

2021

Annual Progress Report

On the Implementation of the OSCE
2004 Action Plan on the
Promotion of Gender Equality

Towards Gender Equality in the OSCE



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List of abbreviations

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CPC	Conflict Prevention Centre
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DHoM	Deputy Head of Mission
DHR	Department of Human Resources
EOA	Election observation activities
EVAW	Eliminating violence against women
ExB	Extrabudgetary
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GFP	Gender Focal Point
HCNM	High Commissioner on National Minorities
HLPG	High-Level Planning Group
HoM	Head of Mission
LTO	Long-term observer
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCEEA	Office of the Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OIO	Office of Internal Oversight
OM	Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSCE PA	OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
OSR/CTHB	Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
PC	Permanent Council
PCU	Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine
PCUz	Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan
PGA	Participatory Gender Audit
POiB	Programme Office in Bishkek
PSEA	Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse
RFoM	Representative on Freedom of the Media
SLWP	Special leave without pay
SMM	Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine
STO	Short-term observer
THB	Trafficking in human beings
TNTD	Transnational Threats Department
UB	Unified Budget
UN	United Nations
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council resolution
VAWG	Violence against women and girls
WIN	Women and Men Innovating and Networking for Gender Equality
WPS HA	Women, peace and security and humanitarian action
WRC	Women's Resource Centres

Foreword by the Secretary General

Gender Equality and fighting all forms of violence against women and girls are crucial to the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security and stability. Significant progress has been made since the milestone adoption in 2004 of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality with visible achievements within OSCE executive structures, field operations and in many OSCE participating states. However, a range of challenges and crises are putting years of gains in gender equality at risk.

Though this is a report on 2021, I have to start with the devastating and disproportionate effect that Russia's war against **Ukraine** is having on the safety, security and well-being of Ukrainian women and girls. Every day, they face an increased risk of trafficking, abuse, and sexual violence. It needs to stop. And even as Ukrainian women continue to endure the consequences of this conflict, they are not just victims: they foster resilience, respond to the needs of their communities, they document war crimes, advocate for women's needs, and work to build a sustainable future. In these dark times, my priority is to ensure that their rights are protected, their leadership recognised and their voices amplified.

As was the case in 2020, in 2021 the **COVID-19 pandemic** continued to wreak havoc on lives and livelihoods and exacerbated pre-existing gender inequalities. Women experienced greater economic setbacks, they shouldered increased caregiving responsibilities, and they were the main targets of the dramatic surge in domestic violence across our region. The pandemic's impact on women living in areas affected by conflict has been even worse. The deteriorating safety and human rights situation of women and girls in **Afghanistan** and the spill over effects on our region remain an issue of concern. Our commitment to the women of Afghanistan remains unwavering and we continue to closely monitor the impact of the situation on women in Central Asia, who are also confronted with new threats and shrinking freedoms. These multiple challenges put three key priorities to the forefront of our work: implementing the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls and fostering women's economic empowerment and inclusion in decision making. Collective action is needed to address the disproportionate impact of conflicts and economic insecurity on women and girls. This report provides concrete examples of how the OSCE has made a difference in these areas in 2021 and sets the stage for our work in the years to come.

Supporting women's leadership remains a key priority. As an International Gender Champion, I am personally committed to women's participation in decision-making at all levels. In 2021, I launched the *OSCE Networking Platform for Women Leaders including Peacebuilders and Mediators* to bring to the forefront women mediators and peacebuilders across the OSCE region. This network is an innovative instrument to connect and empower women across the OSCE, including Ukraine and Central Asia as well as women from Afghanistan with invaluable opportunities for networking, visibility and experience sharing. This includes a unique mentorship program that will support women to build their leadership skills. The Platform will be a vehicle to ensure that women are prepared to represent in all decision-making processes, from peace negotiations to humanitarian assistance delivery, to de-escalation, economic recovery and peacebuilding. Violence against women and girls must also be eradicated and greater strategic cooperation and multidimensional approaches among OSCE institutions and participating states is critical.

As an organization, we have made positive progress toward gender equality and gender mainstreaming of OSCE programmes and projects. However, this remains uneven and much work still needs to be done. That said, I am encouraged by the dedication of OSCE staff members and the growing appreciation for the importance of gender equality. I see it in the demand for training on gender mainstreaming, the development of new tools and information products as well as staff-led activities and initiatives to promote equality between women and men.

As the OSCE makes strides both within its own structures and throughout our region, I will continue to push for gender equality and women's leadership in all parts of our communities. We must lead by example and redouble our collective efforts to turn our common commitments into reality and build a more equitable, prosperous and secure society for all.

I would like to thank OSCE staff members who go above and beyond to implement the commitments of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. A special thanks to the Government of Sweden, the OSCE Chairpersonship in 2021, for placing gender equality and women, peace, and security at the top of their political agenda, and to the government of Poland for their ongoing support. I look forward to building on the momentum with all of you in the years to come.



Helga Maria Schmid

OSCE Secretary General
July 2022

KEY SUCCESSES

Key successes in 2021 and the way forward

Focusing on Women, Peace and Security

- **Supporting women leaders:** Recognizing and encouraging women's contributions to peace and security was a priority in 2021, which saw the introduction of new signature initiatives. This included the launch of the OSCE Networking Platform for Women Leaders, including Peacebuilders and Mediators. The platform brings together women mediators and peacebuilders working in the OSCE region to learn, network and share best practices.
- **Developing strategies for women's inclusion:** Making conflict resolution more inclusive and implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda were the focus of a high-level retreat for OSCE Special Representatives of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office working on conflict resolution. The retreat was organized by the 2021 Swedish OSCE Chairpersonship in partnership with the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC).
- **Building capacity on the ground:** Women representing both sides in the working groups of the Transnistrian Settlement Process were brought together for joint training as part of a collaborative effort by the OSCE Mission to Moldova, the CPC, UN Women and the Swedish Embassy in Chisinau. The training improved the women's professional abilities in communication, dealing with interference, conflict analysis and negotiation, all while keeping a gender-sensitive viewpoint in mind.

In Ukraine, the Gender Issues Programme built the capacities of Ukrainian women civil society leaders engaged in peacebuilding across the country, and assisted in the establishment of a networking platform for women peacebuilders throughout Ukraine to share experiences and best practices.

- **Raising visibility of women in peacebuilding:** The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine published its third gender thematic report, "Gender dimensions of SMM monitoring: Women's perceptions of security and their contributions to peace and security." The report looks at women's individual experiences, draws attention to the contributions women have made to decrease tensions and promote peace, and presents critical views offered by women interlocutors on ways to promote peacebuilding.

A more strategic approach to gender-based violence

- **A multidimensional approach to working on violence against women and girls (VAWG):** The development of an internal Strategic Guidance brings the OSCE one step closer to a more strategic approach to preventing and responding to gender-based violence. The Guidance will assist OSCE executive structures in improving their work on VAWG prevention and response, while also reinforcing this effort across all three dimensions of security and providing for the necessary flexibility to adapt to local realities. It will also enhance OSCE-internal cohesion in the field of VAWG.

Mainstreaming gender in economic and environmental work

- **New knowledge on gender and corruption:** The OSCE Secretariat's Gender Issues Programme published a paper "Gender and Corruption: What do we know", which addresses the important question of how men and women are impacted differently by corruption, focusing on areas that are relevant to the OSCE mandate. The publication also highlights the issue of "sextortion", a form of corruption that disproportionately affects women, and particularly those who are in disadvantaged positions due to poverty, migrant status or disability. The paper proposes several approaches to mainstreaming gender into the anticorruption work of the OSCE.
- **Developing careers of women in water management:** In collaboration with the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia and the Stockholm International Water Institute, the OCEEA launched a mentorship and career development initiative for women water professionals in 2021. Every month, around 20 women from Central Asia and Afghanistan convene online with experts and mentors to explore the problems that women face in the water industry and to participate in capacity-building activities. The OCEEA and the Gender Issues Programme also produced a guidance document on gender mainstreaming in water governance in Central Asia.

Forging new international coalitions for gender equality

- **Joining new global coalitions:** The OSCE became a Catalytic Member of the Generation Equality Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action, and joined four of the six action coalitions of the Generation Equality Forum. Incorporating the OSCE's gender equality-related activities into global transformational initiatives will ensure that the Organization plays a role in delivering the promise of the Beijing Platform for Action and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Improved internal capacities and mechanisms for gender equality

- **Gender equality plans for all:** By the end of 2021, all active OSCE field operations, the institutions, and thematic divisions in the Secretariat had a gender equality action plan in place. This is the first time that all executive bodies of the OSCE have a gender equality action plan that acts as an internal roadmap for gender equality efforts.
- **More fully gender-mainstreamed projects:** Since 2020, the level of gender mainstreaming in activities has grown across all three dimensions: one-third of the programs in the politico-military and economic and environmental dimensions, as well as two-thirds of the activities in the human dimension, are fully gender mainstreamed or completely dedicated to gender equality.
- **Upskilling staff in gender mainstreaming:** As part of the continuous effort to improve staff skills in gender mainstreaming and gender equality in comprehensive security, the Gender Issues Programme created 12 tailored training courses on gender mainstreaming and gender equality in 2021. The courses integrate current OSCE learning resources with new content customized to the Organization's specific needs and circumstances. In 2021, DHR conducted the second round of the Gender Responsive Leadership Programme, an extrabudgetary project funded by the Swedish Chairpersonship and delivered in partnership with the Folke Bernadotte Academy.

The programme equipped 15 senior leaders from across the OSCE with the skills to exercise strong and active leadership in building sustainable gender awareness in the Organization.

THE WAY FORWARD

Meeting the challenges head on

- **Amplify the voices of women peacebuilders and give them leadership roles:** The launch of the OSCE Networking Platform for Women Leaders, including Peacebuilders and Mediators, was a significant step in connecting women mediators and peacebuilders throughout the OSCE area. Advocacy and support for their inclusion in formal negotiations must be the OSCE's next priority in its support for the Platform. This includes the establishment of safe places to promote dialogue among women peacebuilders and guaranteeing the inclusion of diverse women's perspectives in peace discussions as well as engaging women from Ukraine and Afghanistan through dedicated activities to empower women peacebuilders and mediators from these countries, from grassroots activists working on the ground to political figures.
- **Empower women economically:** The spillover effect of the situation in Afghanistan on Central Asia and the war in Ukraine are having a devastating impact on the security and livelihoods of millions, with women disproportionately affected as they face new threats and shrinking freedoms. More needs to be done to empower women economically, especially through building digital and entrepreneurial skills, but also through expanded child care and social protection.
- **Develop and implement minimum standards for working on eliminating violence against women:** The internal Strategic Guidance must be rolled out and OSCE staff trained on minimum standards in working to eliminate violence against women and girls. The OSCE must continue its capacity-building and sharing good practices with service providers, especially women's resource centres, as well as its training for the security and justice sectors.
- **Build more staff capacity and secure resources:** The analysis of gender mainstreaming levels revealed that present capacity-building activities must be supplemented by targeted support from gender specialists on how to put gender mainstreaming into practice. This requires both human and financial resources. The work of the Gender Focal Points network has been invaluable to the Organization's efforts towards gender equality; however, it must be supplemented by the creation of a dedicated post of a gender adviser in each executive structure to assist and supervise gender mainstreaming activities on a more systemic basis. Sufficient operational resources must also be allocated. More knowledge products and evidence-based research on the nexus between gender equality and comprehensive security in all three dimensions are also needed.
- **Achieve gender parity:** Determined implementation of all pillars of the OSCE gender parity strategy must remain a key focus. In recruitment, building on the success in reaching gender parity among Deputy Heads of Mission, more efforts are needed to boost the number of women in senior positions, particularly at the P5 level and as Heads of OSCE field operations. This also involves empowering mid-career female OSCE staff to expand the pool of prospective women leaders to recruit from both internally and—looking beyond the OSCE's horizon—internationally. It also requires continued focus on gender-sensitive recruitment practices among senior management across the Organization to ensure that their recruitment decisions are free of gender bias.
- **Nominate more women to senior seconded posts:** Fewer than one-third of the candidates put forward by participating States for OSCE seconded positions in 2021 were female. The participating States must boost the proportion of female nominees. This is in particular necessary for nominations to Heads of Mission positions.
- **Address new and emerging issues:** The 2021 OSCE Ministerial Council decision on strengthening co-operation to address climate change challenges recognizes that women and girls have a vested interest in mitigating and adapting to climate change, not only because they are disproportionately affected by crises, but also because they are frequently at the forefront of efforts to tackle climate change.

As a result of the decision, and upon request, executive structures should support participating States in ensuring that girls and women are acknowledged as agents of positive change and that they are included in climate change policymaking, as well as mitigation and adaptation processes.

Introduction

The current report evaluates progress towards implementing the OSCE's 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (GAP) (MC.DEC/14/04) in 2021. The report examines how gender equality has been promoted inside the Organization as well as the development and trends in gender mainstreaming policies and programmes. It then offers a few instances of how the Organization has supported participating States in improving gender equality in the GAP priority areas. The report also presents highlights of the Organization's relevant contributions in light of the OSCE's recent engagement in selected Action Coalitions of the Generation Equality Forum and the Generation Equality Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action (WPS HA).

