

Uruguay - Summary Report

WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status:

Uruguay has not published a NAP, but one is in development.

General Assessment:

Uruguay has made concrete advancement towards the implementation of the WPS principles despite not having published a WPS NAP. As a contributor of personnel to the UN missions, its involvement with the WPS agenda is extensive. These efforts have also permeated the police. That said, the WPS standards should be integrated more fully in all security (defense and police) forces and not just those deployed in UN missions.

National Importance/Political Will:

The constitution guarantees that all people shall be treated equally, and in 2007 Uruguay enacted the Equal Rights and Opportunities between Men and Women law.¹ Uruguay's commitment to the WPS principles is reflected in key foreign policy documents, such as the Strategic Plan 2015-2020.³ The Foreign Ministry is also consistent in its support for the international gender equality framework and explicitly makes references to UNSCR 1325.⁴

At the national level, the *National Strategy for Gender Equality by 2030* stands out as the main instrument for the implementation of Uruguay's commitments to gender equality.⁵ The National Strategy is a comprehensive and inclusive roadmap, which guides the actions of the state in matters of gender equality in the medium term. It is also relevant that there is momentum in Uruguay for women's rights. In 2019, Uruguay elected for the first time a woman as Vice President of the Republic, and there is a very active multi-party caucus of congresswomen coordinating gender policies. Given the support for gender equality in the country and in the Congress, both the National Defense policy and the rest of the legal frameworks contain formulations that imply the presence and active participation of women.⁶

¹ See the Section II of Constitution of Uruguay. Government of Uruguay, *Constitución de la República*, (1967), at: <https://www.impo.com.uy/bases/constitucion/1967-1967/8>

² https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/URY/INT_CCPR_ADR_URY_14906_S.pdf

³ See relevant foreign policy related documents: Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Plan Estratégico 2015-2020: Bases para la Política Exterior de Uruguay*, (Montevideo, Uruguay: Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores), at: <https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-relaciones-exteriores/sites/ministerio-relaciones-exteriores/files/2018-10/bases%2Bpara%2Bla%2Bpolitica%2Bexterior%2Bdel%2B Uruguay.pdf>; Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres (InMujeres), *Informe de Uruguay sobre la implementación de la Declaración y Plataforma de Acción de Beijing*, (Montevideo, Uruguay: InMujeres), at: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/13220Uruguay_review_Beijing20.pdf

⁴ Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, “Comunicado de Prensa No. 63/20: Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad: Diálogo Intergeneracional de Alto Nivel para celebrar aniversario de la Resolución 1325 (2000)”, (July 15, 2020), at: <https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-relaciones-exteriores/comunicacion/noticias/mujeres-paz-seguridad-dialogo-intergeneracional-alto-nivel-para-celebrar>

⁵ Ministerio de Desarrollo Social, *Estrategia Nacional para la Igualdad de Género 2030*, (Montevideo, Uruguay: Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, 2017), at: www.gub.uy/ministerio-desarrollo-social/sites/ministerio-desarrollo-social/files/2019-08/estrategia-nacional-para-la-igualdad-de-genero_web.pdf;

⁶ Instituto Nacional de Impresiones y Publicaciones Digitales (IMPO), *Ley N° 18650, Ley Marco de Defensa Nacional*, (Montevideo: IMPO, 2010) at: <https://www.impo.com.uy/bases/leyes/18650-2010/16>; also from IMPO see *Decreto N° 129/016* (Montevideo: IMPO, 2016), at:

Nonetheless, there is room for improvement, particularly in referring explicitly to the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and the police as principal actors of the implementation of WPS and gender equality principles. Both institutions participate in the National Council of Gender, but neither has specific plans to implement the principles of UNSCR 1325.⁷

Institutional Policy and Practice:

Strategy, Plans, Policy

In Uruguay, the National Gender Council is a key government body that advances gender equality principles. This body, created by Law No. 18,104, mainstreams the spirit of UN Resolution 1325 and integrates the principles of gender equality in all public policies of the state, including those related to military strategy, policy, and planning. That said, none of these documents are publicly available.

