

Special Progress Report on the Implementation of the 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (2017-2019)

Towards Gender Equality in the OSCE



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BoM	OSCE Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIo	Chairperson-in-Office
CPC	Conflict Prevention Centre
DHoM	Deputy Head of Mission
DHR	Department of Human Resources
EU	European Union
ExB	Extra-budgetary
GAP	Gender Action Plan or Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GREVIO	Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
HCNM	High Commissioner on National Minorities
HoM	Head of Mission
ICAT	Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
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
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSR/CTHB/THB	Office of the Special Representative for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
RFoM	Representative on Freedom of the Media
PCU	Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine
SMM	OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine
UB	Unified Budget
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNODA	United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
VAW	Violence Against Women
VERLT	Violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism
WPS	Women, peace and security
WPN	Women's Parliamentary Network

FOREWORD BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL

It is my pleasure to share with you this Special Progress Report on the Implementation of the 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. It covers the timeframe of three years (2017-2019) thereby offering a longer-term assessment of the progress we have made in implementing OSCE gender-related commitments.

2020 is a global milestone year for gender equality. It marks the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and five years since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. As a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, the OSCE has played its part in supporting participating States in implementing their international commitments to promote gender equality. 2020 also marks 15 years of implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, the landmark document that outlines the gender equality goals that we have all set for ourselves. The OSCE executive structures have taken this opportunity to take stock and reflect on the achievements and the challenges that remain in removing the systemic barriers that hold women back from equal participation in all areas of life. I would like to thank all OSCE executive structures and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly for providing information on their progress and good practices, and the Gender Issues Programme and the Gender Focal Points for their dedication and commitment to advancing gender equality in the OSCE.

This special report provides many examples of the Organization moving in a positive direction with regard to gender equality and making OSCE structures and activities more gender-sensitive and gender-responsive. Executive structures have significantly strengthened their gender architecture and augmented the gender mainstreaming capacity of their staff. I put a Gender Parity Strategy in place, which sets ambitious targets and monitors progress for parity in all staff categories and levels. I have also pledged to improve the gender balance in panels in events organized by the Secretariat and have encouraged OSCE field operations and institutions to do likewise. Most importantly, enhanced measures to address sexual harassment have been put in place, including the preparation of an action plan and the introduction of mandatory anti-sexual harassment training for all OSCE staff members. Important work to revise the OSCE Code of Conduct is ongoing.

Despite considerable progress in many areas, we cannot say we have lived up to our commitment to gender equality. We need some deliberate intervention to increase the number of women decision-makers in the Organization and I have made it a personal priority to improve the representation of women in senior contracted positions. We must also step up our efforts to create an enabling and inclusive institutional culture so that the Organization can access and capitalize on its full potential and deliver on its mandates. This is all the more important as we are increasingly operating against the background of a global pushback on women's rights. In both our work with external stakeholders and within the Organization, we continue to grapple with mind-sets that fail to see the value of our action to advance equality. More work on our part is therefore required to change gender-biased attitudes and behaviours among our workforce.

The milestone year 2020 offers an important momentum for us all to step up our commitment to advance gender equality and women's rights. We must work together to accelerate the attainment of the objectives of the 2004 OSCE Gender Equality Action Plan.

Thomas Greminger
OSCE Secretary General

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present report is submitted in preparation of the Third Gender Equality Review Conference.¹ It assesses institutional progress and constraints in advancing gender equality and gender mainstreaming against the commitments contained in the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. The report **covers a three year implementation period (2017-2019)** and draws on information provided by all OSCE executive structures and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Among the achievements of the reporting period is the strengthening of the Organization's gender-related commitments by the Ministerial Council, including the decision on preventing and combatting violence against women (MC.DEC/4/18) and several decisions that integrate a gender perspective and contain specific references to their impact on women.