As in previous years, the report is based on contributions submitted by the Organization's executive structures and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) in response to a self-assessment questionnaire developed by the Gender Issues Programme.

Progress was measured against targets outlined in the 2019 Gender Parity Strategy, recommendations from the 2017-2019 Special Report on the Implementation of the 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (SEC.GAL/96/20), and recommendations from the Office of Internal Oversight's Thematic Evaluation of the Implementation of the OSCE's 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, which was released in 2018.

Chapter 1

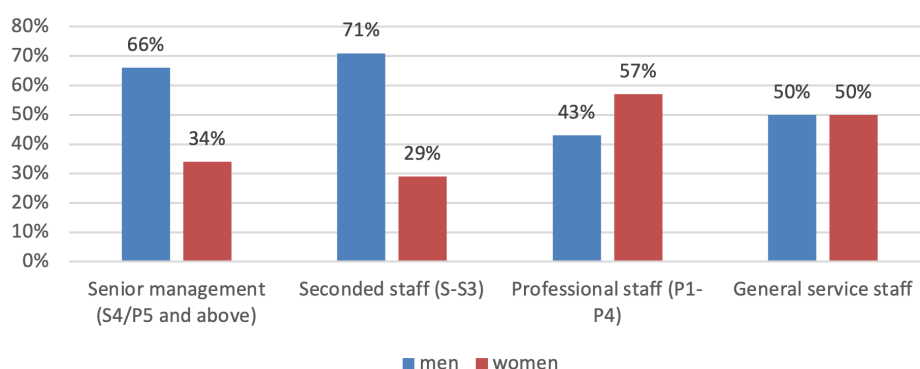
Promoting Gender Equality in the OSCE

The Organization made some headway towards gender parity in several staff categories in 2021. Yet despite advances in attracting women to apply for roles in the OSCE, women continue to be underrepresented in senior positions. Efforts to promote gender equality inside the Organization included a persistent emphasis on capacity-building for increased gender awareness. They also included reworking some of the regulatory framework pertaining to a more professional, inclusive and equal working environment. This included integrating insights gained from the experience with remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.1. Progress towards gender parity

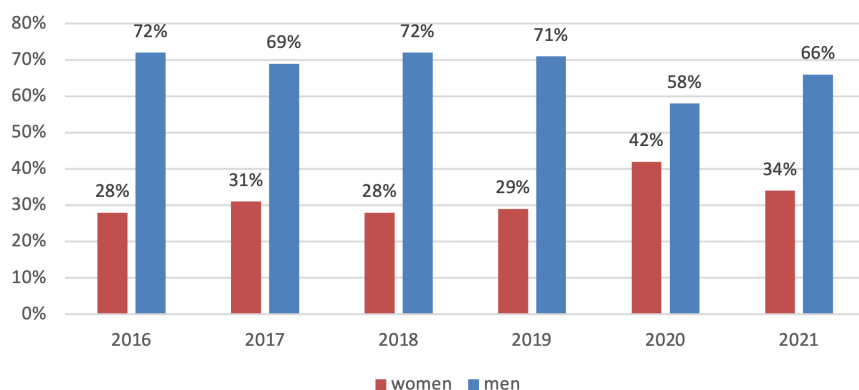
The Organization's progress towards gender parity has accelerated since the launch of the Secretariat's Gender Parity Strategy in 2019. Figure 1 shows the Organization's proximity to equal representation across all staff categories. Despite some progress, women continue to be underrepresented in some roles, in particular in seconded and senior management positions.

Fig. 1: Gender balance across all staff categories, including national professional grades, at the end of 2021 (UB, ExB, excl. SMM and OM)



In senior management, there has been a positive trend towards improved female representation over the past three years, with the women's ratio growing from 28% in 2019 to 34% in 2021. In the Secretariat, the proportion of women remained constant at the director level, with four female directors – the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC), the Office of Internal Oversight (OIO), the Transnational Threats Department (TNTD) and the Department of Management and Finance (DMF) – thus maintaining a 50/50 split of female and male directors. Overall, however, 2021 saw a decrease of 8 percentage points in female senior managers (fig. 2).

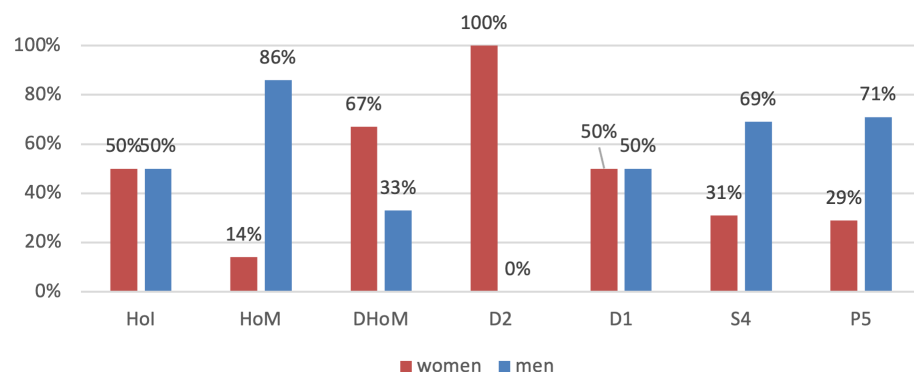
Fig. 2: Gender balance in senior management positions (S4/P5 and above) from 2015 to 2021



The drop in female senior managers is mostly due to the fact that the already low number of women in P5 positions has decreased by 7 percentage points since 2020. While gender parity exists among P5 posts at ODIHR and the HCNM, the ratio of women to men in P5 posts in the Secretariat is 2 to 7.

The limited representation of women in the Organization's leadership is also connected to the limited number of women in S4 and Head of Mission (HoM) positions (fig. 3).

Fig. 3: Gender balance in senior management positions (S4/P5 and above)



While the representation of women in Deputy Head of Mission (DHoM) roles increased from 55% in 2020 to 67% in 2021, the ratio of women in S4 positions dropped by 16 percentage points during the same period. Similarly, the proportion of women in HoM positions decreased from 20% in 2020 to 16% in 2021, with only one woman appointed to one of the six Head of Mission positions recruited in 2021. Women made up just 30% of the candidates nominated by participating States.

Gender disparities in the leadership of OSCE field operations have a long history. Since the beginning of field activities in the early 1990s, the Organization has had 155 men and 14 women as mission heads. The ratio among DHoMs is 84 men and 23 women.

The OSCE Mission to Montenegro is an exception as it has had four women and two men at its helm since its founding in 2006. Seven of the 15 active OSCE field operations have never had a female mission head.

The two tables below provide data on HoM and DHoM nominations and appointments for 2019 to 2021, broken down by gender.

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Data on HoM nominations and appointments for 2019-2021*, broken down by gender.					
	Total Nominations	Female Nominations	Male Nominations	Appointed	
				Female	Male
2019					
3 vacant HoM Positions	13	2	11	1	2
2020					
2 vacant HoM Positions	17	4	13	0	2
2021					
6 vacant HoM Positions	36	14	22	1	5

Data on DHoM nominations and appointments for 2019-2021, broken down by gender.					
	Total Nominations	Female Nominations	Male Nominations	Appointed	
				Female	Male
2019					
2 vacant DHoM Positions	22	7	15	1	1
2020					
5 vacant DHoM Positions	81	22	59	4	1
2021					
No vacant DHoM Positions					

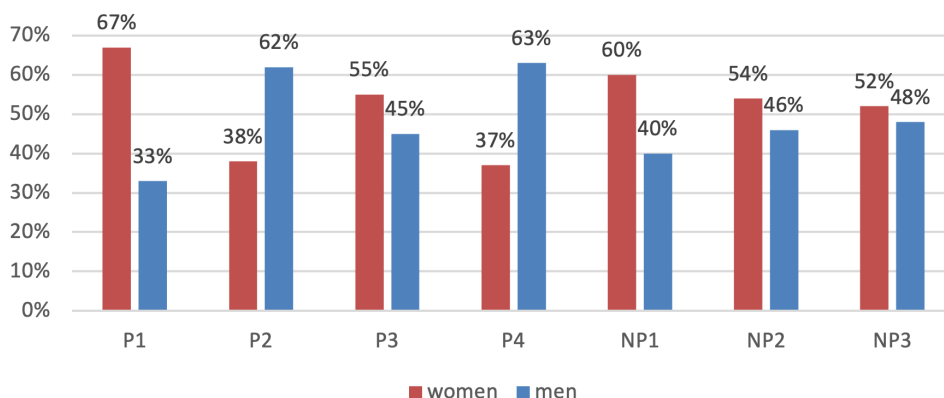
**The data pertains to appointments made from January 1 to December 31 of each year, regardless of the date of the call for nominations.*

Female representation at P4/S3 levels and below

At the P4 level, where female representation has traditionally been low, improvement has been slow with only a 1 percentage point rise. Of the five P4 positions in OSCE field operations, none are held by women.

The proportion of female P4s in the Secretariat is 33% (11 out of 33 positions), whereas it is 42% in ODIHR (5 out of 12 positions). In the HCNM, by contrast, women hold six out of eight P4 positions (75%).

Fig. 4: Gender balance in professional positions (P1/NP1 to P4/NP3)



Progress has also been modest at the S to S3 levels of seconded staff as the rate of female nominations by participating States remains low. In 2021, the percentage of female secondees fell sharply to 23% compared to 27% in 2020 and 31% in 2019, which is likely attributed to expatriation safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic. A persistent decrease in the number of women is also evident the higher the position in the organizational hierarchy. Nevertheless, despite the fact that there were fewer female nominations for seconded posts in 2021, the Organization demonstrated its commitment to gender parity targets by appointing a larger percentage of women than had been nominated by participating States.

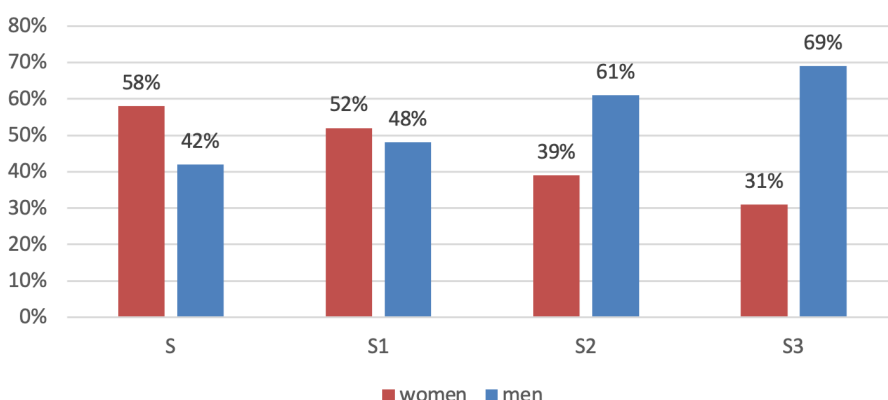
While the Organization has a clear role to play in supporting participating States to develop their female talent pipelines through capacity-building and outreach, and subsequently selecting candidates to the extent possible in accordance with the ratio of female nominations, accountability for improvement in this area rests primarily with participating States. Their awareness of the importance of gender parity when nominating secondees is critical, as is the possibility for the Organization to improve its financial package for secondees. The lack of any family-related benefits in the OSCE compensation system for international staff working in field operations (both contracted and seconded) poses a significant obstacle to hiring mid-career female professionals in field operations.

Female representation at P4/S3 levels and below

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Fig. 5: Gender balance in seconded positions



1.2. Recruitment

The Department of Human Resources has made it a priority to encourage more women to apply for positions at the OSCE. In 2021, it continued to prepare vacancy notices that are equally appealing to male and female candidates, with specific emphasis on eliminating unnecessary restrictions that were shown to discourage female applicants. In situations where there was a gender imbalance, vacancy notices encouraged applicants from the underrepresented sex to apply. The table below summarizes outreach actions aimed at attracting eligible female professionals to apply for jobs at the OSCE.

- **GLOBAL CAREERS FOR WOMEN** – two international virtual fairs to target female professionals for management positions.
- With over 19,000 online subscribers (30% more than in 2020), the **TALENT ACQUISITION NEWSLETTER** was customized to areas of work and levels where women/men are underrepresented. The March 2021 edition was titled ‘Women at the OSCE,’ and all new female Secretariat directors were presented to the subscribers.
- **BRAND AMBASSADORS** feature biographies of the Secretariat’s four female directors on the OSCE website, with their career paths highlighted to attract other potential candidates.
- Several **WOMEN RECRUITMENT BOOTCAMPS** were held, each aimed at a different audience, and including over 20 female participants from Central Asia with politico-military backgrounds.
- Several **WEBINARS WITH A GENDER FOCUS**, some co-organized by DHR, the Gender Issues Programme and the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, targeted female applicants for field operations secondment.
- **LINKEDIN POSTS** included videos and pictures from both men and women. Pictures of women were picked for units with low female representation, with gender-neutral text in the posts.

