

THE NORDIC BALTIC POLICE WOMEN'S MEETING IN NEW YORK



Women's status at the UN conference in New York Nordic Baltic Network of Police Women participated in the CSW at the United Nations in March 2015.

Nordic Baltic Network of Police Women (NBNP) participated in March 2015 in the large-scale UN conference in March in New York. NBNP arranged a side events focusing on combating human trafficking and sexual violence, which was presented an international audience – an arena where ministers for equality and non-governmental organizations from all UN member states participates.

The Nordic-Baltic cooperation to combat trafficking and violence in close relationships was presented from a gender, police and regional cooperation perspective. And the connection to NBNP's speech on trafficking and violence in intimate relationships at the UN conference on the status of women was very successful.

“It was incredibly exciting and rewarding to meet with NGOs and politicians from around the world. It was a very ambitious program, which alternated between presentations and a number of side events on all matters relating to women's rights including human trafficking, violence in intimate relationships, the UN resolution 1325n on more women in peacekeeping forces,



“said Police Inspector Hanne Bergstrom National Prevention Center, who attended in her capacity as board member of the Nordic Baltic Network of Police Women (NBNP).

Hanne Bergstrom and her colleagues in NBNP gave speeches at two side events at the United Nations.

“We were a little nervous that there would be no participants’ attending- but I think we rounded the 400, when there were most listeners. We had chosen to focus the importance of cooperation between the Nordic Baltic countries to jointly fight all forms of human trafficking. Combating human trafficking requires international and regional cooperation and coordination, and cooperation to give effective results. In addition, we discussed the social consequences for the victims of sexual exploitation, forced labour and best practices and activities NBNP, “said Hanne Bergstrom.

Participants in NBNP have since received many appreciative comments and detailed questions on their website. “It’s great that people was and is so interested on our work in the network. That was why we were there – we have to spread the knowledge about how we get these important issues to life through knowledge sharing and collaboration. Belonging was obvious surprised that there is a Policewoman network that concrete work to improve women’s rights and opportunities in the Nordic and Baltic countries. It had great signal values that we were uniformed and that our side events dealt respectively violence in intimate relationships and human trafficking – both areas where women typically are victims, “said Hanne Bergstrom.

The participation in the UN Conference was supported by Nordic Ministers.



EVA PERUGA
TALK GENDER AND COMMUNICATION IN THE POLICE



You have no doubt heard many times how such and such a government, institution or company has a poor communication policy. That they can't communicate. I'm more of the opinion that communication itself is the policy, the definition. In other words, that how and what they communicate defines the product. Communication is the message.

My friend Carlos, from the Spanish police, communicates in such a way that it raises the question of a change in the police force itself. He uses key terms to define this change. Breaking down barriers. An end to the two sides. He even said, first of all, that his work with the networks was for the journalists, and then he redirected his strategy and finally he hit the nail on the head when he said people were the target. This is the great triumph of communication. Revolutionary, if applied in police forces, in terms of getting closer to the public and transparency.

The challenge was to break down this barrier between the police and the public. Not against but for them.

And, for the public, the concept of service is important.

The change in police force thinking and philosophy is conveyed not just through everyday contact but in the media too.

Once we have both turned the page the thinking, the responsibility of police forces as democratic institutions is to set an example and treat everyone equally.



And here is where we can start to speak about the question of gender. The first thing is to educate these forces. Anyone who is not democratic, nor educated in equality, cannot convey the values of equality in their work. They can't do it when dealing directly with people, with their colleagues or in their relations with the media. This year the European Union's civil rights office, FRA, published an absolutely devastating report on violence against women. One section highlighted why women don't go to the police when they are assaulted, in the broadest sense of the term. We believe that the report, when it speaks of violence, extends this to psychological suffering, in the form of harassment and verbal attacks in public and private places. Women feel the police do not take this matter seriously. There is plenty of work to be done here.

The police must communicate out of a conviction of respect and equal treatment between people. Gaining the trust of women is a challenge for them. And as language gives shape to reality, women need to feel represented in police communications, in the narrative of events they take part in. It is important that the police help to empower women. How? Well, by giving them the same voice they do to men and the same power in that voice, and by education. By being the first to prevent mistaken explanations of gender violence, for example.

