

GBA+

Application

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Leveraging the eFP: Future Multilateral Cooperation

About the Author



Vanessa Brown holds a BA (Hons) and an MA in Political Science from York University. She is a PhD candidate conducting her doctoral work in sociology at Carleton University. She joined the College as a lecturer in 2015 teaching Institutional Policy Studies for the Joint Command and Staff Programme. Vanessa became an Assistant Professor of the Department of Defence Studies in 2020 working in the Dallaire Centre of Excellence for Peace and Security.

GBA+ Application for: “Leveraging the eFP: Future Multilateral Cooperation” by Christian Leuprecht, Alexander Lanoszka, Jayson Derow, and Karolina Muti

DSF Thematic Team: European NATO

Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+)

GBA+ is an analytical tool to advance gender equality and diversity outcomes of various policies, programs, and services. This strategy of gender mainstreaming is specific to the government of Canada, and includes not only gender but also intersectional considerations, such as race and sexuality. In 2016, DND-CAF adopted GBA+ in response to United National Security Council Resolution 1325 and related resolutions, which acknowledges the need for gender perspectives in conflict, post-conflict and peacebuilding processes, and women's participation in decision making. GBA+ training through the Status of Women Canada online course is mandated for most DND-CAF employees and is an important consideration in assessing the most pressing future defence and security issues.

The GBA+ team of the DSF Group has developed a GBA+ toolkit that supports authors of working papers to integrate gender and intersectional considerations in their work from the initial stages of their research to the development of evidence-based findings and recommendations. The GBA+ Toolkit provides a series of key questions for regional teams to consider, such as: "are your concepts conceived in broad and inclusive ways to account for the experiences and perspectives of those not well represented in research and power structures?" or "how does your foresight analysis reinforce or challenge existing power relations?" A gender-liaison from each regional team works in consultation with members of the GBA+ team to develop GBA+ for the working papers. This GBA+ application complements the efforts of working paper authors to apply a GBA+ lens to their work.

GBA+ Considerations of "Leveraging the eFP: Future Multilateral Cooperation"

NATO's enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) constitutes an important case for the application of gender and intersectional perspectives. This discussion illustrates that eFP stands to fail or succeed precisely because of: gender and intersectional dynamics in the Baltic region; ideological posturing about gender and nationalism between Russia and Baltic nations; and clashes among NATO Alliance militaries about liberal international values related to gender equality and human rights.

Drawing from gender and intersectional perspectives appreciably enhances arguments made in this paper along several lines. The first being the **desire to move from bilateral relationships to long-standing multilateral relationships** in the NATO Alliance. Values established in NATO's BiSc 40-1 can create a common ground from which to view "the mission not merely as a tactical deployment but [] an opportunity to develop cohesion and collective competencies"(2017, 2). eFP's mission mandates on the application of a gender perspective and "the need to eliminate barriers for the active participation of women, internally within the Alliance, as well as externally where NATO conducts operations and missions" are natural fits for collaboration among Alliance members (NATO, 2017, 3). Building relationships on the premise of these gender related objectives could stave off fragmentation in the Alliance over other socio-cultural issues and might be valuably used as a strategic contrast in gender narratives between the Alliance and Russia. It is worth noting, for example, that Latvia's dominant gender politics may presently be more closely aligned with Russia than those established by NATO (Lazda 2018; Riabov & Riabova 2014).

Joint efforts to implement Women, Peace and Security (WPS) related mission mandates in eFP could aid in forging common views serving to demonstrate that the Alliance is tactically and normatively united against Russian aggression.

Second, applications of GBA+ can assist in **creating more effective responses to ‘crises that fall below the threshold of Article 5’** such as “ethno-political discord instigated from abroad” (p. 8). Diverse gender and identity norms in the region, as well as the unique intersectional dimensions of Baltic states, such as those in Latvia noted in the recommendations below, indicate that now is the time to double down on efforts to strengthen civil peace and security initiatives through aspects of the eFP mission that support the WPS agenda. Using collaborative means that elevate the status of women and marginalized communities could assist in “forging strong civil societies and civil contingency agencies to make [Baltic states] less susceptible to unconventional Russian aggression” (p.8). Better aligning military gender values to those established in NATO BiSc 40-1 could also enhance solidarity and create stronger value-based ties that bond. As the paper notes, “fostering closer links can improve cohesion within NATO ranks. This in turn strengthens deterrence since Russia would be less able to pick off NATO members and play them against each other” (p. 11). Common value standpoints and interests based on equality and human rights could be the foundation upon which to build lasting multilateral security relationships within the NATO Alliance that are beneficial in other strategic areas, and could constitute a useful method to handle ideological threats, particularly in a time where the probability of an Article 5 crisis is low but the importance of winning hearts and minds is high.

Third, **there is need to give wider support to fundamental human rights and gender equality in Latvia** as a key element of socio-cultural interoperability in the NATO Alliance. A critical component of Canada’s engagement in Latvia has been to assist the Latvian Armed Forces to implement key aspects of the WPS agenda. The Canadian military has deployed Gender Advisors to establish relationships with key leaders and civil society organizations and to support the full and equal participation of women in armed forces, politics, and security decision making processes. Canadian military support has also aided the application of a gender perspective (or GBA+) to assess the differential needs, risks, and interests of diverse women, men, girls, boys and non-binary people in Latvia. While “Canada is a credible champion of liberal internationalist values that are broadly shared in the Baltic region” (p. 4), gender relations between staff in the civil-military co-operation section of Canada’s Task Force Latvia have put Canadian military personnel at considerable risk (Pugliese 2019). Despite Canada’s efforts to unite NATO Allies through support of international normative frameworks about gender, it is precisely the use of gender power (in the form of dominance, status, and harassment) that has upended Canada’s ability to effectively support the eFP mission (Ibid). An application of GBA+ to understand gender and intersectional dynamics would ensure that Canada is able to continue its active role in eFP.

¹Such as: European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)(2019) Gender Equality Index, Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2019/LV>; General Statistical Bureau of Latvia (GSBL) (2020) Gender Equality Indicators: Violence, Available at: <https://www.csb.gov.lv/en/gender-equality-indicators/Violence>; UN Women (2016) Global Data Base on Violence Against Women, Available at: <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/pt/countries/europe/latvia>

²For example, see: Novitskaya, Alexandra (2017) Patriotism, sentiment, and male hysteria: Putin’s masculinity politics and the persecution of non-heterosexual Russians, NORMA, 12:3-4, 302-318, DOI: 10.1080/18902138.2017.1312957.

Recommendations

It is recommended that GBA+ applications inform future research on this security topic to provide more fulsome policy implications for DND. This research could valuably:

- > Draw on methods and questions of inquiry outlined in the GBA+ toolkit.
- > Examine intersectional indicators about social, economic, and political inequalities in Baltic states using available indexes. For example, as of 2013 Latvia had the highest rate of violence against women in the EU (EIGE 2019). Latvia has a high rate of suicide among young and middle-aged men and a high rate of male unemployment (Värnik et al 2004). These gendered social outcomes have been linked to economic and ideological transitions from communism to capitalism and democracy in the Baltics (Motiejūnaitė 2008; Värnik et al 2004).
- > Draw on feminist and intersectional literature that examines Russia and its relations with Baltic states and use these insights to help determine which populations are disproportionately impacted by regional insecurity.
- > Investigate NATO member militaries' norms about gender, diversity, and inclusion, and identify if these pose barriers to multilateral relationships.

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