Efforts to attract female applications were successful: In 2021, women made up around half of all candidates in the majority of staffing categories across the Organization. The mid to senior management posts (P4 to D1) were statistical outliers, with only around 40% of applicants being women. There were also very few women who applied for employment at the G2 level, a staff category that has a 95% male representation and comprises mostly drivers, manual workers and security guards. Women, however, hold 100% of the posts at the G1 level, which are almost exclusively cleaners.

In terms of recruitment, appointing authorities continue to aim for a gender-balanced composition in recruitment panels and, to the extent possible, ensure that panel members have undergone interview skills training – for example, the DHR “Hiring Great People” course – including modules on unconscious bias.

In the Secretariat, diversity scorecards are shared with recruiting managers in order to give an analytical framework for departmental gender balance, including recommendations. Gender statistics also continue to be monitored, and deadlines were extended when the number of applications of either sex did not reach at least 20% of the total number of applicants, including for Heads of Mission recruitments.

In 2021, the OIO’s Internal Audit Section performed a thematic review of recruitment and job classification. The team examined and gave suggestions about gender mainstreaming throughout the recruiting process as part of the evaluation.

1.3. Improving accountability for gender equality

Accountability for gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the Organization is critical to achieving the GAP goals. The year 2021 represented the third cycle of reporting for all OSCE managers against obligatory gender-responsive objectives in performance management.

As recommended in the OIO's thematic review of the 2004 GAP implementation, 74% of Gender Focal Points included gender-related objectives in their performance objectives in 2021. This proportion is the same as it was in 2020.

1.4. People management and leadership

Gender awareness and skill training programmes for staff have been extensively scaled up in the preceding two years, and the Organization has maintained its efforts to institutionalize various types of gender-related training for employees at all levels and across executive structures. The table below provides an overview of gender-relevant training courses offered in 2021 and their outreach.

In order to strengthen staff capacity on gender mainstreaming and gender equality in comprehensive security, the Gender Issues Programme developed 12 tailor-made training modules on multiple topics related to gender mainstreaming and gender equality. The transformative modules, which will be rolled out in 2022, are designed to enhance the skills and knowledge of OSCE staff who are engaged in internal and external capacity development. The modules have been created by gathering existing OSCE learning material, as well as designing new content that reflects the specific needs and context of the Organization. In order to test these modules, a Training of Trainers was organized in December 2021. The three-day workshop served the purpose of assessing, discussing and explaining the modules, as well as suggesting training methodologies including overcoming resistance to gender mainstreaming.

- **BIAS BITES** – a campaign that includes self-directed multimedia and online courses, as well as live interventions to increase awareness of the impact of unconscious bias in the workplace. **Reach: all Secretariat staff and shared with other executive structures.**
- **OSCE ETHICS AWARENESS COURSE** – an online programme designed to guide staff through various ethical questions they may face as an OSCE official, providing a clear framework against which to test ethical decision-making and all the resources to understand how ethical a particular action may be, including whom to contact. **Reach: 486 OSCE newcomers (200 women, 286 men).**
- **PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE FOR STAFF AND MANAGERS** – a mandatory United Nations online course focusing on sexual exploitation and abuse among beneficiary populations. **Reach: 534 newly recruited OSCE staff (244 women, 299 men) from all executive structures.**
- **I KNOW GENDER** – a mandatory Gender Equality Introduction for UN Staff, concentrating on gender equality and women's empowerment. **Reach: 2,150 learners (976 women, 1,174 men).**
- **PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ABUSE – WORKING HARMONIOUSLY** – a mandatory online course giving guidance on how to confront unwanted or prohibited behaviour towards women. **Reach: 446 newly recruited OSCE staff (203 women, 243 men).**
- **ADDRESSING AND MITIGATING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS** – an interactive blended course (self-paced and instructor-led) that covers the science of unconscious bias, strategies for overcoming prevalent preconceptions and the OSCE's extensive policy advice on diversity and discrimination. **Reach: 112 staff members (69 women, 43 men).**
- **GENDER-RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME** – a four-month programme organized in collaboration with the Folke Bernadotte Academy that accompanies senior leaders on their learning journey towards a gender-sensitive management culture that contributes to the implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. **Reach: 15 senior managers (7 women, 8 men).**

¹ The Staff Instruction was issued in June 2022.

- **LEADING EFFECTIVE TEAMS** – a new leadership induction programme launched in January 2021, which includes an ethics session and covers unconscious bias in various sessions. **Reach: 61 leaders (23 women, 38 men).**
- **WOMEN'S MENTORING PROGRAMME** – a continuation of the existing Women's Mentoring Programme directly addressing feedback from women in the OSCE that a lack of developmental opportunities and restricted access to professional networks are significant impediments to advancement. **Reach: 87 female mentees and 87 mentors (including 29 male mentors).**
- The mandatory **"STAY SAFE"** online course contains a module with references to the OSCE Code of Conduct, competency model and policies that regulate staff misconduct, including sexual harassment and assault – in collaboration with Security Management and the Gender Issues Programme. **Reach: 2,925 OSCE staff members (1,255 women, 1,670 men).**
- **VARIOUS WORKSHOPS** on ethical questions and Q&A sessions about the Code of Conduct and whistleblowing. In accordance with the Sexual Harassment Action Plan, the training's content highlighted sexual harassment prevention and the roles of managers and bystanders. **Reach: 500 OSCE staff members in live digital sessions.**

1.5. Standards of conduct, ethics and professional working environment

In 2021, the Secretariat continued to strengthen the OSCE's regulatory framework to ensure a professional, inclusive and equitable working environment, including work on developing three new staff instructions:

- **The Staff Instruction on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)**¹ will ensure that OSCE officials contribute to the prevention of all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse. The draft incorporates best practices from other international organizations while catering to the OSCE's organizational structure, operational context and regulatory framework. Relevant OSCE Secretariat officials have also received professional training on investigating SEA and related misconduct.
- **The Staff Instruction on the Informal Resolution Function** will foster an environment in which concerns are resolved by discussion and at an early stage, prior to further escalation or the filing of a formal complaint.
- **The Staff Instruction on Whistle-blower Protection and Protection Against Retaliation** will provide extra safeguards to persons who come forward about violations, fostering a culture in which employees may speak out without fear of retaliation.

In addition, consultations with all executive structures on **Staff Instruction 21 on a Professional Working Environment** were concluded and DHR began to amend Staff Instruction 27 on Flexible Working Arrangements, drawing on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic. Promoting and supporting flexible working and learning arrangements in response to increased family obligations during the pandemic have been shown to improve staff health and well-being and result in more efficient business processes, such as electronic approval flows and signatures, electronic filing, virtual interviews and online learning programmes. The revision is also based on an Office of Internal Oversight study, "Learning from Working During the COVID-19 Pandemic." The study included an examination of the gender component of the pandemic's influence on the OSCE's programmatic activity, as well as concerns affecting the professional and gender-sensitive management culture and working environment. The study found that the pandemic has affected female staff members differently than their male colleagues. While 7% of women said that the pandemic had had a very bad impact on their state of mind/mental wellbeing, and 52% claimed that it had had a somewhat unfavourable impact, the comparable statistics for male staff members were 6% and 41% respectively.

In the area of election observation activities (EOA), ODIHR continued to implement its policy on a professional working environment, which included distributing a leaflet and a poster (translated into more than 20 languages) to all EOA members and posting them in the offices of the core team and long-term observers (LTOs). Furthermore,

pre-deployment briefings on a professional working environment for LTOs and short-term observers (STOs) were revised. This issue is also fully addressed in the LTO and STO guidebooks. In 2021, the gender balance of the body receiving complaints about the professional working environment for election observation activities improved (three men in 2020 versus two men and one woman in 2021).

1.6. Improving internal mechanisms for advancing gender equality

Gender advisers and gender focal points

The number of full-time positions dedicated to supporting gender equality and mainstreaming activities increased by one in 2021: The executive structures that include full-time gender adviser roles now include ODIHR (a Gender Advisor and an Associate Gender Officer in the Democratization Department, and a Gender Advisor in the Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department), the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, the OSCE Mission to Skopje and the Secretariat (the Gender Issues Programme). In addition, the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) had a Gender Expert Structure that included a Senior Gender Adviser, Gender Officers and two Gender Co-ordinators in the field. Furthermore, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Presence in Albania, the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine and the Programme Office in Dushanbe have dedicated programmatic staff who focus on gender-related activities and frequently do gender-related work that goes above and beyond their job descriptions. In executive structures that do not have dedicated staff resources for gender mainstreaming, Gender Focal Points (GFPs) provide strategic advice to senior management and support their colleagues in their gender mainstreaming efforts. They do this in addition to their regular job duties.

Women make up 73% of GFPs, and many work in the human dimension or on cross-dimensional issues. The proportion of male GFPs has fallen from 33% in 2020 to 27% in 2021. A favourable trend is the growth in the number of staff in senior positions (S4/P5 and above) serving as main and alternate GFPs, which has increased from 9 to 12.

Action Plans and co-ordination mechanisms

The number of internal gender equality working groups remained unchanged in 2021 with 10 executive structures indicating that they have such a co-ordination mechanism in place. Furthermore, the CPC began devoting two staff meetings per year to discussing the role of gender focal points and gender issues relevant to its specific areas of responsibility.

All current OSCE field operations, the institutions and thematic divisions in the Secretariat had a gender equality action plan in place by the end of 2021. This is the first time that all OSCE executive structures have a gender equality action plan that serves as their internal roadmap for activities related to gender equality.

Chapter 2

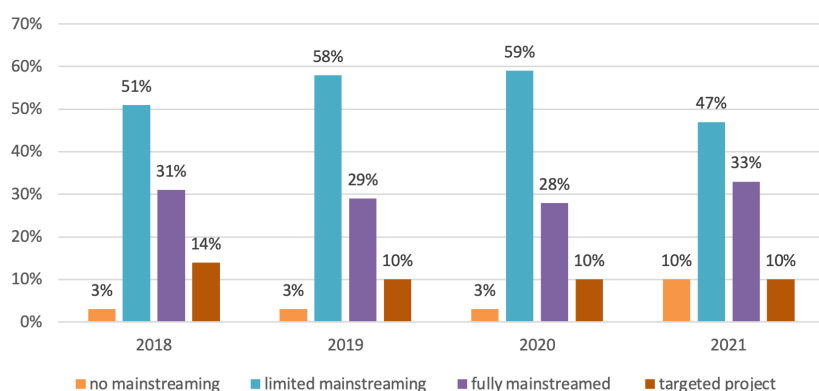
Mainstreaming a gender perspective into OSCE activities, policies, programmes and projects

Progress in mainstreaming gender issues throughout all OSCE activities has remained uneven, as in previous years. The 2021 reporting period is notable for having seen a rise in both projects that were not gender mainstreamed at all and those that were fully gender mainstreamed. This ‘all or nothing’ trend in the approach to gender mainstreaming is indicative of continuing skill gaps in identifying gender perspectives in some areas of the OSCE’s work. Several executive structures have recognized this and have begun to use novel strategies, such as gender audits, to improve their gender mainstreaming records.

2.1. Levels of gender mainstreaming in OSCE activities

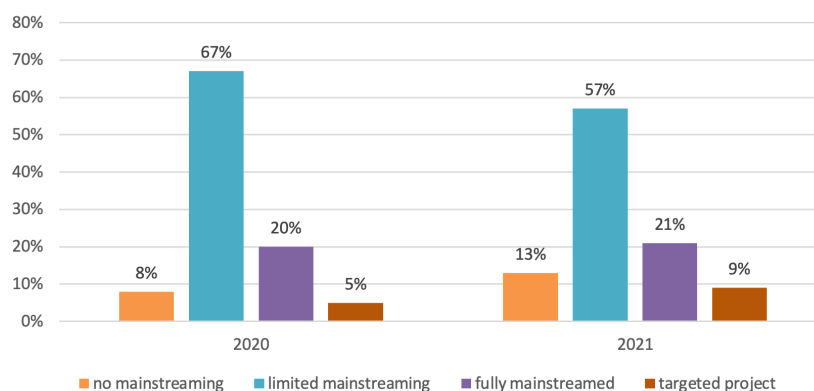
Levels of gender mainstreaming in OSCE projects shifted somewhat in 2021. A comparison of data from 2020 and 2021 reveals that the proportion of projects that were not gender mainstreamed grew by 7 percentage points. At the same time, the proportion of programmes that were fully mainstreamed increased by 5 percentage points. The share of projects fully targeting gender equality remained the same. Overall, the share of projects that had some level of gender mainstreaming remained the highest, although it decreased in comparison to 2020.

