

# **Military Diversity in Multinational Defence Environments: From Ethnic Intolerance to Inclusion An Abridged Summary of the HFM RTG 301 Technical Report**

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## ***ABSTRACT***

*NATO forces' personnel strive to achieve cultural competence to enable interactions that are more effective across multinational military environments. Research shows that ethnic intolerance continues to challenge defence organizations, including NATO's efforts to promote "military diversity as a key transformational element" in overcoming cultural differences (NATO, 2013). The purpose of the Research Task Group (RTG) 301 was to identify the key factors attributed to ethnic intolerance, develop a conceptual model to explain ethnic inclusion, and offer evidenced-based educational programs intended to support a more inclusive organizational culture in NATO and across multinational defence organizations. Based on international case studies and the literature on ethnic intolerance and inclusion, this paper will highlight the historical, political, economic, social, and socio-psychological factors that explain intolerant attitudes and behaviours, as well as the strategies, tools, and evidenced-based programs designed to foster a culture of ethnic diversity and inclusion. Recommendations are put forward to help cultivate greater ethnic inclusion through diversity management strategies and evidenced-based programs across international defence organizations. The findings and recommendations will inform NATO's strategic efforts, policies, and programs to encourage greater ethnic diversity, inclusion, and improved military readiness and resilience.*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Military diversity represents a key transformational element in overcoming cultural differences across multinational forces and alliances (NATO, 2013). Ethnic intolerance attributed to discrimination, harassment, racism, intergroup threats, and ethnic conflicts and hatred continue to negatively impact people's perceptions of diverse ethnic and cultural communities, including multinational defence environments. Fostering ethnic inclusion helps to promote cultural diversity, cooperative relations, and improved operational and organizational effectiveness. As a result, the purpose of the Research Task Group (RTG) 301 was to ascertain the key factors associated with ethnic intolerance and ethnic inclusion, develop a conceptual model to enable ethnic inclusion, and offer evidenced-based educational programs intended to cultivate an inclusive culture in NATO and across multinational defence organizations. The scope of RTG 301 was to: a) examine the current literature on ethnic intolerance and inclusion, including the best practices in diversity management, policies, and practices; b) determine which strategies, methods, and tools would help to deter ethnic intolerant attitudes and behaviours in the military; c) design a framework to explain the factors that impact ethnic intolerance and a conceptual model that depicts ethnic inclusion; and d) highlight strategies, tools, evidenced-based educational programs, and recommendations that would promote ethnic diversity and inclusion within defence organizations.

Based on international case studies and the literature on ethnic intolerance and inclusion, the RTG 301 put forward several key findings and a set of recommendations to enable greater ethnic diversity and inclusion.

This paper provides a brief synthesis on the RTG 301 Technical Report, including the key findings and recommendations for enabling greater cultural intelligence across multinational defence environments. The RTG 301 Technical Report will help inform NATO's defence capabilities (i.e., doctrine, education, training, leadership, personnel, and human interoperability), and will guide defence organizations on how to recognize ethnic intolerance and foster greater ethnic diversity and inclusion.

## **1.1 Background**

NATO's Allied Command Transformation (ACT) emphasizes the need to overcome cultural differences and the "willingness of members to put aside their national, or traditional, way of doing business and adopt the ACT way which is cooperation" (NATO, 2013). People's perceptions of different ethnic groups can influence military-military and military-civilian relations, whether during deployments, military exercises, or in peacetime establishment. As a result, "the increase in multinational missions has led to the identification of a number of potential areas of conflict or stress between collaborating countries that stem from intergroup relations and dynamics, which themselves emanate from differences in culture, language, religion, class and gender customs, work ethics, military values, political systems, levels of expertise, and standards of living" (Plante, 1998; cited in Febbraro, McKee, & Riedel, 2008, pp. 1-2). Research continues to unfold that although people may hold more positive or tolerable attitudes toward ethnic groups, studies and media coverage indicate that people maintain negative attitudes and behaviours toward others belonging to different ethnic groups (e.g., Abderrazzaq, 2021; Kunovich & Hodson, 1999; Rubin, Taylor, Pollitt, Krapels, & Pardal, 2014). For example, ethnic intolerance (e.g., ethnic conflict, discrimination, racism, intergroup threats, and ethnic and inter-ethnic hatred) negatively impact people's perceptions and experiences of ethnic communities, including those found in military organizations (e.g., Daniel, Claros, Namrow, Siebel, Campbell, McGrath, & Klahr, 2019; Davey, Hart, & Guerin, 2020; Waruszynski, MacEachern, & Giroux-Lalonde, 2019).