The principles of WPS/UNSCR 1325 are more substantially integrated into key documents related to police strategy, plans, policy, and operations.⁸ This is also the case for police operational planning process.

The Ministry of the Interior actively promotes gender equality in security institutions, for example, by the elimination of female entry quotas and their participation in UN missions.

Despite these advances, the military has not appointed a full-time Gender Advisor (GENAD). A GENAD is appointed only for UN missions. The police also not have a GENAD. That said, in both the military and the police there are double-hatted GFPs.

Gender in the Ranks (Military and Police)

Service	Men	Women	Percent Women
Army	13,516	1,432	10%
Army Senior Women			2%
Navy	4,161	595	13%
Navy Senior Women			1.2%
Air Force	2,174	438	17%

<https://www.impo.com.uy/bases/decretos-originales/129-2016/2>; Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, *Plan Estratégico del Ministerio de Defensa Nacional*, (Montevideo, Uruguay: Ministerio de Defensa) at:

<https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-defensa-nacional/institucional/plan-estrategico/plan-estrategico>

⁷ In its art. 8, the 18.650 law, defines the integration of the National Council of Gender: The National Council is created within the orbit of the Ministry of Social Development Coordinator of Public Policies for Gender Equality, chaired by a representative of the National Institute of Women, which will also be composed of a representative of each Ministry designated by the respective Minister. See: Ministerio de Desarrollo Social, *Consejo Nacional de Género, Documento Base de Trabajo 2015-2020*, (Montevideo, Uruguay: InMujeres, 2015), at:

<https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-desarrollo-social/sites/ministerio-desarrollo-social/files/2020-08/documento-base-cng-2015-2020.pdf>

⁸ Ministerio del Interior, *Guía de Procedimiento Policial, Actuaciones en Violencia Doméstica y de Género*, (Montevideo, Uruguay: Minterior, July 2011), at:

https://www.minterior.gub.uy/genero/images/stories/guia_de_procedimiento_policial.pdf

Air Force Senior Women			1.6%
National Police	4,127	1,302	24%
National Police Senior Women			3%
Women Deployed	1047	81 ⁹	7%

On average, women make up 11% of the military. Their presence in flag positions remains very low. The Uruguayan armed forces frequently participate in UN missions. Uruguay is the largest troop contributor of Latin America. Of the troops contributed to UN missions, women represent 7.18% of all personnel.

All positions in the military are open to women. The recruitment target for women in the armed forces is set at maintaining the current percentages. This is related to the national demographics. Uruguay's population has not significantly grown in the past three decades; rather than increasing the gross number of women in the armed forces, the goal is to maintain the rate. The MoD has taken steps to achieve this, for example through presenting the military as an appealing professional career.¹⁰

In terms of the police, 25.6% of the personnel are women. The target goal for the recruitment of women in the police is 50%.

Training, Education, and Exercises

The principles of WPS/UNSCR 1325 are not consistently integrated into the education and training for military personnel. Specialized courses are available for Uruguayan personnel before deployment at UN missions. These courses are mandatory. But this is not the case for the rest of the personnel.¹¹ In the training, emphasis is given to the protection of vulnerable populations. This is particularly important after a series of sexual abuse accusations against the Uruguayan peacekeepers were acknowledged at the highest political level.¹² Since then, Uruguay has strengthened its instructions. This “lessons learned and good practice” response has been recognized by the UN as such.¹³

In terms of the police, the Ministry of the Interior provides an extensive curriculum and extracurriculum training program for police officers, including with regard to issues related to domestic violence, receipt of complaints, budgets and planning with a gender approach, trafficking

⁹ See Uruguay's participation in UN Missions. Peace Keeping United Nations, *Summary of Troops Contributing Countries by Ranking Police, UN Military Experts on Mission, Staff Officers and Troops 2020*, at: https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/2_country_ranking_13.pdf

¹⁰ Diálogo, “Uruguay women make great strides in military”, *Diálogo Revista Militar Digital* (October 8, 2013), at: <https://dialogo-americas.com/es/articles/uruguay-women-make-great-strides-in-military/>