Language is important. Language is never neutral, so we need to pay a great deal of attention to how things are conveyed. Language can also be a form of violence.

In the conference on gender and communication text, communication for me encompasses any physical or verbal contact. Communication is not just about police press releases or the invaluable help on the networks. Because that would mean only the force, as an institution, bears the responsibility for communicating within the parameters of equality, to use a well-known term. Everyone making up a police force must communicate in this way. If a police officer gives a talk with women present and resorts to violent or insulting language, or adopts sexist and offensive behaviour or phrases towards women, it makes no difference whether the force itself communicates or does not communicate from a gender perspective. Egalitarian culture has to come from above, reflect an egalitarian culture in the force and be adopted by all its members. Gender communication, if we follow the manuals, has to avoid stereotypes, be inclusive, avoid identifying women as victims or make assumptions.

Even if it's not such a problem for criminals, in the sense that women are a minority in the world of crime. The work to be done concerns women citizens who suffer the most from sexist violence at all levels here.

As a service, a service for everyone, that needs to be recovered. And as a responsibility for setting an example. How can women's trust be regained if the way of communicating is aggressive, sexist and resorts to exclusive terms? Because when women see advertising, publicity or communications we think are appropriate, as these are not the majority, we



comment on them. In publicity and advertising, people do not occupy the positions we think correspond to reality. And if that's the case, we don't think it should be like that. We have to rework these as an example of responsibility and commitment to a better world. And police forces have this responsibility as well. Re-positioning everyone in their service and security project.

One fact needs to be borne in mind today. Media editorial offices are being run by fewer and fewer people, there is an internet service usually staffed by very young journalists and quality control is falling by the wayside, the excuse being lack of resources. So, police press notes must respect the gender perspective fully in case, in the end, they are published as they are. Information can be given in other ways. In the old days, it was “one man, one vote”. You can't say that today because if you say “one man, one vote”, it conjures up a male and a vote. So the new formula is “one person, one vote”. We can say the same for inclusive language. This is the perspective that police force communications, websites and internal communication need to adopt. Language shapes reality and now we need to make it the way we want this reality to be: a modern, advanced, inclusive society that respects everyone. The police cannot act differently. They need to do it better and take the lead, if necessary, by way of example.



CRISTINA MANRESA, COMMISSIONER OF POLICE OF THE GENERALITAT-MOSSOS D'ESQUADRA



For the first time in the history of the Police of the Generalitat-Mossos d'Esquadra (PG-ME), and since 2010, our police organization has the honour and privilege of having a female commissioner, Mrs Cristina Manresa.

Commissioner Manresa has a degree in Art History and a degree in Criminology from the University of Barcelona. She also has a post-graduate degree in Direction and Management of Public Security from the Open University of Catalonia and has been trained in Leadership for Managers at ESADE Business School.

She has a long experience in different areas: security training, speaker and organizer in presentations of master degrees, seminars and conferences, director of the Mobile World Congress Security Master Plan, and member of the Police Ethics Committee, among many others.

One of the career goals is to work to build participation safety where citizens, institutions and police acknowledge each other and cooperate to create a fairer, safer and happier society. Moreover, the values that inspire her daily work are teamwork, transparency, professionalism, proximity to citizens, cooperation and social sensibility, as reflected in the following interview:

Current situation: professional and personal

Personally, I am very proud of my life because I have a 17-year-old daughter, and I am a commissioner of the Police of the Generatilat- Mossos d'Esquadra since I was 42.



From the moment I became a mother, my priority was to find a balance between maternity and my professional career. That is why I decided to change the Police Region of Girona – where I had been working many years – for the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, seizing the moment when my daughter was changing her schooling cycle.

In my 24 years of experience in the Police of the Generalitat-Mossos d'Esquadra, my major destinations have been the Police Academy of Catalonia and the Police regions of Girona and Barcelona, until I was appointed in 2010 head of one of the new police regions that shape the territorial structure of the Police of the Generalitat-Mossos d'Esquadra: the South Metropolitan Police Region, with more than 2,300 officers and 15 police stations.

Becoming a police officer was a vocation or were there other reasons to be part of the Police of the Generalitat-Mossos d'Esquadra?