### **1.1.1 Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion in the Military Context**

Defence organizations around the world are incorporating diversity and inclusion into their policies, strategies, and programs to help cultivate greater cultural awareness. For example, in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), values of fair treatment and respect of all military personnel are encouraged across the ranks, as these values represent "force multipliers" and contribute to operational effectiveness. Indeed, "military personnel who are culturally diverse, multiethnic, and multilingual represent force multipliers during both domestic and international operations" (Department of National Defence, 2015, p. 1). The Australian Department of Defence also states in their *Diversity and Inclusion Strategy* that "through diversity we gain the varied perspectives needed to tackle complex problems...come up with innovative solutions...[and focus on] creating an inclusive environment which values, respects and draws on [people's] diverse backgrounds, experiences, knowledge and skills" (Department of Defence, 2014, p. 3). The United States Department of Defense's (DoD) *2012-2017 Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan* also highlights diversity as "a strategic imperative, critical to mission readiness and accomplishment" and essential to leadership development and accountability (Department of Defense, 2012, p. 3).

As defence forces become more flexible, agile, adaptive, fair, and inclusive to better represent force multipliers, there is a need to examine some of the fundamental attributes underpinning diversity and inclusion. Within the *Canadian Armed Forces Diversity Strategy 2016*, diversity is defined as "respect for and appreciation of differences in ethnicity, language, gender, age, national origin, disabilities, sexual orientation, education, and religion," including people's experiences, skills, knowledge, and abilities (Department of National Defence, 2016, p. 1). Moreover, diversity "is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing, celebrating, and integrating the rich dimensions of diversity within each individual" (Department of National Defence, 2016, p. 1).

Inclusion represents a key component of the future force's environment and is defined as feeling a sense of

belonging within an organization, community, or team, and adopting a work environment that values diversity, promotes mutual respect, and enhances organizational and operational effectiveness. Inclusion means “fostering a work environment where individual differences...are appreciated and valued as characteristics that enhance our work environment, our productivity and our capability” (Department of Defence, 2014, p. 4). The United States DoD *2012-2017 Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan* also embodies an inclusive environment, where “diverse backgrounds, experiences, and ways of thinking are essential to optimal performance within the Department’s increasingly fiscally constrained environment” (Department of Defense, 2012, p. 3). In essence, inclusion refers to: “A deliberate commitment to the value of diversity. It means acknowledging, understanding, accepting and valuing differences within a collaborative, supportive and respectful environment that increases the participation and contribution of all employees” (Department of National Defence, 2020a, p. 2).

Ethnicity is a key component in diversity and inclusion and is defined as belonging to particular social groups and communities based on cultural identities and traditions (e.g., language, religion, history). Ethnic identities are based on having common linguistic cultural traits and resources, historical underpinnings, and geographical space (see Barth, 1969). Kinship, language, religion, and neighborhood/communities establish “we” and “they” identities preventing others from joining in the groups (Elwert, 1997). Indeed, people who identify with a particular ethnic group or ethnic community define and differentiate themselves from others by having a collective name, same language, and a common lineage, history, and tradition (Smith, 1986). However, history has shown us that a lack of acceptance or hostility towards specific groups based on people’s ethnicity, race, religion, economic, cultural, and political affiliations may lead to ethnic tensions and conflict, bigotry, and ethnic cleansing. In addition, racial stereotypes, and prejudice, ethnic or racial discrimination, ethnic exclusionism, and ethnic microaggressions (e.g., criticisms, jokes, and insults attributed to one’s ethnicity) are also examples of ethnic intolerant mindsets (see Rubin, Taylor, Pollitt, Krapels, & Pardal, 2014). As a result, intolerant attitudes and behaviours towards diverse ethnic groups have led researchers to explore the factors that may influence negative attitudes and behaviours among individuals and groups.

## **2.0 ETHNIC INTOLERANCE**

Intolerance is defined as “a lack of acceptance of or hostility towards others specifically on the grounds of their minority status,” and is primarily based on one’s ethnicity, race, religion, culture, or nationality (Rubin, Taylor, Pollitt, Krapels, & Pardal, 2014, p. 1). Intolerance is also perceived as “the refusal and unwillingness to respect or tolerate persons of a different social group or members of minority groups who hold beliefs contrary to one’s own” (Abderrazaq, 2021, p. 278), and is based on prejudicial, judgmental, and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, and a lack empathy (Verkuyten & Kollar, 2021).

