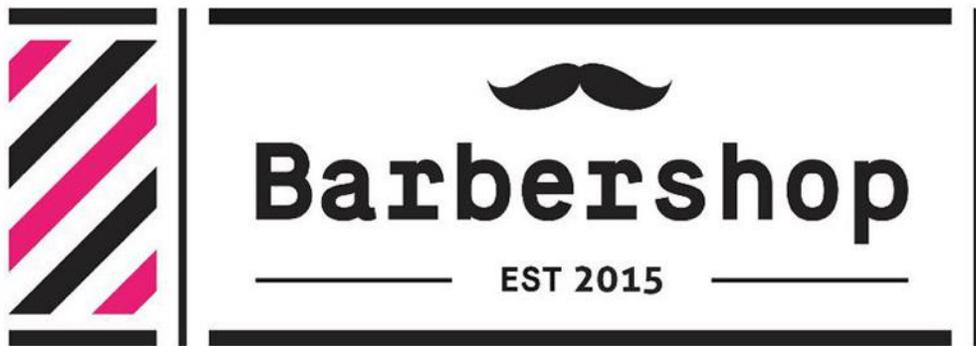
Gender-sensitive relief and recovery during and after conflict

1. Gender-balanced parliamentary leadership: the way forward

Further engagement of men as partners in the advancement of the WPS agenda

Examples:

1. Support women's participation and leadership in parliamentary committees on peace and security
2. Fight sexual harassment in parliament
3. Constructively support initiatives related to WPS



MOBILIZING MEN AND BOYS FOR GENDER EQUALITY

2. Legislation & resolutions

Delegations' report suggest that parliaments' engagement as **legislative bodies** has **diversified qualitatively**:

Reported legislatives initiatives	2013-15	2015-18
4.1 Participation of women in security institutions	3	4
4.2 Support to survivors of sexual violence	2	6
4.3 Gender-sensitive support to asylum seekers and refugees	1	6
4.4 Prioritisation of gender equality in international development and trade	3	2

The way forward:
More legislative initiatives.

legislative initiatives and resolutions remain concentrated in a few countries: 47% of responding countries with a NAP; 22% of those without one.