Fig. 6: Gender mainstreaming levels across all projects (UB and ExB), 2018-2021



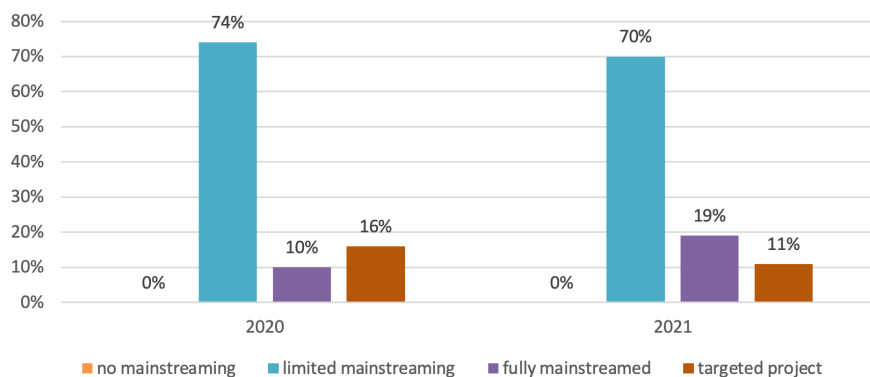
Gender mainstreaming progress in the politico-military dimension has been mixed: the share of activities that did not contain any gender considerations has grown by 5 percentage points since 2020. At the same time, programmes that were completely gender mainstreamed grew by 1 percentage point, and projects fully targeting gender equality grew by 4 percentage points. The proportion of projects that included some gender considerations fell by 10 percentage points.

Fig. 7: Comparison of gender mainstreaming levels in the politico-military dimension (UB and ExB), 2020 and 2021



The economic and environmental dimension made some progress in terms of gender mainstreaming: the number of projects that are not mainstreamed at all remained zero, and the proportion of programmes with minimal gender mainstreaming fell by four percentage points in favour of activities with full gender mainstreaming or specifically targeting gender equality.

Fig. 8: Comparison of gender mainstreaming levels in the economic and environmental dimension (UB and ExB), 2020 and 2021



Projects in the human dimension and cross-dimensional projects have historically demonstrated relatively higher levels of gender mainstreaming, and this was also the case in 2021. A new trend is the rise of activities that do not take any gender perspective into account at all. Simultaneously, the number of completely gender mainstreamed initiatives in the human dimension has grown by 8 percentage points and fully targeted projects by 3 percentage points. The number of fully gender mainstreamed cross-dimensional projects has increased by 2 percentage points, while the number of cross-dimensional activities fully dedicated to promoting gender equality has increased by 1 percentage point.

Fig.9: Comparison of gender mainstreaming levels in the human dimension (UB and ExB), 2020 and 2021

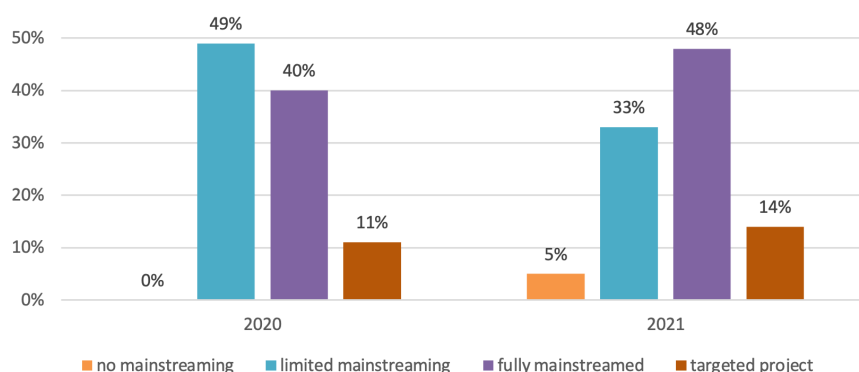
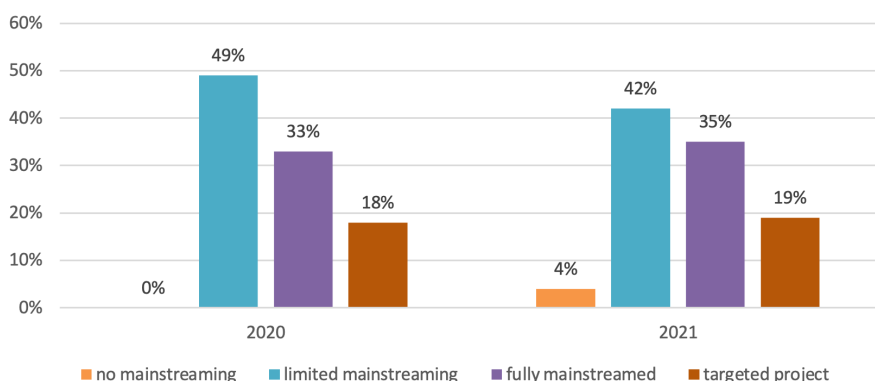


Fig. 10: Comparison of gender mainstreaming levels in cross-dimensional projects (UB and ExB), 2020 and 2021



The data above demonstrates that the capacity of OSCE staff to mainstream gender in projects remains uneven. The effective incorporation of general theoretical principles about gender mainstreaming into real day-to-day work remains difficult and requires continual attention. The Gender Issues Programme and the CPC's Programming and Evaluation Support Unit are working to increase internal capacity for gender mainstreaming by providing personnel with the basic knowledge and skills they need to successfully identify and address equality gaps between women and men in their activities.

Furthermore, executive structures have used a variety of approaches to enhance their internal gender mainstreaming performance. The Programme Office in Bishkek (POiB) has included its GFP, who works in the Office of the Head of Mission, in the project proposal evaluation committee to ensure that all proposals have a gender perspective. It also initiated a series of 'Gender Brunches' in the second half of 2021 to increase programmatic staff members' knowledge of the relevance of gender mainstreaming in POiB programmes and activities.

The Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina is placing more emphasis on monitoring implementation of the Mission's gender action plan and has established a semi-annual monitoring system. It also prioritizes fewer projects and incorporates gender mainstreaming into project indicators.

Another trend in 2021 was the use of gender audits by executive structures to analyse the efficacy of their internal procedures and support systems for gender mainstreaming and gender equality. For example, the High-Level Planning Group (HLPG) used the suggestions of a gender compliance audit to improve the gender sensitivity of its work. Similarly, the Office of the Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) engaged the expertise of a consultant to conduct an evaluation of the OCEEA's gender mainstreaming capacity, which included three employee surveys. The suggestions that resulted from the analysis presented the OCEEA with a strategic vision for improving gender mainstreaming in its programmes and projects. The Mission to Skopje took part in a participatory gender audit (PGA), which evaluated the Mission's activities over the previous two years via a desk review, staff survey, face-to-face interviews and a staff workshop. The PGA exercise increased the Mission staff's collective ability to assess its actions from a gender perspective, identify strengths and shortcomings in advancing gender equality inside and beyond the Mission, and foster organizational ownership of gender equality efforts. The PGA suggestions and actionable steps identified to fix the gaps will be incorporated into the Mission's revised Gender Strategy and Action Plan for 2022-2024.

GENDER EQUALITY AND EVALUATION

The lack of awareness of gender equality and the role of evaluation in promoting gender transformational change is a challenge that the OIO's Evaluation Section sought to address in 2021. Among its related activities were a series of advisory sessions on the integration of gender equality in evaluation based on an external quality assessment of OSCE evaluation reports that revealed shortcomings in this area, the distribution of dedicated newsletters on gender and evaluation, and two webinars hosted by the European Evaluation Society and UN Women for the Evaluation Network. These were especially pertinent during the COVID-19 pandemic, which adds additional barriers to reaching and effectively involving women in all stages of the evaluation process.

2.2. Gender balance in OSCE activities and events

Because most activities in 2021 continued to be held online, participation was more diversified, and more women in key positions were able to participate in OSCE events than previously. Systematic gender balance in OSCE activities, however, is an ongoing effort. Executive structures have been able to improve the women-men ratio in some male-dominated areas, such as border security and cybersecurity. Conversely, incorporating male perspectives in other areas, such as the anti-trafficking agenda (other than law enforcement) remains challenging. Also, the TNTD Strategic Police Matters Unit recently observed that women make up about 90-100% of the national experts involved in the OSCE's work to combat gender-based violence in South-Eastern Europe. Female police officers can play a critical role in reducing the obstacles that women and girls encounter when reporting gender-based violence. At the same time, it is important to avoid framing gender-based violence primarily as a women's issue and make sure that men are part of the related police and justice system responses.

When partners continue to propose male representatives, OSCE executive structures use a variety of approaches to increase female participation, including reaching out to delegations of OSCE participating States, engaging professional networks and women's groups to suggest candidates, and developing expert rosters. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo has begun working with potential female speakers to help them develop skills to have a stronger voice in public discussions.

The OSCE Gender Issues Programme has been monitoring the gender balance at OSCE events since 2018. The graphs below depict the improvements made since then. Progress towards gender parity in the second dimension must be highlighted in particular.

Fig. 11: Share of speakers (including moderators) by sex in OSCE events, including meetings of the Permanent Council, 2018-2021

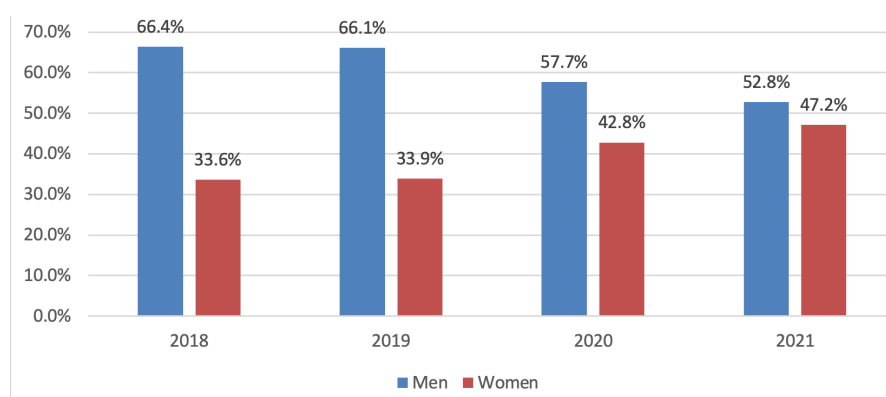


Fig. 12: Share of speakers (including moderators) by sex and dimension in 2021

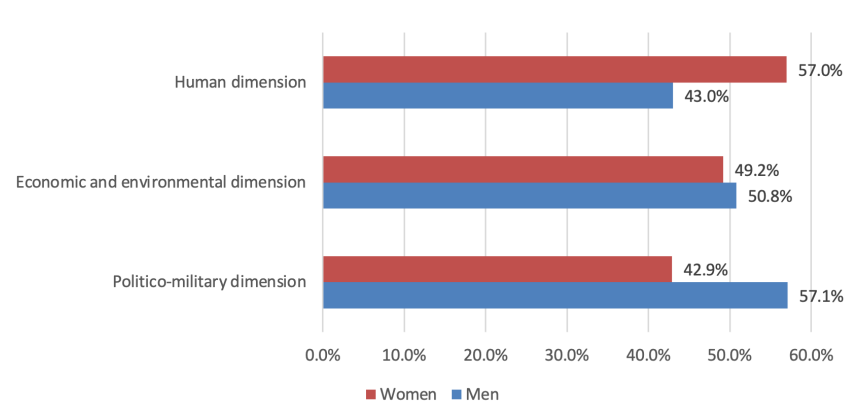


Fig. 13: Share of speakers (including moderators) by sex in events in the politico-military dimension, 2018-2021

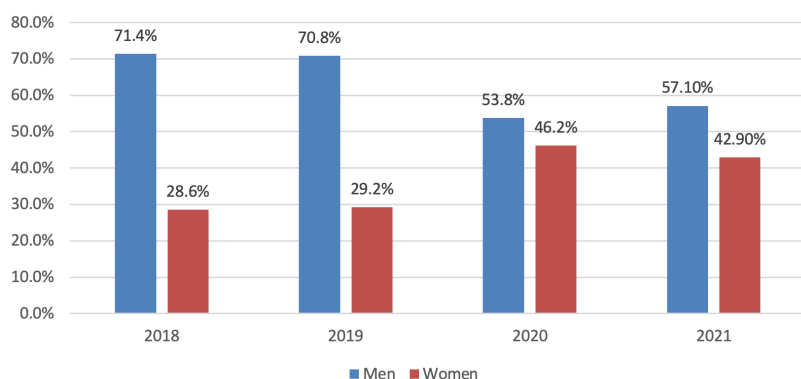


Fig. 14: Share of speakers (including moderators) by sex in events in the economic and environmental dimension, 2018-2021