According to Frėjutė-Rakauskienė (2009),

Ethnic intolerance is defined as the opposite/different opinion/belief, refusal to recognize equal opportunities and justification of dominance or violence. Ethnic intolerance in discourse is defined as the negative sentiments/activities directed against the ethnic/racial/religious groups, arising from the prejudices towards those groups and occurring in public discourse (in the media) in the forms of verbal harassment (verbal abuse, threats, defiance), incitement of ethnic intolerance (hate speech), and incitement to discrimination, hostility and violence. (p. 10)

As highlighted in the RTG 301 Technical Report, examples of intolerant mindsets and behaviours are evidenced in people’s perceptions of immigrants and refugees, different religious and ethnic groups, and those who hold diverse ideological perspectives (Verkuyten, Adelman, & Yogeewaran, 2020). During the past century, examples of intolerance include anti-Semitism ideologies which led to the elimination of Jews, Roma, Slavs, political activists and homosexuals during the Holocaust period (1933 to 1945); apartheid and

colonialism in South Africa (1948-1994) based on white supremacy, institutionalized racial oppression, exploitation and segregation of non-whites (i.e., Black Africans, Coloured and Indigenous or Asian people); ethnic conflicts in the former Yugoslavia (1991-2001) which resulted in the killings of predominately ethnic Albanians, Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs; the Rwandan genocide (1994) which culminated in the Hutu ethnic majority killing the Tutsi (minority group) due to economic disparities; 9/11 militant Islamic extremist group Al-Qaeda's attacks on the United States (2001); Black Lives Matter protests in the United States in response to police brutality and the killing of Black people, for example the death of George Floyd by Minneapolis police (2013); synagogue shootings of Muslim men praying in Quebec City (2017) and Tree of Life synagogue murders in Pittsburgh (2018); and the more recent Russian invasion of the Ukraine (2022), which has accelerated since the Russo-Ukrainian conflict began in 2014, made calls for the denatification of the Ukrainian people and the need to gain territorial regions. Intolerant attitudes toward diverse ethnic groups have led to inequities, prejudicial stereotypes, discrimination, harassment, bigotry, racism, aggression, oppression, exclusion, extremism, xenophobia, Islamaphobia (anti-Muslim sentiments), anti-Semitism (including the rise of fascism post-WWII), and genocide. As a result, people, communities, and nations continue to be divided based on cultural, social, political, geo-political, economic, geographical, and religious differences. Ethnic-racial identities within the political, economic, geographic, structural, and cultural contexts have led to ethnocentric attitudes, behaviours, and ideologies which have been at the core of these differences.

People communicate ethnic intolerance through various forms and expressions (e.g., ethnic discrimination and harassment through stereotypes and prejudicial attitudes; xenophobia based on religious, political, economic, and social-cultural identities and ideologies; ethnic conflict; and ethnic hatred (e.g., ethnic cleansing and genocide). People can express more subtle forms of behaviours through ethnic-based microaggressions (e.g., remarks, insults, and jokes attributed to one's ethnicity or culture). Moreover, ethnic intolerance manifests itself through socially, culturally, politically, and economically driven disputes that are normally found in pluralistic communities and societies. One study revealed that ethnic intolerance is intensified by an "unwillingness to extend economic, political, and social rights to other ethnic groups, regardless of perceived similarities or differences in basic values, norms, or beliefs" (Kunovich & Hodson, 1999, p. 644). As a result, it is important to examine ethnic intolerance in the military context, particularly how intolerant attitudes and behaviours may impede the interrelationships of military personnel.

## **2.1 Theoretical Framework on Ethnic Intolerance**

Ethnic diversity, including the factors impacting intolerant attitudes and behaviours, is highly complex and needs to be examined from a multidisciplinary perspective (e.g., sociological, historical, anthropological, psychological, and biological perspectives). Several theories help to explain ethnic diversity and the implications behind intolerance of people who come from different ethnic groups. The RTG 301 Technical Report provides a comprehensive overview of how intolerance can be manifested across and within groups. These theories include ethnicity theory (primordialism, instrumentalism, and constructivism); psychology of intolerance theory (prejudicial intolerance, intuitive intolerance, and deliberative intolerance); critical race theory; social identity theory; realistic group conflict theory; and theory of cultural racism. This theoretical framework helps to explain the factors that may contribute to ethnic intolerance and the conflicts and oppression that are generated between minority and majority groups living in pluralistic environments. For a complete overview of the theoretical framework, please see the RTG 301 Technical Report.