At the institutional level, important steps were taken to reach gender parity in staffing and create an enabling work environment. This includes the adoption of a Gender Parity Strategy 2019-2026, which has more firmly anchored existing gender equality initiatives into a strategic framework. Enhanced outreach to underrepresented groups and more equitable selection processes have contributed to 51 per cent of international contracted positions recruited since July 2019 going to women. Progress around gender parity in senior management positions across the Organization, however, has remained slow and will require more effective action to boost women's representation in decision-making and leadership roles. This is particularly the case for senior seconded positions where the share of female incumbents is 30 per cent compared to 42 per cent in senior contracted positions.

Work to change the gender dynamics that underlie organizational culture has started in the last two years with initiatives that challenge and address unconscious bias. The Organization has also set higher standards of integrity and expectations of professional and respectful behaviour of OSCE officials as international civil servants against the backdrop of a "zero-tolerance approach" towards sexual harassment in the Organization and sexual exploitation and abuse involving OSCE personnel. These will need to be backed by stronger policies, procedures and awareness raising to ensure the credibility of the approach and a real organizational culture shift.

Training and awareness-raising initiatives for staff have significantly increased during the reporting period and more OSCE staff/mission members were exposed to gender-related topics and advanced levels of gender training than prior to the reporting period. The rising demand for advanced and specialized capacity-building, however, is currently not matched by training capacities. To ensure systemic and lasting change, capacity-building for gender equality must be better financed and new transformative approaches to capacity-building must be taken.

The OSCE's gender architecture was significantly strengthened through the expansion of the network of Gender Focal Points (GFPs). The number of gender equality strategies and action plans within executive structures has almost doubled since 2016 and there is more co-ordination within executive structures to ensure coherence in gender equality-related action. This notwithstanding, gender expertise remains spread unevenly across the Organization, which has led to varying levels of gender mainstreaming in the three dimensions of security and will have to be addressed in the next implementation period.

¹ The Third Gender Equality Review Conference has been postponed until further notice due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The reporting period has also seen more awareness of the need to ensure equal representation of women and men in panels of OSCE-organized events. Although the imbalance persists, progress has been made, particularly in the economic and environmental dimension, which increased female speakers by 5, 9 percent.

This report also showcases examples of successful initiatives undertaken by executive structures in supporting participating States with meeting their OSCE gender-related commitments. This includes work on the legislative and policy framework, the protection of women's rights, measures to reduce violence against women, and increasing women's participation in politics and peacebuilding.

Looking ahead, the OSCE will be better equipped to achieve gender parity and equality due to the progress it made in the last three years, including the adoption of a Gender Parity Strategy, a new framework to combat sexual harassment and protect against sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as gender strategies and action plans that guide the gender mainstreaming efforts of executive structures. The review process leading to the preparation of this report has, however also confirmed persistent gaps and revealed new challenges that the OSCE should address in the next implementation period:

- Progress in reaching gender parity in the Organization's decision-making positions and in male-dominated areas has been slow but there is evidence from individual executive structures that transformation can be rapid when underpinned by commitment from senior leadership. Parity targets should therefore be coupled with institutionalized accountability measures. The implementation of the Gender Parity Strategy will also need the commitment by participating States to increase the number of female candidates in the seconded senior management category.
- The reporting period has seen an increase in the number of gender-related initiatives and overall higher levels of gender mainstreaming, which testifies to greater gender-awareness among staff. The challenge will be to sustain these efforts given the rotational nature of the OSCE's staffing policy. The development of a gender architecture and gender action plans, which by now are in place in all executive structures, should help. Increased emphasis on accountability should also help to reinforce that working toward gender parity and gender equality is the responsibility of all staff at all levels.
- Gender expertise must also be spread more evenly across the Organization, including by appointing GFPs in all three dimensions and offering more advanced and specialized gender mainstreaming training. Capacities must be further developed to fully grasp the complexities of gender mainstreaming and translate them into practice. This will also require adequate budgeting as the current reliance on extra-budgetary contributions is an impediment for a more systematic rollout of gender-related capacity building in the Organization.
- The achievement of gender equality requires leadership and accountability. The important efforts that were made in this regard must be further strengthened including through participation of the senior and middle management in the Executive Gender Coaching programme.
- The introduction of an anti-bias programme in the Secretariat was an important first step towards the creation of an inclusive workplace that promotes equal opportunity and diversity. More initiatives are needed organization-wide that focus on improving organizational culture, including addressing everyday sexism amongst other forms of prejudice and discrimination.
- Many executive structures have made progress in monitoring and evaluation and the development of gender-related performance indicators. In order to improve results-based reporting, the OSCE should consider developing indicator sets that make performance comparable across the Organization and allow for better tracking of progress. Executive structures should also be trained