Initially, it was not a vocation. I actually wanted to become a ballet dancer and I have a university degree in Art History.

The vocation came to me after joining the Police of the Generalitat-Mossos d'Esquadra. Today, I wouldn't be able to do anything else because I love my job, the contact with the citizens.

What does it mean to you to be the only female commissioner and the woman who has a higher rank?

I would certainly like not to be the only female commissioner as soon as possible and that other female officers could reach this rank.

I believe my rank needs more talent and, for this reason, the best selection among intendants must be done, regardless the sex of the candidates. However, I think that female intendants add value to the organization and the best teams are mixed ones, where different points of view come together.

I recognize that I am a benchmark as a woman and as a professional. What surprises me most is that people that I meet for the first time are pleased with my naturalness and with the fact I am a “normal person”, a mother of a teenage daughter, who, like other women, combine work and family.

Thus, the key is how to get organized. I do not think I am a superwoman. The support provided by my family has been crucial, especially my mother advice: “if a man can do this, you can as well”.



Do you think you have encountered the same difficulty like a man to become a commissioner?

I remember my promotions in my professional career (corporal, sergeant, sub-inspector, inspector, intendant and commissioner) as being difficult, especially because I did it on my own and this is always tough.

I admit that the long journey to reach the top is necessary. I have learned a lot on the way, and even if the promotions toughened me, I have learned to survive and always keep going. I have learned that I do not win with direct confrontation so I have developed strategies like continued day-to-day work where you end up gaining prestige and a personal brand of credibility.

It is time to break down prejudices and barriers between men and women. I realized that men observe what I do and how I do it...Let's be patient and work every day...Results will follow.

The support of other female officers is important as well as fostering fellowship, good relations among police women and discarding negative criticism among us. Indeed, I have always felt comfortable working with other women because teamwork is a part of us, with no absurd competitions.

I want to thank and highlight the value of the first women who joined the Police of the Generalitat-Mossos d'Esquadra. These are the ones taking part of the second generation of the Catalan police who were pioneers and are a good example from whom we can learn. This is why they deserve all the acknowledgements.

Have you felt discriminated, negatively or positively, in your professional career?

I always thought it is better to be discriminated and alone than arousing pity.

Thus, I dislike paternalism when a man looks at me and thinks "poor thing, she won't be able..." because then I have to tell him not to worry for me, I am perfectly capable and I will surely succeed.

Do you think female leadership provides value different to the traditional ones?

The answer is YES, in capital letters. Female leadership is based on normalizing the situation, in being realistic and not being deified. In any case, I dislike being buttered up.

The command style of a woman is to place at the centre of the group to circulate the information, instead of at the vertex of the pyramid to look at the rest from a pedestal.



Women are more human, bring a lot of enthusiasm and hope in everything and our premise is excellence.

My leadership has been always based on values, although it seems to be lately cutting edge and some commanders are also incorporating it.

Do you consider that for a woman the police job is more difficult to combine with family life than for a man?

Balancing family and working is difficult for everyone (men and women). However the situation of women exacerbates because we feel guilt and find difficult to delegate household work and responsibility.

Thus, we need to talk a lot with our children to make them understand that you are their mother but also a professional worker with great responsibilities because children grow up...and you keep going with yourself and your future...

We must remove this female false modesty and work hard and constantly to gain credibility. It is therefore important to have a good image ALWAYS, fine words...because the opposite demeans us.

We need to work hard because the traditional pattern of our mothers where the main axis of the family is the woman still remains.

Do you think that men feel equally safe when patrolling with women?

It doesn't matter how they feel, that is their problem. What really matters is that you are a professional and the work you perform daily.

Do you think that the collective has normally assimilated being commanded by women?

There are differences according to every person and especially according to the age because every generation has its values and, in general, elderly are more sceptical, whilst young people are more tolerant and it is insignificant to them whether the commander is a man or a woman. On the contrary, they care whether commanders are good, and there are a lot of women who are good.

How do you see the evolution of the Police of the Generalitat-Mossos d'Esquadra, from a gender equity perspective, since you joined the police organization?



Since I joined the Police of the Generalitat-Mossos d'Esquadra until now I have seen a positive evolution. However, there is a lot to do, especially because since the beginning of the crisis (2011) there have not been new admissions. Therefore, more women haven't been able to join. In any case, we need to keep working and promoting projects, programs and plans for equity...because if women don't do it, who will?