## **2.2 Factors that Influence Ethnic Intolerance**

The factors that influence ethnic intolerance include political, economic, social, cultural, religious, and socio-psychological perspectives. The political, economic, social, and structural factors are important to understand, particularly their interrelationships to socio-psychological factors. The RTG 301 Technical Report highlighted the need to examine in greater depth the socio-psychological factors that may influence ethnic intolerance, including implicit or unconscious biases, microaggressions, systemic racism, and hateful

conduct and right-wing extremism. These factors help to better understand past and present intolerant attitudes and behaviours toward different ethnic groups.

### **2.2.1 Political, Economic, Social, and Structural Factors**

As outlined in the RTG 301 Technical Report, perceived threats attributed to ethnic and racial stratification, social polarization, power and competition, conflict, immigration overflow, human rights issues, economic disparity, social injustices, religious identities, and fanaticisms are examples of why people may become more intolerant towards others who come from different racial and ethnic backgrounds (e.g., Atanassova, 1999). Moreover, RAND analyzed the trends between 1981 and 2008 to explain intolerant attitudes and behaviours in Western Europe (Rubin, Taylor, Pollitt, Krapels, & Pardal, 2014). By examining European datasets, empirical research studies, and trends across Western European countries, RAND was able to assess the increase in intolerant attitudes in specific countries and among groups of people, and the trends attributed to political, economic, social, and cultural factors. The authors highlighted specific factors that explained intolerance, including:

- a) Evidence of association with intolerance is strong for some economic factors, such as macroeconomic prosperity, and much less so for others, such as unemployment rate.
- b) There is strong evidence of an association between intolerance and demographic factors such as age, education and socio-economic class, but somewhat less strong evidence for an association between intolerance and personal income.
- c) All socio-political factors examined in this study – citizenship regime, welfare state regime and political orientation – have been found to be associated with intolerant attitudes (Rubin, Taylor, Pollitt, Krapels, & Pardal, 2014, p. 2).

### **2.2.2 Socio-psychological Factors**

The interrelationships between social and psychological factors help to explain ethnic intolerant attitudes and behaviours found among and between cultural, ethnic, and religious groups. For example, Atanassova (1999) asserts that fear and insecurity are associated with “hostile images, mistrust, negative stereotypes and prejudices about the ‘other ethnic group’” (p. 12) as a result of historical and territorial disputes found across South-Eastern Europe. Inter-ethnic psychological stereotypes characterized by “master” or “subject” spoke to the different intergroup relationships (Atanassova, 1999). Similarly, “cultural discrimination against minorities” and “ethnic groups’ histories and perceptions of themselves and others” (Atanassova, 1999, p. 27) contributed to these conflicts. Cultural and ethnic identities were based on in-grouping of people, leading to mistrust of out-groups. Lebedva and Tatarko (2004) also highlighted that the “most powerful predictor of ethnic intolerance is the ambivalence of ethnic identity” ...where it tends to promote “general ethnic intolerance, negative ethnic stereotypes of out-groups, increased social distance toward ethnic out-groups, and [the] willingness to distinguish among people according to ethnic and religious criteria” (p. 528). This was the case within multicultural regions in Russia. “Perceived discrimination” was the second predictor of ethnic intolerance, and it was attributed to people’s ability to differentiate others by their religion, negative stereotyping of specific ethnic groups, and how people created greater social distance (Lebedva & Tatarko, 2004). Examples of intolerance were also evidenced in people who were narrow-minded or prejudiced towards specific groups and lacked empathy, were judgmental, or discriminated against others (Verkuyten & Kollar, 2021). As a result, intolerance was associated with “race and ethnicity”, including “disabilities, sexual orientation, and difference of opinion” (Verkuyten & Kollar, 2021, p. 177)

The associated factors attributed to ethnic intolerant attitudes and behaviours will be briefly examined next, and include unconscious biases, microaggressions, racism and systemic racism, and hateful conduct and right-wing extremism (RWE).

### *2.2.2.1 Unconscious Biases*

Unconscious biases refer to deep-rooted prejudicial beliefs and unsubstantiated judgements and are developed through social and cultural norms, stereotypes, and personal experiences. People who hold preconceived opinions of others are usually attributed to their race and ethnicity, religion, gender identity or sexual orientation, or other characteristics that set people apart (Rodriguez, 2018). These preconceived opinions are ingrained throughout time and are embedded through people's development, socialization, and experiences. As a result, people tend to create social categories such as race, ethnicity, religion, political affiliations, socioeconomic status, age, and gender, for example). Social Identity Theory, Realistic Group Conflict Theory and Theory of Cultural Racism, all highlight how unconscious biases lead to the development of positive stereotypes of an in-group and negative stereotypes of an out-group. Unconscious biases have been attributed to the notion of white privilege, where white people have benefited from their participation in the more dominant group. As a result, recognizing white privilege is important to denouncing stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination.