in results-based reporting to enable them to better tell their success stories. This is particularly important to reinforce messaging about gender equality being essential for comprehensive security.

- Progress was made by OSCE executive structures with supporting participating States in addressing violence against women and girls. The next stage in this area should be based on an OSCE-wide strategy. Such a strategy is needed to ensure a systematic, consistent and collaborative approach by all executive structure towards combating gender-based violence in order to achieve sustained change.
- OSCE executive structures have stepped up their support to the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. In the coming period, they should further enhance their own capacities in order to be able to assist the participating States with implementing the WPS commitments in specific areas such as conflict prevention and resolution, and women's genuine participation in security sector institutions and policy-making.
- OSCE executive structures should enhance their work on the inclusion of a gender perspective in promoting good economic and environmental governance and support equal participation of women in the economic sphere and in decision making in relevant bodies, as well as in addressing gender gaps in the digital era, especially in areas of technology and cyber security.
- OSCE executive structures should increase their activities in support of women's organizations and women leaders from all groups of the society, including by strengthening their skills, capacities, and confidence for politics and facilitating their access to knowledge and networking opportunities and decision-making structures.
- The outbreak of the COVID-19 has exacerbated gender inequalities by aggravating pre-existing economic disparities, leading to more gender-based violence, including domestic and online violence and trafficking in human beings, and negatively impacting the socio-economic wellbeing of women who belong to disadvantaged groups. The OSCE's future work in the area of gender equality should take the gender dimensions of the pandemic into account by undertaking relevant analysis and working with participating States to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on women as well as to provide adequate gender-responsive measures to the crisis.

INTRODUCTION

The 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (GAP) tasks the Secretary General to provide an annual report on progress made in its implementation. This year, the report is special in that it covers an implementation period of three years, taking stock of the Organization's achievements in gender equality and gender mainstreaming since the Second Gender Equality Review Conference held in 2017. It also provides the basis for discussions at the upcoming Third Gender Equality Review Conference.

The information contained in this report is based on a self-assessment questionnaire designed by the Gender Issues Programme and completed by all executive structures and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. The questionnaire covered institutional progress in gender equality and gender mainstreaming between 2017 and 2019, and invited executive structures to provide information on innovations, lessons learnt, visibility initiatives, and partnerships for gender equality. It also included questions on the measures that executive structures have taken to implement the recommendations from the Thematic Evaluation of the Implementation of the OSCE's 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality by the Office of Internal Oversight issued in early 2018.

This special report is not an exhaustive account of all the activities that OSCE executive structures have undertaken to implement the provisions of the 2004 GAP. Instead, it focuses on institutional change, progress and key results, as well as remaining gaps and challenges in the following thematic areas of the 2004 GAP:

- ensuring non-discriminatory legal and policy frameworks
- preventing violence against women
- ensuring equal opportunity for participation of women in political and public life
- encouraging women's participation in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction
- promoting equal opportunity for women in economic sphere
- building national mechanisms for the advancement of women

The report follows the structure of the 2004 GAP by first looking into how gender equality has been promoted within the OSCE and then describing how the Organization has supported participating States in promoting gender equality in the politico-military; economic and environmental; and human dimensions of security. It also offers recommendations to accelerate the achievement of gender equality and enhance gender mainstreaming in the Organization's policies and programmes.