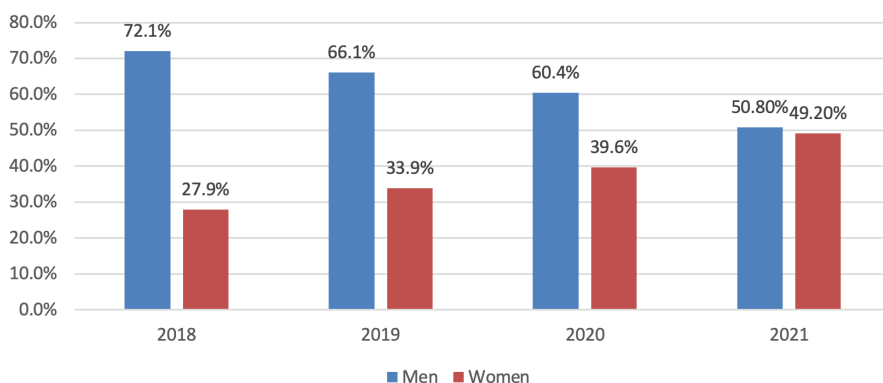


Fig. 15: Share of speakers (including moderators) by sex in events in the human dimension, 2018-2021

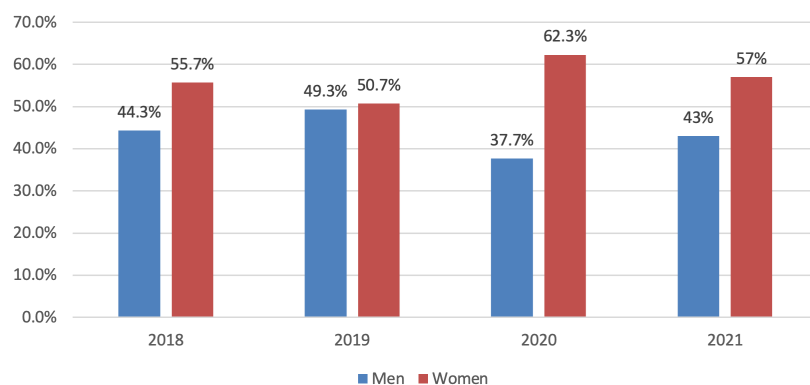
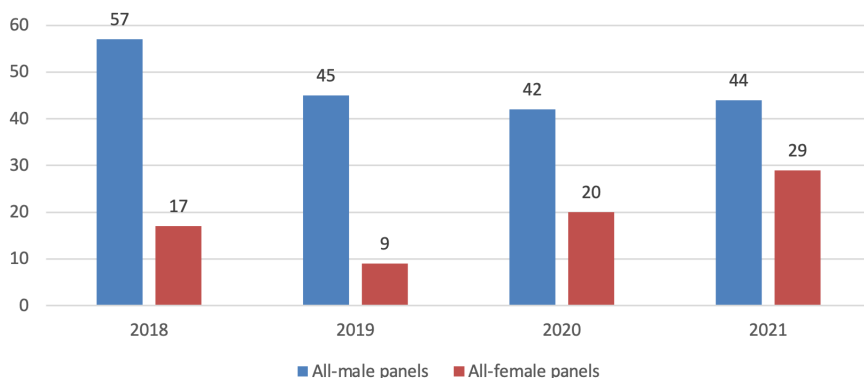


Fig. 16: Number of all-male and all-female panels (including moderators) in all OSCE events, including Permanent Council meetings, 2018-2021



PARTNERSHIPS AND INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCES FOR GENDER EQUALITY

The failure to achieve meaningful equality between men and women over the last two decades, as well as the disastrous impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender equality, has driven global coalitions of governments, corporations and change agents to advance equality, leadership and opportunities for women and girls. In 2021, the OSCE joined major coalitions aimed at accelerating the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

In July 2021, the Organization joined the Generation Equality Forum in Paris and pledged to the following action coalitions:

- **The Action Coalition on Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality**

Commitment: contribute to closing the digital gender gap by 2026 by ensuring that 80% of all OSCE technology and innovation projects, programs and activities are fully gender mainstreamed and provide OSCE participating States with capacity-building to strengthen legal and policy frameworks to combat violence faced by women and girls through digital technologies.

- **The Action Coalition on Gender-Based Violence**

Commitment: systematically implement activities to prevent and combat gender-based violence/violence against women and girls in all areas of the OSCE security mandate. The OSCE will build capacities of its own staff to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, including trafficking in human beings, in line with international standards, both internally and in all OSCE programmes that promote comprehensive security.

- **The Action Coalition on Economic Justice and Rights**

Commitment: promote economic justice and rights for women as a crucial contribution to conflict resolution, peace and security by recommending policy and legal frameworks that ensure women's access to labour markets; promoting an enabling business environment for women's entrepreneurs; and supporting policies and services in the social and economic sphere addressing the specific needs of women in vulnerable situations and from socially marginalized groups, including survivors of violence and human trafficking, as well as women belonging to minority groups.

The OSCE, together with ODIHR, also joined the Forum's Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action as a Catalytic Member with a focus on bringing together women mediators and peacebuilders and engaging with women's networks to develop their leadership. ODIHR joined the Action Coalitions on Gender-Based Violence and Feminist Movements and Leadership.

All commitments made within the context of these alliances are consistent with the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. Examples of the OSCE's concrete contributions to these initiatives are provided throughout the report.

Chapter 3

Promoting gender equality in participating States

In 2021, OSCE executive structures collaborated with their counterparts in OSCE participating States to improve gender equality in the areas identified by the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. Support varied from encouraging public discussions to conducting research and offering policy recommendations, as well as legislative and policy advice and technical assistance. This chapter contains examples of the results they obtained.

3.1. Ensuring non-discriminatory legal and policy frameworks

Ending discrimination against women and attaining gender equality require the removal of discriminatory laws and the establishment of legislative frameworks that promote gender equality. Since the adoption of the 2004 OSCE GAP, OSCE executive structures have assisted participating States in implementing their commitment to ensure non-discriminatory legal and policy frameworks.

Work with lawmakers

A good example is ODIHR's and the OSCE Mission to Skopje's work with the Assembly of North Macedonia, which culminated in the formulation of the Assembly's second Gender Action Plan for the period 2022-2023. The Action Plan will improve Members of Parliament's political accountability for gender equality, as well as the Parliament's transparency, making North Macedonia one of the few OSCE participating States that has consistently worked to achieve gender equality in Parliament.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the OSCE Mission engaged with political parties and relevant State and entity institutions to promote women's and youth's political participation. For example, in a two-day workshop, the Social-Democratic Party added measures linked to gender equality to its programme. The Mission's collaboration with the People's Democratic Party meanwhile resulted in the training of gender equality trainers inside the party and the development of the party's gender equality action plan.

SUPPORTING GENDER-SENSITIVE PARLIAMENTS



Beginning in 2020, ODIHR began a study of good practices and lessons learned on gender sensitivity in national parliaments in the OSCE area in collaboration with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and national parliaments of OSCE participating States. A handbook was issued to assist a wide range of parliamentary actors in establishing gender-sensitive parliaments, including parliamentary leadership teams, members of parliament, political and parliamentary staff, as well as parliamentary practitioners and civil society organizations working on gender equality issues.

Work with legal practitioners

As constitutional complaints serve as an effective means of protection against discrimination, the Project Coordinator in Ukraine worked on a programme to promote constitutional complaint as a tool for resolving gender-related discrimination concerns. The two-year programme, which finished in 2021, included legal practitioner capacity-building, expert discussion platforms, and the creation and distribution of awareness-raising materials. It trained some 380 human rights defenders, attorneys, activists, representatives of legal clinics, professors and students from across the country. Officials, judges, other legal professionals and civil society representatives discussed gender-sensitive constitutionalism at a number of legal conferences in Ukraine. The initiative also published the manual *Gender Equality: Theory and Practice in Comparative Constitutional Law* as well as a guidebook on gender analysis in constitutional processes featuring international best practices.

Work with governments

National gender equality strategies are significant policy frameworks that set out an ambitious vision and a comprehensive agenda for advancing gender equity and equality. With support from the OSCE Mission to

Montenegro, the Government of Montenegro adopted a comprehensive and needs-based National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2025. For the first time, a participatory-defined vision, a detailed situation and issue analysis, a clear baseline and measurable indicators have been included in the plan to address core causes of inequality and track progress. It is aligned with other national and international strategies, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and recommendations by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, and it implements principles of financial sustainability, accountability, co-operation, transparency, continuity and rational planning. The strategy will help to mainstream gender into policies, processes and legislation in a systematic way, as well as decrease gender stereotypes in society and establish gender-sensitive organizational culture in the public sector.

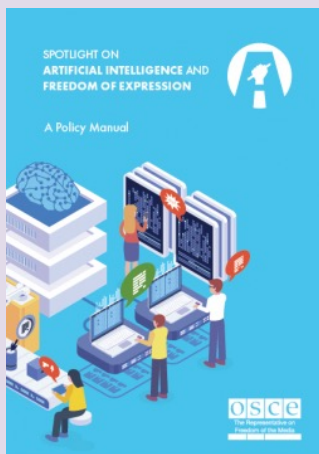
Work with civil society

Gender-based hate crimes are a consequence of gender inequalities and have a profound and long-term impact on their victims. By reinforcing gender inequities, they also jeopardize security and societal cohesiveness. Civil society monitoring and reporting provide one means to disclose the scale of the problem, enabling policymakers to devise suitable remedies. After several years of ODIHR monitoring of sex/gender-based hate crime, the number of gender-based crimes recorded by civil society organizations (CSOs) in 2021 increased slightly. This shows that CSOs have an improved understanding of what constitutes a gender-based hate crime.

FRAMEWORK: ACTION COALITION ON TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

OSCE commitment: To contribute to closing the gender digital gap by 2026 by ensuring that 80% of all its technology and innovation projects, programs and activities are fully gender mainstreamed, and provide OSCE participating States with capacity-building for strengthening legal and policy frameworks to combat violence faced by women and girls through digital technologies.

#SAIFE and #SOFJO: Addressing Digital Risks Facing Women Journalists



Female journalists around the world are facing unprecedented levels of harassment. According to a recent UNESCO research discussion paper, the goal is to denigrate, degrade, shame, instil fear and ultimately discredit female journalists and undermine public trust in critical journalism.²

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media's (RFoM) #SAIFE project addresses challenges to freedom of expression through artificial intelligence, including the implications such tools may have for equal opportunities for participation of women in the public sphere, whether as a result of the amplification of targeted campaigns, hate and attacks, or a shrinking space for pluralism through parallel, delimited information spaces, with concerning effects on social cohesion, among other things.

The RFoM #SOFJO Resource Guide focuses on gender-specific online abuse of journalists, such as online attacks and harassment of female journalists. It intends to contribute to the reduction of online violence against women by giving recommendations on who should do what – and how – to promote the online safety of women journalists. Several awareness-raising initiatives were carried out in 2021, including promotion of the Resource Guide and its translated versions in regional and international fora, podcasts, events and trainings; screenings and promotion of the documentary *A Dark Place*, which highlights how the online safety of female journalists affects gender equality, media freedom and democracy; as well as participation in the OSCE Sixteen Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign in advance of International Human Rights Day.

Following attacks on specific female journalists, the Office of the RFoM intervened and/or initiated contact with the affected journalists. The RFoM also contributed to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's report on Violence Against Women Journalists and Politicians, as well as the report's launch event, which initiated closer co-operation to engage parliamentarians in ensuring better preventive and protective mechanisms – which will be one of the SOFJO project's focuses in 2022.

² UNESCO, "The Chilling: Global trends in online violence against women journalists" (April 2021). Available at <https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/the-chilling.pdf>

3.2. Preventing violence against women and girls

Violence against women and girls is still widespread and has been aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the OSCE's efforts to eliminate all kinds of violence against women, including human trafficking, have remained prominent in 2021.

Training for the police and justice sector

The OSCE's assistance to national initiatives to prevent domestic violence and protect its survivors includes a wide variety of actions addressing various facets of the problem. The Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example, has provided capacity-building to police inspectors in the Republika Srpska, guidance for improved data collection on sexual harassment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and equipped a new safe space established by the Women's Association SEKA in Goražde. At the policy level, it has provided advice and comments on the proposed Strategy for Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence 2021-2027, as well as expert assistance in efforts to align the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Criminal Code with the Istanbul Convention and work on additional amendments to the Law.

The Gender Issues Programme commissioned a mapping of police and justice sector training curricula on gender-based violence in South-Eastern Europe in 2021. A roundtable meeting with experts from throughout the area reviewed the mapping results and discussed ideas to improve training in the police and judicial sectors to prevent and combat violence against women and girls. The findings are also being used in a project carried out by the TNTD Strategic Police Matters Unit to develop new gender-based violence training for South-Eastern Europe.



ACTIONABLE RECOMMENDATIONS TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

In January 2021, a series of expert roundtables on eliminating violence against women (EVAW) in the OSCE region that began in 2020 concluded with a conference that resulted in actionable recommendations by experts from government, civil society, international organizations and academia from across the OSCE area. The roundtables were organized as part of the WIN project EVAW pillar. The recommendations provide concrete actions that OSCE participating States can take to improve the quality and access to services for survivors of gender-based violence, to enhance the capacity of law enforcement and the justice sector in responding to cases, and to put in place better systems to collect data on all forms of violence against women and girls, including femicide.