- Example 1: Asylum seekers and refugees



Protection of the human rights of women and girls in conflict-affected contexts



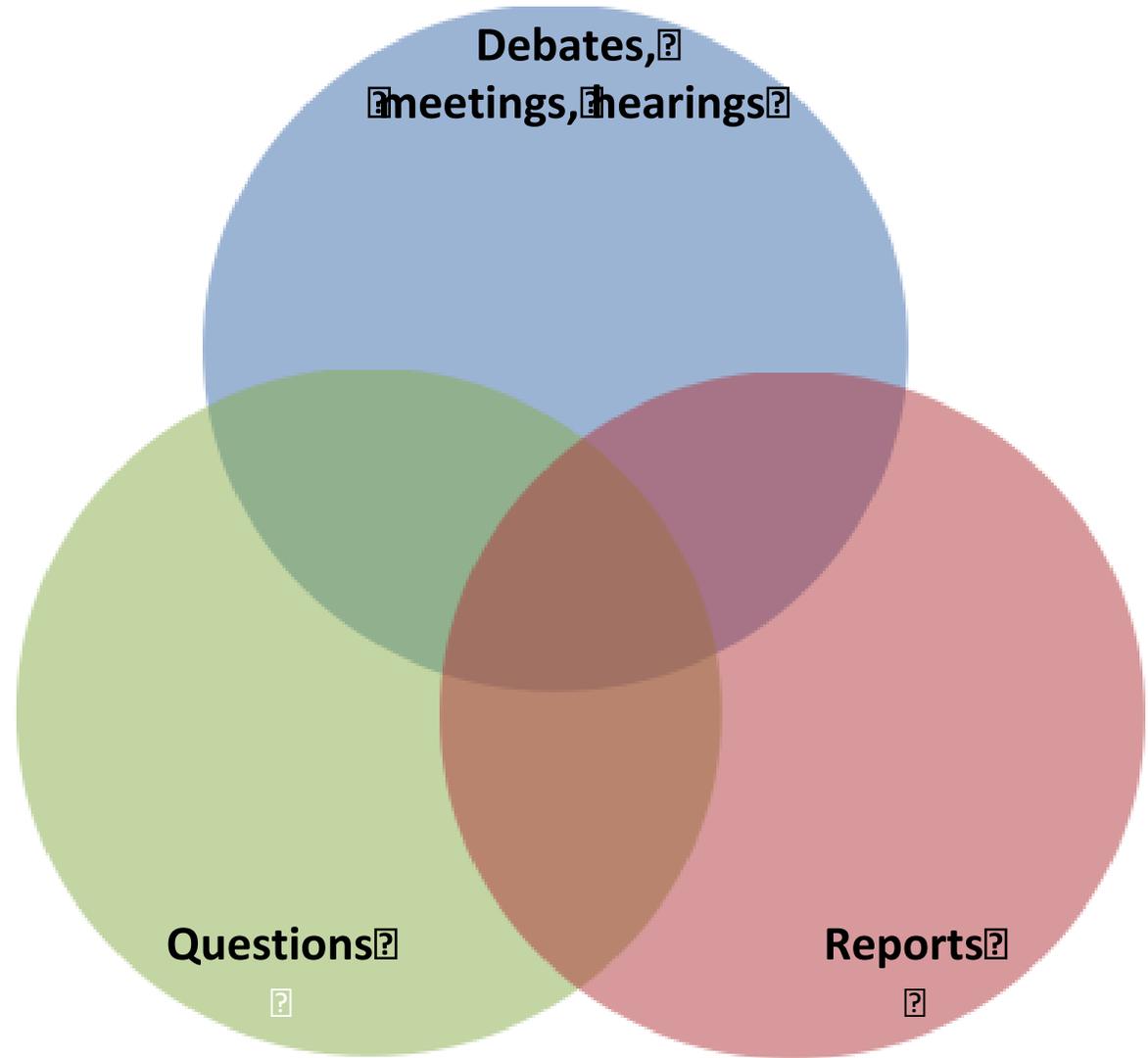
Prevention of conflict and gender-based violence

© Dragan Tatic. Migrants at the Greek–Macedonian border near [Gevgelija](#), 24 August 2015.