SUMMARY: OSCE executive structures have significantly advanced institutional policies and structures to accelerate the attainment of gender parity and gender equality in the Organization. The Gender Parity Strategy has put in place a systematic and multi-pronged approach that combines improved recruitment and retention efforts, enhanced measures to create an enabling environment, and a fair balance between individual accountability and incentives. Outreach measures and more equitable selection processes have led to an increase of women being shortlisted for professional and director posts (excluding the SMM) from 48 per cent in 2017 to 52 per cent in 2019. The representation of women in leadership positions (S4/P5 and above) has, however, remained low throughout the reporting period.

Beyond committing to quantitative goals, measures were put in place to foster a gender-inclusive and gender-sensitive workplace, including a programme on eliminating unconscious bias for the Secretariat and the creation of a Women's Advisory Group for improving the working environment in the Secretariat. The Organization also made notable progress in addressing sexual harassment and started working on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. In the coming years, more measures will have to be taken to ensure compliance with the zero-tolerance policy.

The reporting period has seen an increase in trainings and awareness-raising initiatives on gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the Organization, and more OSCE staff members were exposed to gender-related matters and advanced levels of learning than prior to 2017. At the same time, the demand for specialized trainings keeps rising as staff members grapple with the operationalization of gender concepts. Capacities to meet this demand remain limited and the reliance on extra-budgetary contributions affects the planning and sustainability of capacity building.

An overwhelming number of executive structures have developed gender strategies and/or action plans since 2017 and the Organization's internal gender architecture improved as all executive structures have appointed gender focal points (GFP). The number of internal co-ordinating bodies to enhance coherence of gender mainstreaming across executive structures and dimensions has increased by 16 per cent. GFPs at senior level remain a rare occurrence, however, and GFPs are mostly female and work in the human dimension. More diversity among GFPs will be needed to ensure gender mainstreaming across the three dimensions of the OSCE's work.

1.1. PROGRESS TOWARDS GENDER PARITY

Efforts to achieve gender parity at all levels in the OSCE have seen a considerable push during the reporting period. A Gender Parity Strategy 2019-2026 was put in place in 2019, which has anchored the Organization's work towards gender parity in a strategic framework. The Strategy's aim is to ensure

that the OSCE reaches parity in all staff categories by 2026 by setting objectives for an inclusive work environment, enhanced talent management, and accountable leadership.

The Department of Human Resources (DHR) has significantly stepped up its branding and outreach activities in order to attract higher numbers of candidates from groups that are underrepresented in specific grades and areas of work. Since their introduction in 2018, live events have reached more than 3,500 potential candidates across participating States, with an average of 55 per cent women. A monthly *Talent Acquisition* newsletter that is tailored to areas of work and levels where women are underrepresented ran throughout 2019 with more than 12,000 online subscribers. Since 2017 and following a recommendation by the Gender Issues Programme², vacancy notices for contracted positions are also more systematically reviewed for gender-sensitive language and only include the professional specifications actually required for the job in order to attract a more diverse pool of candidates. DHR has also introduced a practice whereby any vacancy notice that does not result in at least 20 per cent of applications by women, or men, is automatically extended.

GOOD PRACTICE: THE MENTORING PROGRAMME



Participants at the kick-off event of the OSCE's 2019 edition of the Mentoring Programme for Women, which supported 56 mentor-mentee pairs, Vienna, 28 February 2019. (OSCE/Micky

As the OSCE strives to attract qualified women for mid-level and senior positions and in order to support more junior women in their advancement, DHR has established a mentoring programme for women. The programme supports women in preparing for more senior positions by helping them to manage their careers successfully and encourage them to take initiative for personal development. 145 women have taken part in the programme since the pilot in 2016.

Since 2017, DHR Recruitment also renewed efforts to make staff selection processes more gender equitable. These include gender-balanced recruitment panels, as well as measures to enhance accountability through requiring written justification when recruitment recommendations by managers at the short list and/or final recommendation stages do not take the opportunity to redress gender imbalance. DHR provides a diversity scorecard to hiring managers in the Secretariat, which delivers the data they need to reach gender parity targets when taking recruitment decisions.