### *2.2.2.2 Microaggressions*

Microaggressions are defined as “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group” (Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, & Esquilin, 2007, p. 273). Microaggressions represent subtle forms of expression and may include racist overtones, such as negative stereotypes or disparaging remarks (e.g., jokes). The social construction of race can be attributed to the power and dominance held by one group over another, particularly as it relates to people's race or ethnic background.

### *2.2.2.3 Racism and Systemic Racism*

Racism is the “transformation of race prejudice and/or ethnocentrism through the exercise of power against a racial group defined as inferior, by individuals and institutions with the intentional or unintentional support of the entire culture” (Jones, 1972, p. 117, cited in Ponterotto, Utsey, & Pedersen, 2006, p. 16). Historical examples include the domination of racialized people by Europeans during the eighteenth century; colonialism and the resulting appropriation of Indigenous lands in North America as well as abuse of Indigenous Peoples; and the enslavement of Africans since the beginning of the sixteenth century (Clair & Denis, 2015, pp. 857-858). Historical accounts have included racist ideologies which culminated in ethnic and cultural stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, harassment, conflict, and hatred.

Systemic racism is the result of continuously ingrained stereotypes and prejudices and is embedded in the foundational underpinnings of organizations and society. These foundational underpinnings (e.g., written, or unwritten policies, processes, practices, cultural norms) have contributed to unequal power structures and unconscious biases which resulted in colonial oppression and social injustices and the unequal treatment of marginalized groups (e.g., Blacks, Asians, and Indigenous Peoples). Research demonstrates that “once racism becomes part of a system, it is self-replicating, and can be difficult to detect, because most organizational members are not disadvantaged by these inherent biases and thus take for granted the underlying socio-cultural assumptions and histories upon which they were formed” (Wright, Waruszynski, Silins, & Giroux-Lalonde, 2021, p. 4).

### *2.2.2.4 Hateful Conduct and Right-Wing Extremism*

Hateful conduct is defined as:

An act or conduct, including the display or communication of words, symbols or images, by a CAF [Canadian Armed Forces] member, that they knew or ought reasonably to have known would constitute, encourage, justify or promote violence or hatred against a person or persons of an

identifiable group, based on their national or ethnic origin, race, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics or disability (Department of National Defence, 2020b).

Perry and Scrivens (2019) assert that right-wing extremism is associated with “power, identity and belonging that result in a social hierarchy where societal power is placed with white, Christian and heterosexual males” (cited in Chana, 2020). Extremist (hate) groups represent groups of people that adopt supremacist causes that are based on race, creed, colour, ethnicity, national origin, sex, or religion and promote violence and suppress individual civil rights (Department of Defense, 2007). White nationalist attitudes and behaviours have included harassment, threats, violence, crimes, and terrorism linked to hate groups or right-wing extremists (e.g., La Meute/The Pack, Proud Boys, The Base, Three Percenters, QAnon, anti-vaccine movements, etc.).

Ethnic intolerance in the military can result when personnel come together to work in multinational military contexts. People’s lack of acceptance of specific ethnic cultures and ideologies may result in hateful conduct and right-wing extremism. For example, although alliances like NATO have personnel from different countries working under a “supranational military culture”, members across the alliance continue to experience different subcultures (Tresch, 2007, p. 35). As a result, there is a need to promote greater communication, flexibility, and adaptability to help address multicultural challenges found within multinational alliances.

### **3.0 INTERNATIONAL CASE STUDIES**

In the RTG 301 Technical Report, the authors provide cross-national perspectives on ethnic diversity and inclusion, along with the strategies, methods, and tools that promote positive ethnic relations in military organizations (e.g., diversity and inclusion strategies, cross-cultural communications, cultural sensitivity training, ethnic conflict management, and evidenced-based educational programs and practices). The RTG 301 Technical Report puts forward international case studies that draw on ethnic diversity and inclusion in defence environments. These case studies include:

- **Ethnic, Cultural and Gender Diversity in the Bulgarian Armed Forces: A Vision for a Multicultural Force:** Dr. Yantsislav Yanakiev examines ethnic, cultural, and gender diversity in the Bulgarian Armed Forces, and highlights the need for a future vision that will transform the Bulgarian military into a multicultural and inclusive organization (e.g., promote an organizational climate that encourages the inclusion of all people through diversity management strategies, policies, and cultural competence).
- **Military Socialization and Prejudice: The (Mediating) Role of Right-Wing Authoritarianism and Social Dominance Orientation:** Dr. Mathias De Roeck and Dr. Delphine Resteigne focus on military socialization and prejudice and the mediating role of right-wing authoritarianism and social dominance orientation in the Belgian Royal Military Academy. The authors highlight that a more diverse workforce would have long-term advantages in helping to promote a positive image, and improved recruitment and performance when carrying out operations in culturally complex environments.
- **Perceptions of Racism and Hateful Conduct in the Canadian Armed Forces: Promoting a Culture Change to Foster Greater Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion:** Dr. Barbara Waruszynski conveys the key findings on Canadian Armed Forces personnel’s perceptions on racism and hateful conduct. The author highlights the main issues and provides key recommendations to help address racist and hateful attitudes and behaviours, and the strategies needed to promote a sustainable culture change that strengthens ethnic diversity and inclusion in the Canadian military.
- **Race and Ethnic Diversity in the United States Armed Forces: A Continued Evolution Toward**

**an Inclusive and Lethal Force:** Dr. Jessica Lowen and Dr. Daniel McDonald present a timeline of diversity and inclusion in the United States Armed Forces and provide a set of recommendations to promote greater diversity and inclusion principles and practices in the United States military.

- **From Migration in Germany to Inclusion in the Bundeswehr: An Appreciative and Inclusive Approach to Diversity in the Bundeswehr:** LCol Sven Hertel examines migration in Germany to inclusion in the Bundeswehr, specifically the inclusive approaches to fostering diversity in the Bundeswehr, and the required strategies to promote a culture of inclusion, transparency, respect, and tolerance.

#### **4.0 FUTURE INSIGHTS FOR ENABLING ETHNIC DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

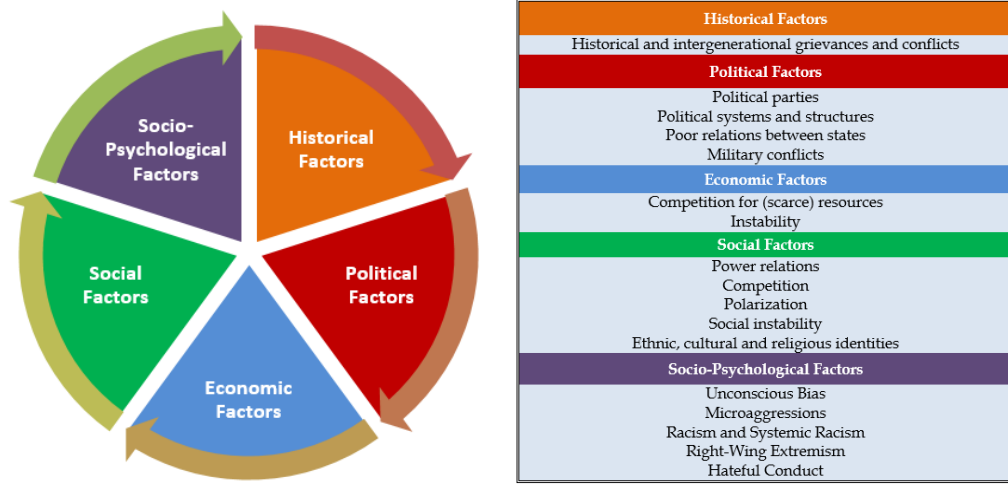
Establishing greater ethnic diversity and inclusion in multinational military environments will be contingent on the strategies and tools that will promote an inclusive workplace. This section will briefly introduce the strategies and tools that will help to enhance ethnic diversity and inclusion, and a conceptual model and the recommendations that are essential for bridging organizational cultural differences and creating greater inter-cultural and intra-cultural inclusion across multinational military environments. Before summarizing these future insights, it is important to recap the factors attributed to ethnic intolerance, with a focus on historical, political, economic, social, and socio-psychological factors.

##### **4.1 Factors that Influence Ethnic Intolerance: Recap**

The RTG 301 Technical Report outlined specific factors that may influence ethnic intolerance, including historical, political, economic, social, and socio-psychological factors. As illustrated in Figure 1, historical factors focus on intergenerational grievances that have contributed to oppression, suffering, and conflict among people coming from different cultures or countries. Political factors are attributed to political parties, systems and structures, and unhealthy relations between state actors, and military conflicts that have resulted from political interferences. Economic factors focus on competing (scarce) resources and economic instability. Social factors include power relations, competition, polarization, social instability, and conflict attributed to ethnic, cultural, and religious identities. For example, specific social networks and ideologies may influence people to take part in extremist activities; while some people may be more inclined to join based on personal grievances, vulnerabilities, have a need to belong to a particular group, or are drawn towards violence (Government of Canada, 2018, pp. 8-9).