¹¹ National Peace Operations Training Institute of Paraguay, *Courses* (Uruguay, 2020), at: <http://www.enopu.edu.uy/en/educacion/cursos/>

¹² Presidencia de Uruguay, *El presidente Tabaré Vázquez enumeró medidas para combatir abuso sexual en misiones de paz*, (September 18, 2017), at: <https://www.presidencia.gub.uy/comunicacion/comunicacionnoticias/vazquez-naciones+unidas-explotacion-sexual-onu>

¹³ Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, *Naciones Unidas distingue a Uruguay como Referente en Políticas de Protección a la Niñez en Misiones de Paz*, (June 23, 2020), at: <https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-defensa-nacional/comunicacion/noticias/naciones-unidas-distingue-uruguay-referente-politicas-proteccion-ninez>

of persons for the purpose of sexual exploitation, sexual and reproductive health, gender and sexual diversity, and gender and deprivation of liberty.

Work Environment

Family policies: The Uruguayan military and police provide maternity/paternity leave as well as childcare. This is a direct ordinance from the Ministry of the Interior that provides training on sexual and reproductive rights, pregnancy, breastfeeding and leave, including consultation services and the distribution of contraceptives.

Anti-Harassment and Abuse Policies: Both institutions have protocols to prevent and respond to sexual harassment cases within the ranks, although the protocol for the military is recent.¹⁴ In 2020, a general from the army was sanctioned for a domestic abuse case.¹⁵ There is also a sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse prevention program to address issues of military and police personnel as perpetrators of violence in an area of operations.

Equipment and Facilities: Although there are facilities and infrastructure available for women in the military and the police, uniforms and equipment are not necessarily adapted.

Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation:

Despite not having published a WPS NAP, civil society is involved in the monitoring of the adoption of WPS/gender equality principles through the National Gender Council and the 4th National Action Plan for Open Government 2018-2020.¹⁶

In the area of accountability, the Ministry of the Interior, through the Division of Gender Policies, reports annually to the National Institute of Women on the implementation of the Plan for Equal Rights and Opportunities in its area of action.

Sex-disaggregated data is collected by the military and the police, and it is available through transparency mechanisms.

Recommendations:

Uruguay has a great opportunity to consolidate and expand the efforts of implementing WPS principles by adopting a NAP. The experience of the police can become the basis for an inward-looking perspective for the Plan. Uruguay's experience with UN missions could also be the starting point for an external perspective. The NAP should specify particular tasks for the MoD, apart from

¹⁴ Ministerio del Interior, *Protocolo de actuación ante situaciones de acoso sexual en funcionarios y personal*, (Montevideo, Uruguay: Minterior and UNFPA, December 2012), at https://www.minterior.gub.uy/genero/images/stories/protocolo_acoso_sexual.pdf. For the military, see: Ministerio de Defensa, *Gobierno aprobó protocolo de actuación ante situaciones de acoso sexual en el Ministerio de Defensa*, (February 14, 2020), at <https://presidencia.gub.uy/comunicacion/comunicacionnoticias/decreto-prevencion-acoso-sexual-ministerio-defensa>

¹⁵ Redacción El Observador, "General sancionado por violencia doméstica aceptó el pase a retiro ofrecido por el Ejército", *El Observador* (October 13, 2020), at: <https://www.elobservador.com.uy/nota/general-sancionado-acepto-el-pase-a-retiro-ofrecido-por-el-ejercito-20201013115448>

¹⁶ Presidencia de Uruguay, *4to Plan de Acción Nacional de Gobierno Abierto 2018-2020*, (Montevideo, Uruguay: Presidencia, November 2018), at: www.gub.uy/agencia-gobierno-electronico-sociedad-informacion-conocimiento/sites/agencia-gobierno-electronico-sociedad-informacion-conocimiento/files/2019-02/4to_plan_accion_gobierno_abierto_vf_26_11_2018_0.pdf

those that it already undertakes. Further mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the military should be a priority, both for increasing the number of women in decision making-positions as well as in the training of all personnel. Assigning a full-time GENAD that is part of the senior command would prove valuable to achieve it. The consolidation of the protocols through a program for the prevention of sexual violence within the ranks should also be included.

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