As part of the Gender Parity strategy and linked to a significant drop in representation of women from P₃ to P₄ levels, DHR commissioned a study in 2019 to explore the underlying reasons for the gap. As the study identified unconscious bias as one of the most significant barriers to career progression, learning offerings on unconscious bias were expanded, including a campaign at the Secretariat in 2020. Other executive structures were encouraged to follow by tailoring the contents to their needs. The recruitment process for senior management positions in the Secretariat was strengthened with the introduction of psychometric assessments of the shortlisted candidates by an external service provider. Resulting from the P₃/P₄ study, members of interview panels at the Secretariat must also complete

² See the 2016 Annual Progress Report on the implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan on the Promotion of Gender Equality.

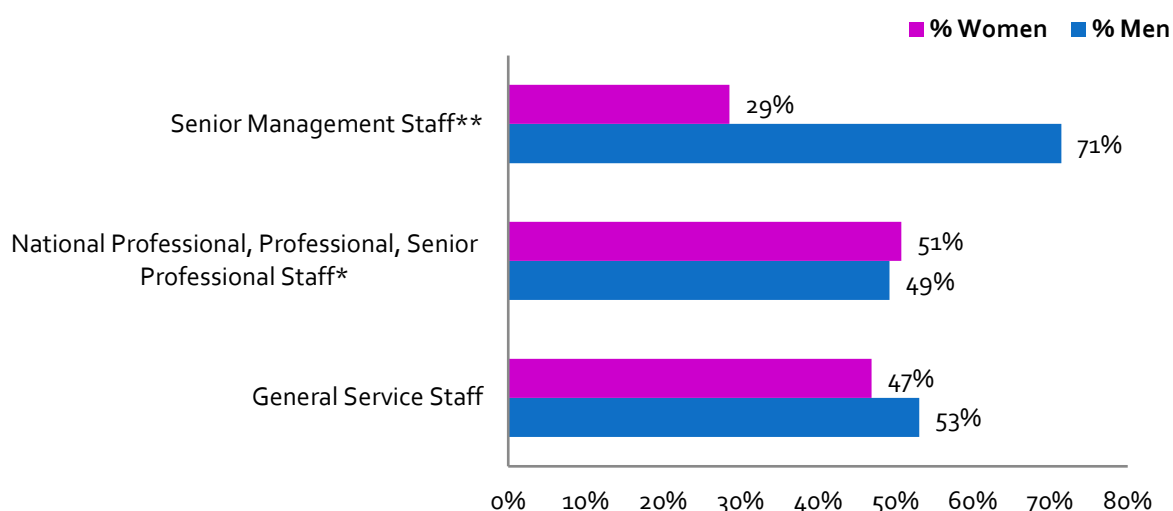
interview skills training. Other executive structures have taken additional steps to reinforce gender mainstreaming in recruitment, including through the preparation of internal guidelines.

Since July 2019, 75 per cent of the specific elements of the Gender Parity Strategy that are within the remit of management, have been completed and these efforts show results. Of thirty-five appointments for international contracted officials made since July 2019, 51 per cent were women and 49 per cent men. Eleven appointments were made in the category of senior management, of which 65 per cent were women and 35 per cent men. While the percentage of women in senior management posts at the end of 2019 was only at 29 per cent - well short of the 2020 target of 40 per cent - the outcomes of more recent recruitments resulted in an increase to 36 per cent by the end of the first quarter of 2020.

The number of women **nominated** by participating States for seconded positions has increased from 24 per cent in 2018 to 31 per cent in 2019 due to persistent outreach efforts by the Secretary General and DHR to participating States, as well as a pilot project of direct applications for secondments. This notwithstanding, the share of female **incumbents** in senior seconded positions stood at only 30 per cent by the end of 2019. In comparison, the share of female incumbents in contracted senior management posts was 42 per cent with a 27 per cent female application rate for contracted senior positions. This shows that the OSCE’s direct outreach to female candidates has proved to be successful.