The socio-psychological factors which may influence ethnic intolerance, include unconscious biases, microaggressions, racism and systemic racism, hateful conduct, and right-wing extremism. Ethnic intolerance can be expressed through stereotypes and microaggressions, prejudices, discrimination, and ethnic conflict as well as xenophobic attitudes that are grounded on religious, political, economic, and social-cultural identities and ideologies, ethnic conflict, and hatred. People's attitudes and behaviours may be shaped by power dynamics, isolation, historical influences, and perceived threats, including the "physical, emotional and psychological impacts; normalization of violent action and rhetoric; polarization; and reduction of trust" (Government of Canada, 2018, pp. 13-14).





**Figure 1 Ethnic Intolerance Factors (Paradigm and Legend)**

The above factors are descriptive of ethnic intolerance and help to illustrate the implications of fostering greater ethnic diversity and inclusion across multinational defence environments.

## 4.2 Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion—Management Strategies and Tools

Diversity management strategies, methods, and tools designed to promote ethnic diversity, equity, and inclusion have specific characteristics to help ameliorate ethnic intolerance. These characteristics include a) culture of belonging, b) inclusive leadership, c) cultural competence and cultural awareness training, d) bystander intervention training, e) unconscious bias training, f) evidence-based prevention programs against right-wing extremism, and g) establishment of allies through allyship training and practices.

### 4.2.1 Culture of Belonging

A culture of belonging requires self-reflexivity, where people are aware of diverse cultural groups and appreciate people for their differences and contributions. People’s unique attributes are valued and promote mutual trust and respect. Psychological safety and physical safety play key roles in developing a culture of belonging (Shore et al., 2018). For example, safe spaces can be created to enable people to talk about racialized and marginalized groups or identities (Ng, Ware, & Greenberg, 2017). Accordingly, senior leaders need to demonstrate their commitment to fostering a culture of inclusion, with all personnel contributing to creating a culture and climate of belonging (Shore et al., 2018).

### 4.2.2 Inclusive Leadership

Inclusive leadership plays a fundamental role in fostering greater inclusion, particularly with marginalized social groups. For example, a qualitative study on visible minorities and Indigenous military and civilian personnel’s perceptions on racism and harassment in the CAF uncovered the need for supportive leadership practices to help eliminate racialized intolerance and discrimination (Waruszynski, MacEachern, & Giroux-Lalonde, 2019b). Accordingly, “leader inclusion is a style that promotes psychological safety, work group identification, and psychological empowerment” (Shore & Cheung, 2021, p. 11).

### 4.2.3 Cultural Awareness and Cultural Competence Training

Intercultural awareness training enables people to learn about the differences and similarities found in

pluralistic societies and the need to prevent stereotypes and prejudicial views (including microaggressions and unconscious biases) from occurring. Cultural competence is demonstrated when people “understand, appreciate and interact with people from cultures or belief systems different from one’s own” (DeAngelis, 2015). By employing greater empathy, open-mindedness, and understanding, people can encourage cultural change and inclusiveness (e.g., through intercultural dialogue) and be more accepting of diverse worldviews.

#### **4.2.4 Bystander Intervention Training**

Bystander intervention training has been implemented to prevent harassment and discrimination in the workplace, including (systemic) racism and hateful conduct, sexual assaults, and bullying. Bystander intervention is based on people’s “willingness to safely take action and help someone in time of need” (Department of Defense, 2014, p. 21).

#### **4.2.5 Unconscious Bias Training**

Unconscious bias training helps organizations to understand the implicit biases that are ingrained in our mindsets and behaviours. Organizations are using scenarios and role playing to learn about individual and collective biases that may impact people’s feelings (e.g., people learn about the use of microaggressions and stereotypes and how they contribute to discrimination against specific ethnic groups). The intent is for people to consciously recognize their attitudes and behaviours to avoid creating in-groups and out-groups. As such, people must learn, understand, and manage their individual and collective biases and change their behaviours to reflect more positive inclusion. Individuals also need to monitor their progress and assess if people are moving away from misconceptions and prejudicial stereotyping after training (Gino & Coffman, 2021).

#### **4.2.6 Prevention Programs against Right-Wing Extremism**

Prevention programs designed to avert people from enrolling in right-wing extremist groups are intended to educate individuals on right-wing extremism and the repercussions of extremist attitudes and behaviours. The prevention of right-wing extremist attitudes and behaviours can incorporate an evidence-based prevention framework to help recognize and address racial extremism and its impacts (McBride, Gold, Faber, & Haney, 2021, p. 18).