What challenges have the Police of the Generalitat-Mossos d'Esquadra for the future?

We must look towards Europe and take as a benchmark countries that stay ahead of us. We should be able to use these countries as a model where we could mirror and go forward. We should also be a benchmark to other countries.

Thus, the participation of the Police of the Generalitat-Mossos d'Esquadra is perfect because we must do, participate and act, showing our capacity in the different international organizations.

It is a reality that, over the years, the female officers in the Police of the Generalitat-Mossos d'Esquadra are better prepared in educational level and languages.

What do you feel proud of?

Of having been a very creative person and a pioneer in areas such as leadership of values and proximity for which I always bet on. Despite being criticized for that, time has proved that I was right and the Generalitat-Mossos d'Esquadra has a consolidated model of proximity.

I strongly believe that safety must be participatory and citizens must have the opportunity to take part of the decisions making, because they know the place where they live and like to get involved. In any case, the safety policies and others must be adjusted to the demands of the society.

I also believe in mediation. I actually was the first mediator of Generalitat-Mossos d'Esquadra. In this sense, we need more admissions, with young people and women, because women are used to mediate, negotiate, listen...In any case, we must talk about safety in feminine, with more mediation, conciliation, and avoiding, as far as possible, direct confrontations.

The commissioner Cristina Manresa concluded the interview with the following Chinese and African proverb: If you want to walk fast, walk alone. If you want to walk far, walk together.

UNIT OF INVESTIGATION AND PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS GUARDIA URBANA DE BARCELONA



The UIPA whose acronym means Unit of Investigation and Prevention of Accidents, is a centralized unit of the Guardia Urbana de Barcelona, which has its origin in the year 2000, since accidents patrols were previously distributed around the entire territory of the city of Barcelona. It is a Unit that has traditionally always been formed by a number of policewomen and nowadays is composed of 128 officers of whom 33 are women, a 25,78% of the Unit is made up of women police officers.

This is a high percentage since in the rest of the GUB units the percentage of women not reach 10-11% and here is exceeded by almost 15%. The values prevailing in this unit are working in team, orientation to the victims, responsibility, impartiality, integrity, proactivity and of course, commitment to prevention.

Our objectives are to determine the degree of responsibility of each person involved in a traffic accident.

We intervene when there are injuries, damage to public property, accidents associated with acts of criminal or caused by negligence and property damage exceeding 80,000 euros, as well as accidents with driver Lam.

Also instruct the certificates for offences against road safety and injured by very serious or deaths caused by the traffic accident.

From prevention are carried out continuous traffic controls of breathalyzer and drug test around the city.

In large part by the contribution of women, we was recognized for professionalism, a positive valuation of cordiality, impartiality and empathy showing by the agents, as well as the treatment offered to the victims and offenders, even in front of serious offences. The officers show a great coordination in interventions in traffic incidents and accidents. The citizens of Barcelona show a high degree of satisfaction for the services





performed.

There are other activities that also are conducted from this unit, in an accident occur a series of facts which require that are not research, but which are necessary to not worsen the consequences of the accident and to return the traffic situation to normal, such as:

- attention to victims and family,
- protection of evidence,
- Security measures
- Regulation of traffic,
- Protection of heritage

-...

A few years ago the Guardia Urbana de Barcelona has signed a protocol of collaboration with the CUESB (Centre of Emergency and Social Emergencies of Barcelona) to improve the psychological assistance to the victims and relatives of the victims of accidents and claims. In addition, in this agreement, they also attend to professionals involved in accidents or claims and who may be at risk from this intervention.

The future of the unit is aimed at the creation of a Cabinet of reconstruction and a second phase of development of computer programs with which we work.

Following the philosophy of the UIPA and with the aim of reducing traffic accidents with injuries in the city of Barcelona, has created a program that allows officers to make proposals for improvements in places where there is a high accident rate.

With this we want to achieve the goal proposed by the city of Barcelona, using the knowledge gained through research and analysis of traffic accidents and the wish that will not produce more accidents, achieving the objective zero victims in traffic accidents.



Guàrdia Urbana