The challenge to increase the number of seconded female staff is most visible in the gender parity data of the **Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM)**, which despite considerable efforts to reach gender parity among its staff, grapples with underrepresentation of women in managerial, specialized (including security) and technical positions, including in the field. At the end of 2019, women accounted for 20 per cent in S2 positions (mainly monitoring officers); 32 per cent in S3 positions and 29 per cent in S4 positions. In the SMM technical monitoring centre, only 10 per cent of the staff are female.

Figure 1: Post distribution of staff in the Secretariat, institutions and field operations



** S4/P5 and above

Figure 2: Gender balance among international seconded positions, S-S3

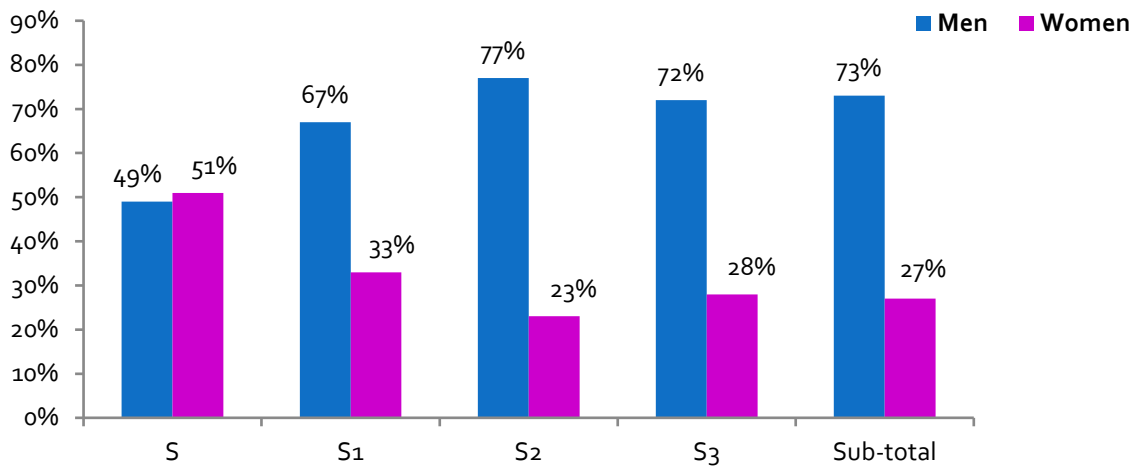
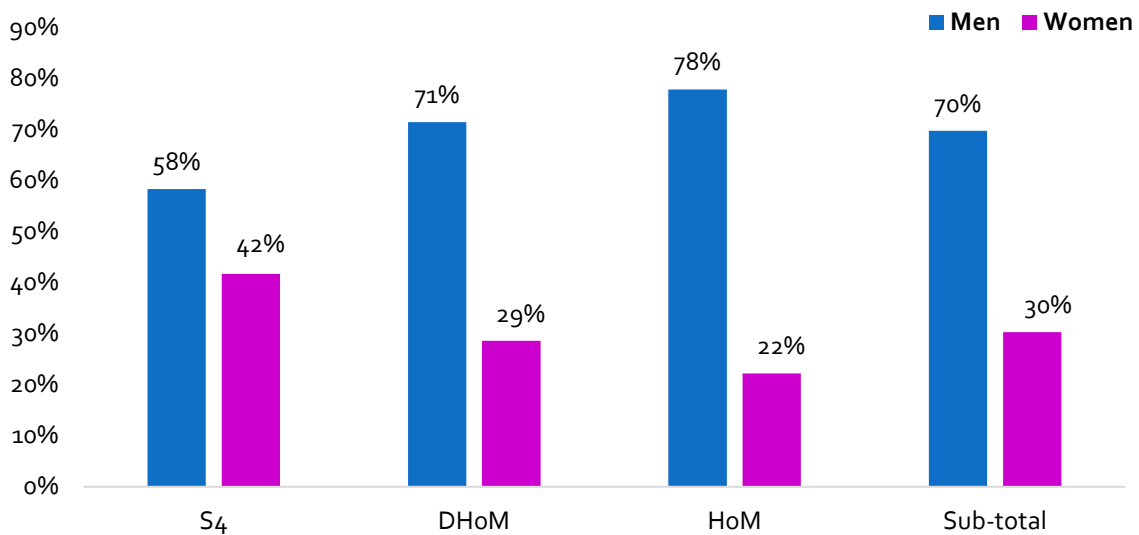