#### **4.2.7 Establishment of Allies through Allyship Training and Practices**

An ally is “someone who actively questions, rejects, and combats exclusionary ideology and works against oppression. Allies support and advocate for populations and communities of which they are not a part, using their power and privilege to uplift others” (DasGupta & Polsinello, 2020, para. 3). By becoming an ally, people can actively promote a culture change of inclusion “through positive and conscious efforts that benefit people as a whole” (Atcheson, 2018, para. 5). Becoming an ally to support people from diverse ethnic groups is key to fostering greater ethnic inclusion.

### **4.3 Conceptual Model on Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion**

A conceptual model was developed to illustrate the factors that would enable greater ethnic diversity and inclusion. The factors highlighted in Figure 2 are derived from evidenced-based strategies and programs designed to enable ethnic diversity and inclusion in multinational military cultures, and are explored at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. Military personnel need to promote inclusive multinational military cultures, shared communications and situational awareness, operational and organizational effectiveness, mental health and well-being, shared knowledge, skills, expertise and abilities, and greater human interoperability to help generate work cultures that are inclusive of diverse ethnic groups. The RTG 301 Technical Report explains this model more fully and suggests that the historical, political, economic, social,

and socio-psychological factors attributed to ethnic intolerance have the potential to influence the strategic, operational, and tactical pillars and their inter-relationships.



**Figure 2 Conceptual Model to Enable Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion in Multinational Military Environments**

#### **4.4 Recommendations for Enabling Greater Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion**

The RTG 301 Technical Report outlines many recommendations to help foster a culture change of ethnic diversity and inclusion in multinational military environments. Several key recommendations are highlighted in this paper, including:

- a) Examine NATO’s existing Diversity and Inclusion Programme and Action Plan and assess its effectiveness in relation to “ethnic diversity and inclusion” to enable positive culture change.
- b) Incorporate evidenced-based strategies, methods, and training to a) foster a culture of belonging; b) develop inclusive leadership skills; c) encourage cultural competence and awareness training; d) implement bystander intervention and unconscious bias training; f) establish prevention programs against right-wing extremism; and g) develop allyship training and practices.
- c) Undertake a systematic review of the existing recruitment, retention, and promotion policies to prevent ethnic and racial barriers across personnel’s career life cycle.
- d) Determine ways to institute a coaching and mentoring program intended to educate personnel on ethnic and racial injustices and the importance of ethnic diversity and inclusion.

- e) Assemble a multinational committee (representation based on race and ethnicity) to foster an inclusive culture and assess the intersectional factors that may impact military and civilian personnel (e.g., using a Gender-based Analysis Plus lens).
- f) Hire equity and inclusion experts/advisors in ethnic and racial inclusion to help examine systemic racism and best practices for cultivating a diverse and inclusive culture.
- g) Develop a Lecture Series, conference, and best practices and lessons learned to promote ethnic inclusion.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

The RTG 301 examined ethnic intolerance and inclusion in defence organizations and provided international case studies to explain the different forms of ethnic intolerance and the diversity management practices needed to overcome cross-cultural differences and enable more cooperative relations within and between military organizations. Based on the literature and international case studies reviewed, this paper outlined the factors that influence ethnic intolerance (e.g., historical, political, economic, social, and socio-psychological factors). Moreover, the paper highlighted the socio-psychological factors that influence ethnic intolerance (e.g., unconscious biases, microaggressions, racism and systemic racism, and hateful conduct and right-wing extremism). Strategies, tools, and evidenced-based training programs intended to foster diverse and inclusive organizational cultures included: a) fostering a culture of belonging; b) establishing inclusive leadership practices and skills; c) promoting cultural competence and cultural awareness training, d) incorporating bystander intervention and unconscious bias training; e) providing evidence-based prevention programs against right-wing extremism; and e) establishing allies through allyship training and practices. Moreover, a conceptual model on ethnic diversity and inclusion was presented to demonstrate the factors that would enable greater ethnic inclusion in defence organizations. Recommendations were also put forward with the intent to promote strategies, policies, programs, and skills on cultivating greater ethnic diversity and inclusion.

To help advance NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept, it is important to examine the cultural implications of building effective alliances with member countries, particularly as NATO continues to assess the need for greater human security through risk reduction, crisis prevention, conflict management, and confidence-building measures (Alberque, 2022). Fostering stronger relationships and social cohesion will focus on the need to have policies in place that promote and reflect ethnic inclusion. Comprehensive culture change will only happen if military personnel are committed to advancing operational military and human security capabilities, interoperability, and mission readiness.

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