Support to service providers for survivors of gender-based violence

The Programme Office in Dushanbe has carried out a variety of activities to assist its host country in protecting domestic violence survivors. A case management system established by the Office, for example, has been embraced by local multidisciplinary victim support organizations, which have begun to utilize it in their communities. In 2021, government agencies referred 759 survivors of domestic violence to women's resource centres (WRCs), a 37% increase from 2020.

WRCs, for their part, referred 1,706 domestic abuse survivors to responsible government structures in 2021, a 32% increase over 2020. Office support for a network of 14 WRCs resulted in direct assistance to 1,188 women, 7,600 legal and psychosocial consultations, the organization of vocational courses in remote areas of the country serving 1,487 women, and the delivery of weekly community outreach and awareness-raising workshops on domestic violence to 17,921 community members (13,606 women, 4,315 men).

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the extent of domestic violence in the OSCE area. OSCE executive structures helped expand the capacity of shelters for victims of violence as part of their first response to the pandemic. As this crucial work continues, they have increasingly turned to forms of support that assist women's shelters in maintaining their services for the longer term. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo, for example, taught the fundamentals of project cycle management to 20 women who work in shelters for victims of domestic violence.

The objective was to boost the shelters' capacity to effectively apply for funding from local and international donors, hence increasing their financial sustainability. The identification and planning stages of the project cycle, as well as gender and diversity mainstreaming, were prioritized. The training was developed in response to a 2020 needs assessment conducted with staff of domestic violence shelters, in which 89% of respondents indicated a need for capacity-building in this area.

Safety of women in public spaces

Local governments and communities have a critical role in protecting women's and girls' safety and preventing gender-based violence. The OSCE Mission to Serbia and the CSO FemPlatz conducted desk research and surveys of 157 women and girls in Panevo, Kraljevo and Zemun to enhance the safety of women in public places; this resulted in the mapping of unsafe public locations for women and girls in these three cities. Subsequently online talks were held with 46 participants (32 women) from local institutions, CSOs, ombudsperson offices, safe houses, educational institutions and the media. Recommendations were made to local governments, municipal safety councils, gender equality institutions and social welfare agencies in order to enhance infrastructure and boost women's participation in local planning and decision-making.

DATA ON CHILD TRAFFICKING

The "Guidance on Data Gathering, Analysis and Determination of Action for Children at Risk of Exploitation or Trafficking" prepared by the OSCE Presence in Albania, together with the database for child trafficking cases that fosters a gender-segregated data component, have been used throughout 2021 by Albania's Ministry of Interior and the State Agency for Child's Rights and Protection. Both the Guidance and the database were originally intended to be used by only five municipalities, yet by the end of 2021, ten municipalities had employed both tools. The results of their application indicated that the bulk of child trafficking cases were girls who were sexually exploited.

Assisting participating States in meeting their commitments to combat human trafficking

Shedding light on overlooked aspects or new trends in human trafficking to inform counter-trafficking policies is an important part of the work of the Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (OSR/CTHB). In 2021, the OSR/CTHB published two occasional papers that examine the gaps in adopting gender-sensitive approaches in the context of combating human trafficking,³ and the role of demand in fostering exploitation and harm to victims, particularly women and girls.⁴ Both papers contain recommendations for participating States to better meet their international obligations in the fight against human trafficking.



³ OSCE Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Applying gender-sensitive approaches in combating trafficking in human beings (Vienna, 2021). Accessible at <https://www.osce.org/cthb/486700>

⁴ OSCE Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Discouraging the demand that fosters trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation (Vienna, 2021). Accessible at <https://www.osce.org/cthb/489388>

The 21st Alliance against Trafficking in Persons conference⁵ also focused on addressing the demand that fuels human trafficking. The gender aspects of these various types of exploitation were given special focus, and both male and female survivors of trafficking spoke at the event to raise awareness about the distinct gender dynamics of the crime. The conference intended to draw high-level attention to the international commitments that States have to discourage the demand that sustains human trafficking.

In addition, the OSR/CTHB continued its simulation-based training programme on combating THB along migration routes. Its 2021 international training was attended by 40 professionals (29 women and 12 men) from Austria, Canada, Denmark, Georgia, Germany and Spain. The training methodology is designed so that it can be reproduced at the national level, and in 2021, OSCE field operations in Albania, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Ukraine received OSR/CTHB support for national training exercises.

Survivor leadership in countering human trafficking

In January 2021, ODIHR established the International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council. The Advisory Council is made up of 21 people (16 women and 5 men) from 14 OSCE participating States who are survivors of human trafficking. Its mission is to provide advice, guidance and recommendations to ODIHR and the participating States on all issues concerning human trafficking. The Council's assistance to ODIHR has aided participating States in improving their national legal, legislative and regulatory anti-trafficking frameworks, as well as in encouraging more victim- and survivor-centred approaches to combating trafficking. Beyond country-specific work, OSCE publications and resources are increasingly including a stronger victim- and survivor-centred approach, as advised by the Council.

ODIHR's International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council is leading a paradigm shift towards including survivors of trafficking in all anti-trafficking measures in order to combat this crime comprehensively and to ensure that these measures reflect the specific risks and needs of women and girls.

FRAMEWORK: ACTION COALITION ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

OSCE commitment: To systematically implement activities to prevent and combat gender-based violence/ violence against women and girls in all areas of the OSCE security mandate; to build capacity of its own staff to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, including trafficking in human beings, in line with international standards, both internally and in all OSCE programmes that promote comprehensive security.

A more strategic OSCE approach to prevention and response to gender-based violence

The OSCE executive structures have a long and strong record of preventing and responding to gender-based violence. In 2021, the Gender Issues Programme initiated the creation of an internal Strategic Guidance in order to establish a more unified and strategic approach to the OSCE's work on prevention and response to violence against women and girls (VAWG). The Guidance provides OSCE executive structures with strategic direction to drive, co-ordinate and reinforce their work on VAWG prevention and response across all three dimensions of security while also allowing for the essential flexibility to adapt to local circumstances. According to one of the core principles of the Guidance, VAWG must be considered as a security issue that must be handled across all three security dimensions. In 2021, OSCE programmes and efforts to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls were mapped as part of the preparation process for the Guidance, which will be issued in 2022.

⁵ <https://www.osce.org/event/alliance21>

3.3 Ensuring equal opportunity for participation of women in political and public life

Ensuring equal participation and leadership for women in politics and public life is a key component of the 2004 OSCE GAP, and in 2021 OSCE executive structures continued to work with participating States to address the persistent underrepresentation of women in decision-making at all levels.

This includes work to ensure women's equal participation in democratic processes, promote women's political participation, and build local capacities on gender issues as well as networks linking community leaders and politicians.

“Fake news and hate speech are a growing threat to women’s political participation across the OSCE region. Increasing media literacy, defining hate speech in national legislation and criminalizing hate crimes could help prevent discrimination and create safe spaces for women.”

Khatuna Kvitsiani, Member of Parliament, Georgia, and participant in ODIHR's Young Women's Political Academy implemented as part of the CHANGE project (Capitalizing on the Human Dimension Mandate to Advance Gender Equality)

RAISING AWARENESS ON EDUCATIONAL OBSTACLES FACING MINORITY GIRLS

The 25th anniversary of the HCNM's Hague Recommendations on the Education Rights of National Minorities focused on the educational obstacles that face minority girls and young women. Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, spoke on the educational challenges that girls, particularly ethnic minority girls, are now experiencing. Participants in the event, including representatives from participating States, were invited to advocate for inclusive, equitable and high-quality education for everyone, with particular focus on ending discrimination against national minority girls and boys. Participants also emphasized the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on the education of national minorities, particularly girls. They also highlighted examples of how leveraging the power of the digital age could mitigate the pandemic's impact on national minority youth in order to sustain and expand education's equalizing function.

Empowering women in politics

Because advocacy campaigns can be effective political tools, ODIHR trained 45 young women from 17 OSCE participating States to develop and implement advocacy campaigns aimed at increasing women's political participation and the gender sensitivity of central democratic institutions as part of its Advocacy School on Gender and Politics and the Young Women's Political Academy.

As part of Kyrgyzstan's efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, the Programme Office in Bishkek trained over 300 women activists and local leaders from across the country in political leadership. All the participants subsequently ran for office in local council elections held on 11 April 2021, and 60% of these candidates were elected to their respective municipal councils. Simultaneously, the POiB supported an impartial observation to monitor women's participation in local council elections in 2021. According to observation findings, women won 2,931 mandates, or roughly 38% of all local council seats across Kyrgyzstan – nearly a fourfold increase in women's representation in local councils. Women now comprise more than half of the members of one out of every 18 local councils. Most of these female office-holders (62%) are between the ages of 36 and 55; 20% are over 56; 16% are between the ages of 26 and 35; and 6% are between the ages of 18 and 25.

“The OSCE Gender Equality trainings and programmes on empowering young women in leadership gave me many useful skills and knowledge for my personal and career development. I became the OSCE Gender Champion in 2016, and as of 2019, I am a member of the Legislative and Human Rights Committee in Parliament and actively participate in different political events. I hope that many young people will be interested in the topic of gender equality and actively promote participation of women in all spheres of life.”

Sarvinov Madjidova, Tajikistan, OSCE Gender Champion 2016

Gender equality in the armed forces

Over the years, the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine (PCU) has implemented a variety of capacity-building and awareness-raising programmes to prevent gender-based violence, include women in dialogue processes, encourage gender-sensitive justice and promote women's rights in the armed forces. In 2021, the PCU organized a train-the-trainer event on interaction between the armed forces and civil society. Thirty-six military officers and representatives from non-governmental organizations, including 17 women, were trained on best practices for gender equality in the armed services. The PCU also published a guidebook on the interaction of the Ukrainian Armed Forces with civil society that includes a section on gender mainstreaming in the process of democratic civilian control of the armed forces and the role that public organizations can play in the gender integration in the armed forces.

GENDER AND CYBER POLICY

Gender defines and influences online behaviour, determines access and power, and has the potential to intensify social, economic and political structures. It should matter in international cyber security, but awareness is only growing slowly. In June 2021, the OSCE Secretariat, in close co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, organized the third Inter-Regional Conference on Cyber/ICT Security, which included a session on “Women in Cyber Policy – Promoting Gender Equality to Enhance Cyber Stability, Capacity, and Resilience”. Speakers examined gender-perspectives in cyber policy and provided ideas and suggestions on how to incentivize and ensure meaningful involvement of women in cyber/ICT security through capacity-building activities and role models. For the first time in an interregional conference, gender equality in cyber/ICT security in both the OSCE and Asian regions was brought to the fore, with prominent speakers highlighting the benefits of gender analysis and mainstreaming, such as by applying the gender lens to OSCE cyber/ICT security confidence-building measures.

As part of the OSCE Cybersecurity Awareness Month in October 2021, the Transnational Threats Department hosted an online panel discussion that explored ways to empower women in international cyber policy decision-making and featured examples of best practice efforts. In addition, five presenters provided their perspectives on the effects of gender equality in cyber security and the progress that has been made.

FRAMEWORK: ACTION COALITION ON FEMINIST MOVEMENTS AND LEADERSHIP

ODIHR commitment: To further advance women's leadership in politics, elections, security and in the civic space, ODIHR commits to supporting institutional change in political and security institutions through effective laws and policies on gender equality and women's participation, voice and influence; empowering women of diverse backgrounds, including Roma and Sinti women, women human rights activists, organizations and movements.

Supporting professional networks for women in justice and policing

ODIHR hosted two events in 2021 to assist the formation of women's judicial groups in Central Asia. In all, 151 women and 31 men took part in the online and in-person activities. The events highlighted the benefits of having women's judge associations as well as best practices for forming them.

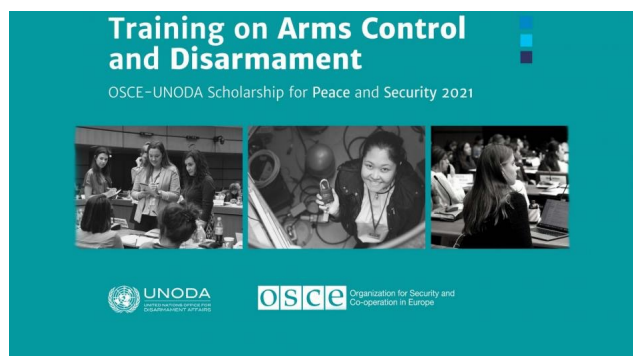
ODIHR also conducted comparative research on associations of policewomen in the OSCE region to examine the legal and decision-making powers of these organizations, as well as their internal structures and roles in recruiting women, fostering their professional development in the police, and supporting policewomen approaching retirement age.

In addition, ODIHR mainstreamed gender in its activities in support of peaceful assembly for all citizens. As a result of its monitoring activities in 2021, ODIHR gathered information in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom on how law enforcement and other authorities facilitate the right to freedom of peaceful assembly for men and women, boys and girls. The findings and resulting recommendations will provide guidance on how to facilitate assemblies in a gender-sensitive way, including through human rights compliant policing of assemblies.

3.4. Encouraging women's participation in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction

Recognizing and encouraging women's contributions to furthering peace and security was an OSCE priority in 2021 thanks in part to the introduction of several new signature initiatives.