Figure 3: Gender balance among senior international seconded positions, S4, DHoM and HoM (UB, ExB SMM and BoM included)



A long-term overview of sex-disaggregated data of senior management staff across the Organization (figure 4) shows that the adoption of the 2004 GAP has given an impetus to an increase of the women's share in decision-making. It also illustrates, however, that progress in the men to women ratio has remained slow and that the levels have roughly remained the same in the last 10 years.

Figure 4: Gender balance in all senior management positions across the Organization

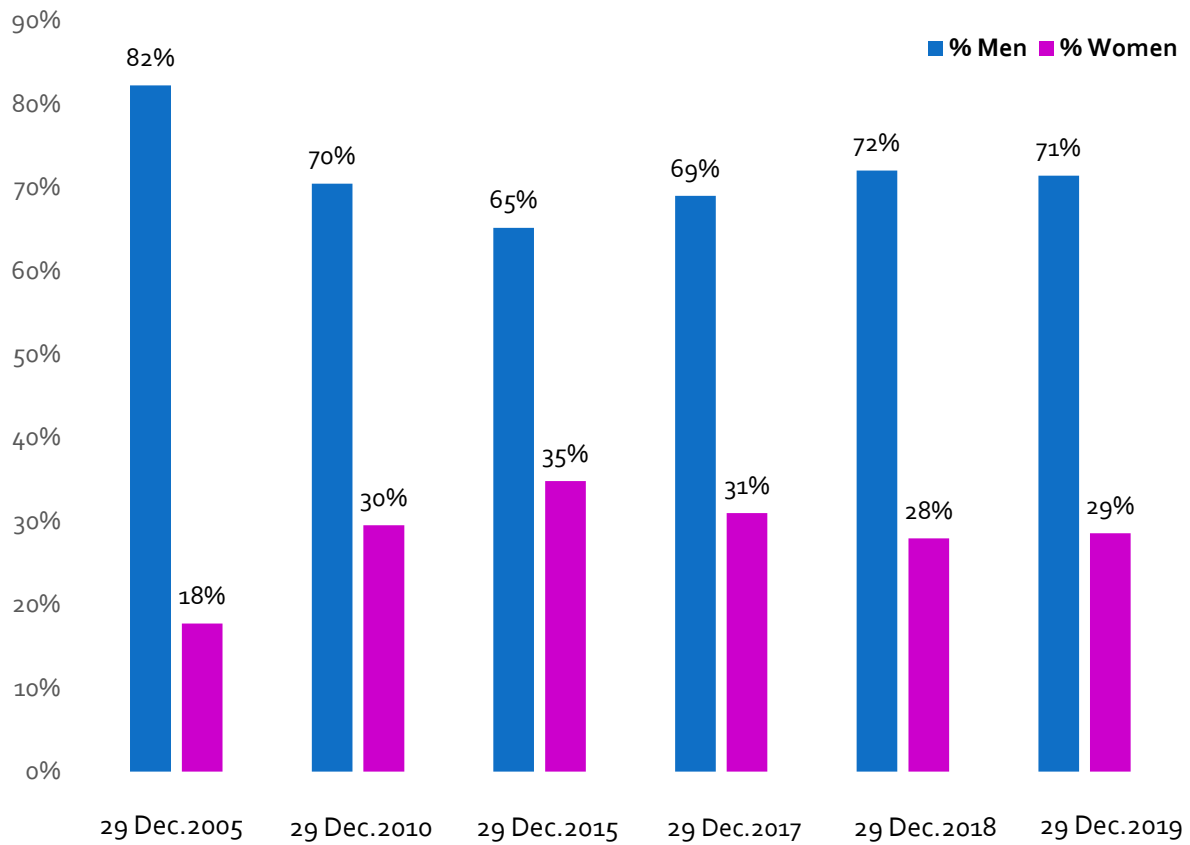
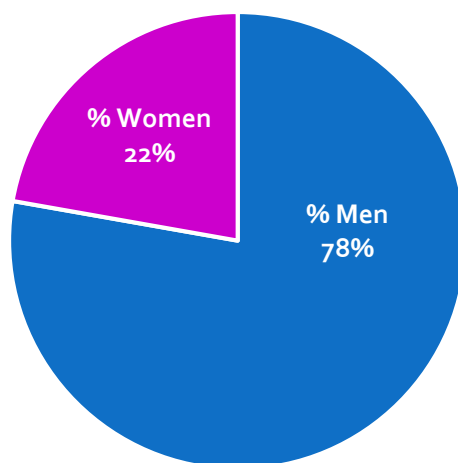