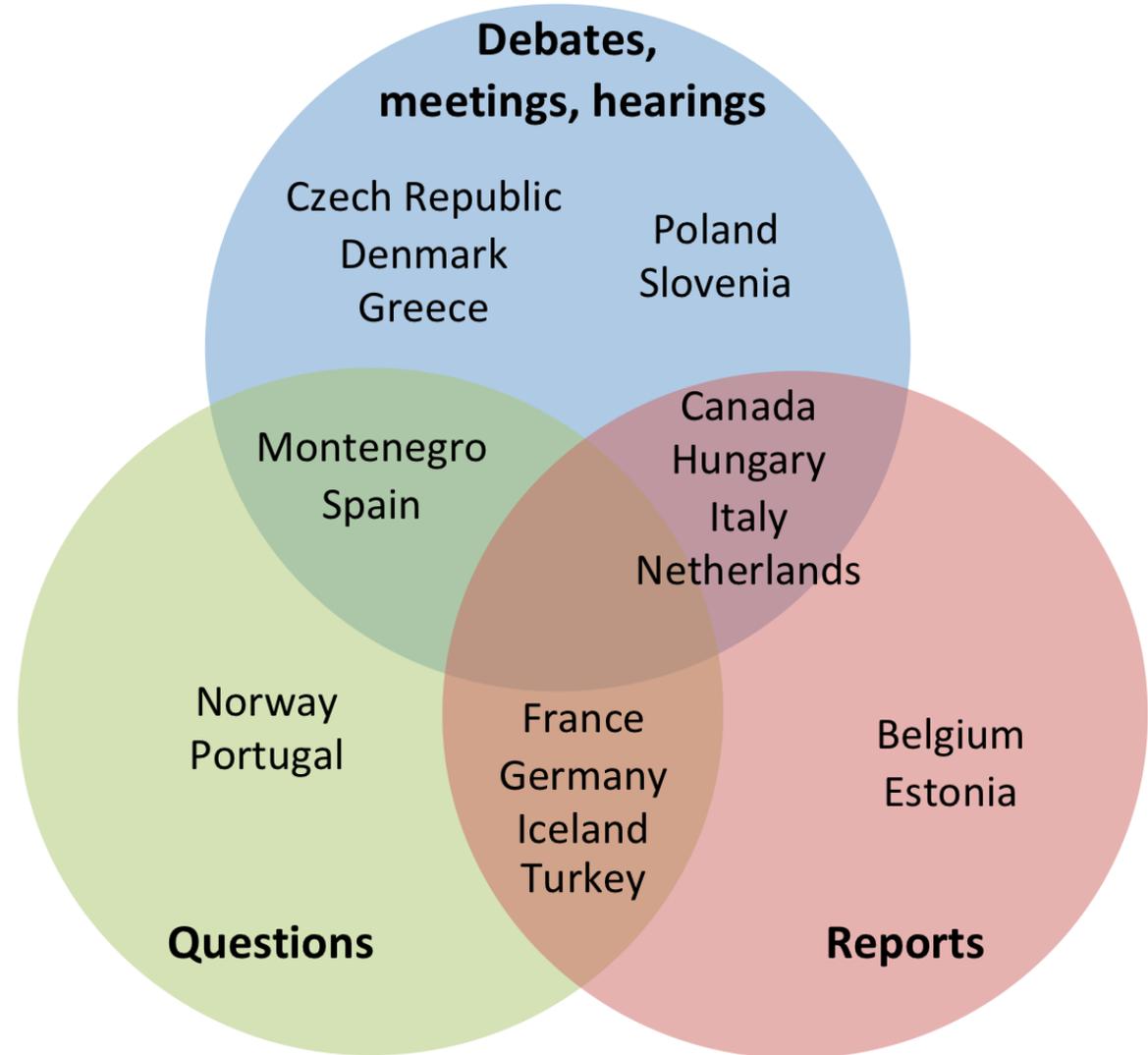
3. Oversight

- 68 % of delegations report some involvement in oversight (76% in 2015).



3. Oversight

- 36% of delegations mention using two or more monitoring mechanisms in overseeing the implementation of the WPS agenda (24% in 2015).



3. Oversight: the way forward

- More periodic mechanisms (currently only 32%)

Advantages of periodic oversight:

- 1) Ensures that WPS remains on the agenda;
- 2) Signals to executive authorities that their performance will be scrutinized.

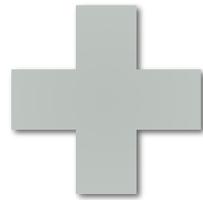
Example: Canada ties its scrutiny of the government's progress on WPS to the parliamentary budget cycle. Two House of Commons committees jointly assess the performance of the government three times of year. Recently MPs thus assessed the Ministry of Defence in relation to resources dedicated to:

- Integration of women in defence forces
- Elimination of sexual misconduct in defence forces
- Commitments to peace operations

4. Civil society engagement

- 61% of responding delegations report activities in this area.

Coalitions with civil society organisation



Attendance at and organisation of national and international forums



- Give WPS civil society leaders official recognition and legitimacy
- Foster dialogue and cooperation between civil society and parliaments
- Favour (cross-national) knowledge exchange and expertise building

Civil society engagement: the way forward

Develop a more holistic
understanding of the
WPS agenda as
concerned not only with
women, but
gender
relations

1. Develop awareness of sexual violence against men and boys, while also maintaining attention on women and girl survivors.
2. Address the role of culturally defined masculine norms of behavior in fostering violence but also building peaceful dialogue.
3. Engage men as agents capable of positive change for an equitable peace.

Examples: Three parliaments report exercising oversight over the role of men in implementing WPS objectives in defence institutions.

Concluding thoughts