DEVELOPING TOMORROW'S LEADERS FOR PEACE AND SECURITY



The OSCE-UNODA Scholarship for Peace and Security, which convened its fourth round in 2021, continues to attract young women who want to work areas related to peace and security, such as conflict prevention, management and resolution; and disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. The programme's online component was attended by 150 scholars from 52 OSCE participating States and 9 OSCE Partners for Co-operation countries. It was successfully completed by 120 participants (90% women). To date, the OSCE-UNODA Scholarship for Peace and Security has had some 400 graduates from 52 OSCE participating States and 11 Partners for Co-operation countries. Ninety percent of alums are women, and the majority of them plan to continue to work in the security field.

Networking for conflict resolution and peacebuilding

Women continue to be underrepresented in peace and conflict resolution efforts in the OSCE area. The systematic inclusion of women in formal negotiation processes remains a challenge in part due to the limited and restricted formats of such processes. To date, only a few women have served as high-level mediators in OSCE-supported negotiation processes. Because women generally lack access to power structures and formal actors, they have limited opportunities to influence negotiation processes. There is also a lack of systematic linkages between formal negotiations and informal peace initiatives that are often led by women's civil society organizations. In addition, women peacebuilders' active roles in and contributions to peacebuilding at informal levels remain largely ignored.



OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid addressing the 7 December 2021 kick-off meeting of the OSCE Networking Platform for Women Leaders, including Mediators and Peacebuilders.

The OSCE Networking Platform for Women Leaders including Mediators and Peacebuilders was launched in 2021 with the aim of addressing some of these issues. The Platform, established at the initiative of OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid, unites women leaders, mediators and peacebuilders for learning, networking and exchanging best practices. It is an invaluable mechanism for connecting and empowering women across the OSCE region, including women from Ukraine and Central Asia, as well as from Afghanistan. The goal is to improve women's ability to participate in and influence peace processes at all levels.

Women peacebuilders in several of the conflict contexts in the OSCE region have expressed that they need practical training, such as in negotiation skills, in order to be able to engage effectively with the formal peace processes.

In partnership with the 2021 Swedish OSCE Chairpersonship, the CPC hosted a high-level retreat for the Special Representatives of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office who work on conflict resolution. The retreat provided an opportunity for participants to share their experiences, best practices and ideas for making the best use of the OSCE's conflict resolution instruments, with an emphasis on fostering inclusive approaches to conflict resolution and Women, Peace and Security. In addition, Liliana Palihovici, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Gender Issues, shared her experience and insights on Women, Peace and Security and gender mainstreaming, bringing this expertise closer to OSCE-supported negotiation processes and strengthening relationships between Special Representatives working on related issues.

The Mission to Moldova and the CPC provided a week of training on gender-sensitive mediation and negotiation to female Co-Chairs and members representing the Sides in the work of the Transdniestrian Settlement Process's Joint Expert Working Groups. Participants improved their technical abilities in negotiation, communication and gender-sensitive conflict analysis as a result of the training, which was also supported by UN Women Moldova and the Embassy of Sweden in Chisinau.

CENTRAL ASIAN FORUM PROMOTES THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN FOSTERING PEACE, TRUST AND SECURITY



An online Central Asian Forum on the role of women in fostering peace, trust and security held in March 2021 promoted an open debate on the role of

women in maintaining peace and promoting trust. Co-organized by the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat, the OSCE Secretariat's Gender Issues Programme and ODIHR, the Forum brought together participants from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Afghanistan, including experts from academia, civil society and business. The Forum resulted in a number of suggestions for promoting women's political participation at all levels, their active participation in the security sector, and women's engagement in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. These suggestions were collected in a document that also provides recommendations for promoting gender equality and developing targeted programmes for boosting women's economic empowerment, as well as implementing programmes to promote tolerance and respect for human rights.

Image: The opening session of the Central Asian Forum on "The Role of Women in Fostering Peace, Trust and Security", 16 March 2021. (OSCE)

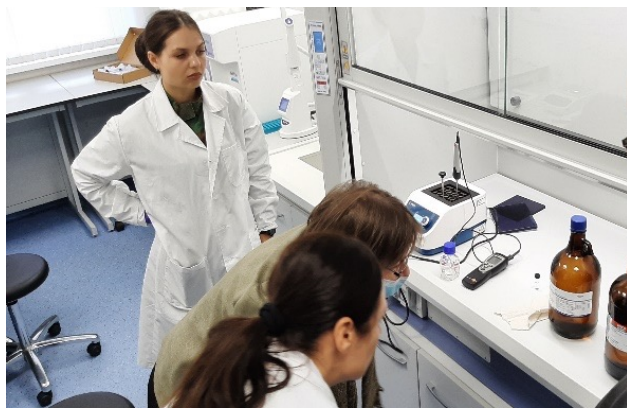
Support to UNSCR 1325 National Action Plans

Supporting the development of national action plans (NAPs) in response to UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security is a long-standing OSCE activity. For example, the Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan (PCUz) played an essential role in supporting the development of a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security for Uzbekistan. Throughout 2021, the PCUz supported discussions on drafting and implementing NAPs in collaboration with the OSCE Secretariat's Gender Issues Programme, Uzbekistan's National Human Rights Centre and its National Commission on Gender Equality. International experts and national partners shared best practices and provided information on drafting NAPs. As a result, the Government of Uzbekistan drafted a National Action Plan, which will be subject to national and international expert review.

The Programme Office in Nur-Sultan contributed to Kazakhstan's first-ever National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325, which was adopted in December 2021. It resulted from excellent collaboration in Kazakhstan involving UN Women, the OSCE Programme Office, UNDP, many other international organizations, host country authorities, academics and representatives of civil society.

As part of its WIN Project, the Secretariat's Gender Issues Programme, in partnership with the Women's Information Consultative Center in Ukraine, organized three online capacity-building workshops in late 2021 for 26 Ukrainian women civil society actors working in peacebuilding across 14 regions. Participants included internally displaced persons, representatives of organizations supporting implementation of the WPS agenda, and women active in peacebuilding at the community level. The focus was on implementing the Ukrainian NAP on the local level. Workshop participants created a networking platform for sharing experiences and practices among women peacebuilders throughout Ukraine and in other countries in the OSCE region. Interpretation in Ukrainian sign language was provided at the workshops, a first for the OSCE in this context.

WOMEN IN THE MOLDOVAN ARMED FORCES



The Mission to Moldova supplied a chemical analysis laboratory for the study of the longevity of ammunition components as part of an extrabudgetary project related to explosive risk reduction at ammunition depots in Moldova. The laboratory's personnel trained in chemical analysis of munitions were 50% female (two women and two men). By providing this specialized training to women, the Moldovan National Army took a small step towards gender equality, giving these women the opportunity to advance their professional skills, and contributing to the implementation of the Moldovan Army's UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan by expanding the responsibilities of women in the armed forces.

FRAMEWORK:

GENERATION EQUALITY COMPACT ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION (WPS HA)

OSCE commitment: To ensure women's full, equal and meaningful participation and inclusion of gender-related provisions in peace processes, and to promote women's leadership and their full, equal and meaningful participation across the peace, security and humanitarian sectors.

Women in policing

Achieving gender equality in police forces is part of implementing UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. OSCE executive structures have a long track record of working effectively with police forces to achieve gender equality in law enforcement and to encourage the development of gender-sensitive service provision. The OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMIK) notably supported the Kosovo Police in preparing and launching its very first Gender Equality Agenda and Action Plan, for 2021-2023. This document aims to strengthen women's roles and professional development at all levels within the police. The Agenda focuses on establishing internal policies within the Kosovo Police to guarantee gender equity and encourage women's professional advancement. Another key area of activity for OMIK is awareness-raising and information activities to encourage young women to join the Kosovo Police as women account for less than 15% of the police service.

The OSCE Mission to Montenegro supported the police's public awareness campaign to encourage young women to apply for a career in the police with the goal of increasing the number of women enrolled in Montenegro's Police Academy. The campaign resulted in an 11 percentage point increase of female candidates enrolling at the Academy in 2021 (38.8% in 2021 compared to 27.8% in 2020). The campaign was part of a joint project by the TNTD Strategic Police Matters Unit, the Mission to Montenegro and the Montenegrin Police Directorate which also included a study to assess the status of women's participation in the Montenegrin Police and to explore the views and experiences of female and male Montenegrin Police employees of various levels of seniority. The study contains suggestions to support Montenegro in translating commitments into practical measures targeted at expanding women's participation at all levels of policing.

The OSCE Presence in Albania and ODIHR organized a roundtable with 25 women in the Albanian State Police. Facilitated by ODIHR, the OSCE Presence in Albania, and the European Network of Women in Police, international partners in the fields of WPS shared expertise and regional best practices. An important outcome was the initiation of the establishment of the Albanian Women Police Association as Albania's key self-organized body to promote gender equality in the police, which was announced at the OSCE Presence's Conference on Women, Peace and Security held in November 2021.

The Recommendations on Policing in Multi-Ethnic Societies



15th Anniversary Conference

www.osce.org/hcnm

www.osce.org/hcnm/policing-recommendations

The 15th Anniversary Conference of the HCNM's Policing Recommendations in Multi-Ethnic Societies exchanged ideas and practices on how to mainstream gender in policing from the perspective of the HCNM's conflict prevention mandate. (OSCE)

WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO PEACE AND SECURITY: LESSONS FROM THE SPECIAL MONITORING MISSION TO UKRAINE

In September 2021, the SMM released its third gender-themed report, "Gender Dimensions of SMM Monitoring: Women's Perceptions of Security and Contributions to Peace and Security." It was based on direct observations made by the Mission while patrolling, as well as information gathered through interviews with over 200 women living on both sides of the contact line in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as well as meetings with women and men working on peace and security at the community and policymaking levels. The study provides important insights into the efforts and contributions of women to Ukraine's peace and security, as well as their experiences and perspectives on security in eastern Ukraine. The creation of safe spaces to promote dialogue among women peacebuilders, better networks for women to break the cycle of marginalization in political participation and decision-making, improved linkages between women operating at the grassroots level and decision-makers, and long-term technical and financial support to women-led peacebuilding initiatives are all recommendations derived from those experiences.

3.5. Promoting equal opportunity for women in the economic sphere

The economic disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected women, exacerbating the barriers to their effective economic participation. In 2021, the OSCE executive structures took a variety of actions to decrease economic gender disparities, ranging from policy guidance to capacity-building for income generation.

Gender-sensitive labour policies

The OSCE Mission to Serbia has been assisting trade unions in establishing gender-sensitive labour policy, and in 2021, it collaborated with the women's organization FemPlatz on a study on the position of women in trade unions. The study used data from a poll of 200 female labour union members to examine job segregation, the "glass ceiling" and uneven representation in leadership roles, working conditions and resource allocation, as well as the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on women. The Mission held events and webinars with women's groups, government authorities and female trade union members to discuss the study's results and potential redress procedures. This resulted in the research findings being incorporated into Serbia's National Strategy for Gender Equality (2021-2030), which was approved in October 2021.

Gender and corruption

One of the recommendations of the OIO's 2018 thematic review of the 2004 GAP implementation was to increase the inclusion of a gender perspective in Second Dimension initiatives where the OSCE has a competitive advantage, such as anti-corruption. A number of executive structures have taken this advice and begun working on gender and corruption, starting with the Gender Issues Programme, which produced a paper on the subject, "Gender and Corruption: What do we know?"⁶ The paper explores the critical subject of how corruption affects men and women differently, concentrating on areas pertinent to the OSCE mandate. It also brings up "sextortion," a type of corruption that disproportionately affects women. The paper concludes by identifying promising practices and proposing numerous options for mainstreaming gender within the OSCE's anti-corruption work.

The Presence in Albania promoted public awareness about gender inequality and corruption in a high-level meeting held in December 2021. The purpose of the event, which marked the end of Albania's Integrity Week, was to discuss and create awareness about the potential of gender-specific methods to combatting corruption to enhance socioeconomic growth and security, and to reinforce democracy.

In Serbia, the OSCE Mission developed a programme for mainstreaming a gender perspective across the operations of anti-corruption bodies in Serbia. In May and June 2021, the Mission organized a nine-week online training seminar on gender-responsive policies and budgeting for staff from all sectors of the Agency for Prevention of Corruption. The Mission also supported the development of a gender-specific anti-corruption toolkit/manual for incorporating gender aspects into anti-corruption interventions. This document was presented at the Annual International Anti-Corruption Conference organized with the Mission's support to mark Anti-Corruption Day on 9 December.

The OSCE Mission to Skopje undertook the first-ever survey of a nationally representative sample of women in North Macedonia to collect baseline data on sexual extortion for the provision of public services, revealing that sextortion is a problem in the country. The survey was followed by a comparative legal study of relevant local and international legislation on corruption and gender equality/gender-based violence. The Mission provided national authorities with recommendations for legal provisions to be incorporated into legislation. Based on these recommendations, a committee of national specialists is formulating proposals to incorporate a definition of sexual extortion in North Macedonia's Law on the Prevention of Corruption.

