

# Foreword

By Marina Nuciari, Joelle Laplante & Irina Goldenberg

## ERGOMAS and *Res Militaris*: A Fruitful Partnership

The **E**uropean **R**esearch **G**roup on **M**ilitary and **S**ociety (ERGOMAS) is an association of social scientists who study the relationship between armed forces and their parent societies, as well as related phenomena. It promotes empirically and theoretically oriented research cooperation and international collaboration. Indeed, joint transnational research and intercultural comparisons in interdisciplinary thematic working groups constitute the core of ERGOMAS.

Through participation in those working groups, ERGOMAS members engage in a wide range of research, as the list of “WGs” revealingly shows: “Morale, Cohesion and Leadership”; “Public Opinion, Mass Media & the Military”; “Gender & the Military”; “Military Families”; “Military Profession”; “Civilian Control of Armed Forces”; “Warriors in Peacekeeping”; “Recruitment & Retention”; “Military & Police Relations”; “Violence & the Military”; “Military Conflict Management & Peace Economics”, “Veterans & Society”; and “Critical Military Studies”. Additional information about the association may be found on <http://ergomas.ch/index.php>.

A partnership between ERGOMAS and *Res Militaris* was formed in Spring 2014, and entails publication by the journal of special issues based on the research and analysis of ERGOMAS Working Groups. This partnership is intended to provide members and collaborators with an excellent avenue for publication in this journal of military studies, and *Res Militaris* with scholarly contributions based on the work and collaborations of this reputable and productive association.

Thus we are pleased to put forward this first ERGOMAS special issue of *Res Militaris* on the topic of “Women in the Military”. This inaugural number is related to the work of the Working Group on “Gender & the Military”, established (following a proposal made by its present coordinator, Prof. Marina Nuciari) in the year 2000 during an ERGOMAS Conference held in Prague. This special issue was initiated and guest-edited by the signatories of this foreword.

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Since its inception, the WG on Gender & the Military has been thought of as a forum for raising interest in topics about gender-related issues which affect servicewomen, for the presentation and exchange of research in this domain during ERGOMAS conferences, and for enabling international collaboration, comparative research and publication. The WG's scope is intentionally broad, and covers topics such as women's accession and integration into the military, issues affecting women's career advancement in the armed forces, as well as their professional orientations, career-family trade-offs, sexuality in the workplace, "buddy relationships" in combat and non-combat environments, gender discrimination and role segregation, sexual harassment, female soldiers' roles and different functions with special reference to international and intercultural missions.

This range of research is represented in the articles published in this first issue of *Res Militaris*, and in the forthcoming second issue – also devoted to "Gender & the Military". The guest editors encountered serious difficulties indeed when it came to choosing which of the thirty or so abstract submissions received in response to their Call for Papers on this topic would eventually be published. While the anonymous peer-review process in use at *Res Militaris* helped to some extent, it still proved insufficient to decide between them and the idea of a second issue on the same broad topic was soon considered the only possible way out of those multiple dilemmas. This large number of submissions is a testament to the degree of interest in this topic and the range of international researchers focusing on this issue. The present volume discusses the central topic of gender integration within armed forces and provides some insight into socio-cultural factors present within different national contexts.

It is with great pleasure that we share with our colleagues in the social science community this first ERGOMAS Special Issue. We would like to thank **Yagil Levy** (past President of ERGOMAS), **David Mason** (past treasurer) and the members of the Publication and Member Support Committee which he chairs, as well as **Bernard Boëne**, coeditor in chief of *Res Militaris*, for their instrumental role in bringing this initiative to fruition. Most importantly, we thank all the authors for their valuable contributions: they are the true protagonists of this initiative.

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