Advancing women's entrepreneurship and employment prospects

Improving women's participation in income-generating activities and economic empowerment at the local level remained a priority for the OSCE's field operations in Central Asia in 2021. For example, the Programme Office in Bishkek assisted women in achieving economic security for themselves and their families by increasing their entrepreneurial skills and giving them access to material (non-financial) resources to start their own businesses. Fifty-five women from the Issyk-Kul and Batken provinces received business planning and marketing training. Increasing women's engagement in the local community economy is especially important in Kyrgyz regions where

⁶ <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/507569>

the growth of local small and mid-sized enterprises is critical to reducing the emigration of the workforce. It also helps to create jobs since women hire other women in their communities.

The Programme Office in Nur-Sultan provided Kazakh women with training courses in traditional crafts such as felt-making and in entrepreneurship skills. One beneficiary of this training went on to participate in handicraft exhibits, winning an award for the finest national products. The Programme Office encouraged local ownership of the training programme by collaborating with the local women's group Aral Aielderi (Women of the Aral) to organize the training courses. This resulted in the establishment of a new, locally owned ecological centre that promotes ecotourism and the work of local artisans.

The Programme Office in Dushanbe supported a wide range of training initiatives to increase the economic participation of women in Tajikistan. For example, it funded sewing classes organized in collaboration with the State Agency for Social Protection, Employment and Migration, enabling 45 women to gain internationally recognized certification, improved skills and new employment opportunities. A series of 13 Office-sponsored economic training sessions for 20 women in Garm and Dzhilikul resulted in enhanced participant understanding of finance, business planning, marketing and the fundamentals of new ventures. In addition, 155 Office-supported vocational training courses were held in rural areas, delivering classes in baking, cooking, sewing, embroidery, weaving, financial literacy and computer literacy to 1,487 women. In the traditionally male-dominated field of mountaineering, the Programme Office trained ten women aspiring to be mountain guides. Their training covered trekking and expeditions, leadership, communication, group motivation, route planning, equipment selection, first aid and mountain rescue.

As part of its efforts to promote women's economic empowerment, the Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan provided assistance to a self-employment start-up via a digital food delivery platform. The Coozin app assists women in starting businesses from home and formalizing their economic activity, providing income to women in female-headed families and women with disabilities. Coozin also provides capacity-building on how to create online enterprises, with the goal of creating more than 600 jobs by the end of 2022.

Supporting female water professionals

The OCEEA has a long history of working with the Central Asian and Afghan water communities. One goal is to help female water professionals in the region advance their careers and move into senior management positions in the water sector. In collaboration with the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia and the Stockholm International Water Institute, the OCEEA started a mentorship and career development initiative for women water professionals in 2021. Every month, around 20 women from Central Asia and Afghanistan convene online with experts and mentors to explore the problems that women face in the water industry and to participate in capacity-building activities. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic constraints, there has been a surge in the use of OSCE manuals and online tools, increasing the visibility and reach of OSCE publications. Furthermore, online sessions enabled the OCEEA to diversify participation in its programmes and activities. A notable example is the involvement of four Afghan female specialists in the Mentoring and Career Development Programme for women water professionals, which would not have been feasible without online sessions.



Mountain guide trainees acclimate to the altitude at 2,800 metres as they hike in the Gaznok Mountains of Tajikistan's Ayni province, 26 June 2021. (OSCE/ Violeta Velkoska)

“The Mentoring Programme allows us to share experiences and knowledge and provides a platform where we can improve not only our professional skills, but also personal qualities such as public speaking, communication and self-branding. Such programmes are very necessary and useful for broadening horizons and reaching for new peaks for women professionals.”

Aigerim Karibay, Bartogay Reservoir water management complex, Kazakhstan

3.6. Building national mechanisms for the advancement of women

National Mechanisms for Gender Equality, which are entrusted with encouraging the incorporation of gender equality measures into national policies and programmes, are comprised of both governmental and non-governmental players. OSCE executive structures continue to be their partners in implementing gender policy.

The Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan trained 120 women representing local, regional and national government entities in international standards of women's rights and gender equality, using the conceptual framework of the CEDAW to frame rights and State obligations. Some of the trained beneficiaries are anticipated to continue working for the government or to run for legislative office, therefore increasing women's engagement in the country's socio-political life.

The Programme Office in Nur-Sultan held the first-ever training of regional gender secretaries in 2021. The event brought together secretaries from 15 regions of Kazakhstan, 29 women and one man, to explore the issues of fostering gender equality in local government policy formulation and execution, as well as gender-sensitive service delivery. The regional secretaries also agreed on how to strengthen their horizontal and vertical communication and co-ordination.

Chapter 4

Visibility and communication

Communication and advocacy are critical components of the OSCE's gender equality activities. The Gender Equality Newsletter was issued four times in 2021, informing subscribers about the OSCE's gender-related initiatives, events and resources. A number of communication campaigns in 2021 drew attention to several key gender equality concerns and actions taken in response.

The focus on women's leadership in peacebuilding on International Women's Day and the campaign on women's economic empowerment in conjunction with the Economic and Environmental Forum reached a wide audience.

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence social media (partly paid) campaign, "Could you tell she's suffering violence?", which reached over 2 million people, was by far the most successful OSCE social media campaign in 2021. The Gender Issues Programme, the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings collaborated on the campaign as part of the Gender Issues Programme's WIN project. The campaign focused on online violence against women and girls, which is often overlooked or ignored, and highlighted OSCE resources such as the OSR/CTHB's comprehensive analysis of technology tools, the RFoM's resource guide on the safety of female journalists online, as well as external resources on digital violence prevention methods.



ODIHR joined the global campaign "Orange the World: 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence" by lighting the office in Warsaw's Miodowa Street in orange for the first time in 2021. (OSCE/ODIHR)

As in previous years, several OSCE executive structures used the worldwide 16 Days campaign to promote awareness of gender-based violence, reporting and recourse options, and accessible OSCE support through events, billboard advertisements, TV and radio spots, podcasts and social media.

The photo story "OSCE empowers women economically by training them as mountain guides in Tajikistan" published by the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe was one of the best performing posts of the year on OSCE social media platforms, with 10,165 impressions on Facebook, 3,710 impressions on Instagram and more than 30,000 impressions on LinkedIn.

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A selection of reports and manuals promoting gender equality published by OSCE executive structures in 2021 covering the three dimensions of security

EVENT	REACH, ENGAGEMENT AND IMPRESSIONS ⁷ PER SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNEL
CAMPAIGN International Women's Day (8 March 2021)	 96,138 persons reached, 2,667 engagements  43,605 impressions, 38,253 engagements  English: 101,040 impressions; 3,437 engagements  Russian: 8,609 impressions; 132 engagements
BLOG "It's more than a seat at the table: Why we need women in security", OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid (8 March 2021)	 5,259 users reached, 8% engagement rate  25,458 impressions, 4.5% engagement rate
FEATURE STORY: "The Full Picture: An all-female SMM patrol on the contact line in eastern Ukraine" (8 March 2021)	 4,235 users reached, 3.8% engagement rate  8,064 impressions, 4% engagement rate
NEWS ITEM Joint OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation– Permanent Council meeting on Women, Peace and Security Agenda (10 March 2021)	 21,915 impressions, 351 engagements
NEWS ITEM Annual OSCE Gender Equality Champion awards (11 March 2021)	 106 engagements
PRESS RELEASE On the 10th anniversary of the Istanbul Convention, OSCE leaders stress its importance for progressing towards gender equality (11 May 2021)	 85 interactions, 0.65% engagement rate  4,100 users reached, 70 interactions, 3% engagement rate

⁷ 'Reach' refers to the number of users who saw the content, 'engagement' to the number of user interactions, and 'impressions' to the number of times the content was displayed.

EVENT	REACH, ENGAGEMENT AND IMPRESSIONS PER SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNEL
BLOG The Istanbul Convention saves lives of women and girls, OSCE Senior Adviser on Gender Issues (11 May 2021)	Website: 303 page views  4,112 users reached, 146 engagements  15,323 impressions, 428 engagements  10,679 impressions, 184 engagements
PRESS RELEASE OSCE launches break-through study on gender and human trafficking (26 May 2021)	 4,566 impressions, 50 engagements  6,201 impressions  3,931 impressions
PRESS RELEASE Promoting women's economic empowerment when rebuilding after the COVID-19 pandemic essential, say participants at OSCE meeting (10 June 2021)	 4,566 impressions, 50 engagements  6,201 impressions  3,931 impressions
PRESS RELEASE The Generation Equality Forum, Paris (30 June - 2 July 2021)	 17,000 impressions, 429 engagements
FEATURE STORY Fighting for a gender-equal world: Interview with Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Gender Liliana Palihovici (9 July 2021)	 6,800 users reached, 70 engagements  4,347 impressions, 32 engagements

EVENT	REACH, ENGAGEMENT AND IMPRESSIONS PER SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNEL
NEWS ITEM The Secretary General's presentation of the 2020 Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the OSCE 2004 Action Plan on the Promotion of Gender Equality (22 July 2021)	 4,634 impressions, 83 engagements  16,291 impressions, 140 engagements  5,700 impressions, 92 engagements
FEATURE STORY #EveryWomanCounts: Creating a positive space for women and girls in North Macedonia (14 July 2021)	Website: 159 pageviews  3,934 users reached, 53 engagements  5,514 Impressions, 1.09% engagement rate  4,510 impressions, 29 engagements
CAMPAIGN 29th Economic and Environmental Forum: "Promoting comprehensive security, stability and sustainable development in the OSCE area through women's economic empowerment" (9-10 September 2021)	 18,856 impressions, 1,862 users reached, 351 engagements  35,388 impressions, 421 reactions  21,018 users reached, 462 engagements
NEWS ITEM OSCE Gender Responsive Leadership Programme (16 September 2021)	 3,129 impressions, 123 engagements  12,092 impressions, 413 engagements  8,403 users reached, 369 engagements
NEWS ITEM The seventh OSCE Dialogue Academy for Young Women (8 October 2021)	 1,734 impressions, 24 engagements

EVENT	REACH, ENGAGEMENT AND IMPRESSIONS PER SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNEL
International Day of the Girl Child (11 October 2021)	 3,568 impressions, 51 engagements  3,637 impressions, 36 engagements  4,203 users reached, 58 engagements
FEATURE STORY 4 reasons why gender equality works (24 August 2021)	Website: 470 pageviews  11,974 users reached, 310 engagements  16,237 impressions, 350 reactions  18,832 impressions, 351 engagements
NEWS ITEM Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Girls ODIHR seminar (3-16 November 2021)	 4 retweets from @osce_odihr  20,413 impressions, 467 engagements  11,288 users reached, 35 engagements
FEATURE STORY “Could you tell that she is experiencing violence?” (22 November 2021)	Website (landing page for the #16days campaign): 3,088 pageviews  94,424 users reached, 1,121 engagements  502,657 impressions, 2,765 reactions  English: 828,795 impressions, 20,635 engagements  Russian: 4,039 impressions, 44 engagements
CAMPAIGN 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (25 November – 10 December 2021)	 English: 828,795 impressions, 20,635 engagements  Russian: 4,039 impressions, 44 engagements  502,657 impressions, 2,765 reactions  94,424 users reached, 1,121 engagements  16,989 impressions, 8,322 views, 507 engagements
CAMPAIGN OSCE Networking Platform for Women Leaders including Peacebuilders (December 2021)	 4,809 impressions, 34 engagements  31,365 impressions, 858 reactions  3,948 impressions, 117 engagements

EVENT	REACH, ENGAGEMENT AND IMPRESSIONS PER SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNEL
FEATURE STORY OSCE Networking Platform for Women Leaders including Peacebuilders and Mediators, 6 December 2021	Website: 495 pageviews  3,954 users reached, 302 engagements  31,386 impressions, 1,139 engagements  4,820 impressions, 140 engagements
PRESS RELEASE OSCE networking platform for women in peace processes, 7 December 2021	Website: 495 pageviews  4,809 impressions, 34 engagements  31,365 impressions, 858 engagements  3,948 impressions, 117 engagements
FEATUREW STORY “Growing Women’s Businesses in Kyrgyzstan”, 8 December 2021	Website: 110 pageviews
PRESS RELEASE “Joint Message by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office’s Personal Representatives focusing on tolerance and non-discrimination, on Human Rights Day”; “Now is the time to remember the universality of human rights, says OSCE human rights head”, 10 December 2021	Website: 493 pageviews  2,359 impressions, 54 engagements  6,168 impressions, 172 engagements  4,674 users reached, 117 engagements
NEWS ITEM White Ribbon Award, 16 December 2021	Website: 768 pageviews  4,235 users reached, 71 engagements  14,716 impressions, 512 engagements  6,099 impressions, 312 engagements
NEWS ITEM Gender Responsive Leadership Training, 16 December 2021	 4,467 impressions, 27 engagements  11,878 impressions, 123 engagements  1,988 impressions, 136 engagements



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