Figure 5: Gender balance among Heads of Missions and Heads of Institutions



GOOD PRACTICE: GENDER PARITY IN ELECTION OBSERVATION



ODIHR observers visit a polling station in Skopje during North Macedonia's presidential election, 21 April 2019. (OSCE/Maria Kuchma)

OSCE PA maintained the ratio of women in the leadership of Election Observation Missions in 2019 at 50 per cent for the second consecutive year. ODIHR also developed professional working environment guidance for election observation activities as relevant staff instructions are not directly applicable to non-OSCE staff.

ODIHR's Elections Department has held annual meetings of Focal Points for Election Observation to discuss ways to improve the professional working environment in observation missions and how OSCE participating States can ensure gender balance in deploying observers. These discussions have improved employees' capacities to mainstream gender into their day-to-day work and enabled them to take new initiatives for gender equality. In addition, they resulted in women constituting at least 40 per cent of heads of election observation missions and short- and long-term officers. Similarly, the

1.2. IMPROVING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Gender mainstreaming should not have to rely on the individual's understanding of and commitment to the issue but should be supported by dedicated leadership and organizational accountability. Building on the practice that was introduced for senior managers at the Secretariat in 2017, DHR has subsequently introduced mandatory gender-responsive performance objectives for all supervisors in the Organization. This is in line with the recommendation by the Office of Internal Oversight (OIO) to include gender-related performance objectives in the performance appraisal of senior and mid-level leadership. Most GFP, namely 68 per cent (compared to 43 per cent in 2017) have also introduced gender-related objectives in their Performance Management Process (PMP), as advised by the OIO. This is important, not only to ensure accountability for their work, but also to give them credit for their achievements and make sure that their GFP role is treated like an integral part of their job. The effectiveness of the PMP-related measures, which were introduced in 2019 for the 2020/2021 PMP cycle, will be assessed in the coming years.

Recognition is also an important driver of accountability, which is why a Gender Champion Award for staff and leadership of executive structures was introduced in 2018. ODIHR's Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo³ have launched similar gender equality champion awards in 2018 and 2019 respectively to inspire efforts to mainstream gender in their respective executive structure.

³All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text should be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244.

1.3. TALENT MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Training and building capacity for gender awareness and mainstreaming are a key part of the 2004 OSCE Gender Action Plan and a precondition for advances in gender equality. During the reporting period, executive structures offered many different types of trainings for their staff to develop awareness and capacities on gender issues. As a result, significantly more staff members were exposed to gender-related matters and more advanced levels of learning.

In the context of the General Orientation Programme, some 600 new OSCE staff and staff members of the OSCE Chair have received basic gender training between 2017 and 2019, and some 232 OSCE staffers attended ODIHR's Human Dimension Induction Course, which includes a gender component. In addition, seven field operations have integrated a gender training module in their induction programmes.

At a more advanced level, the Gender Issues Programme provided specialized trainings on gender analysis and gender mainstreaming for colleagues from different OSCE executive structures between 2017 and 2019. These trainings covered basic concepts of gender equality but were also tailored to help both project and non-programmatic staff to mainstream gender considerations into their daily work, taking into account the specificities of political, socio-economic and cultural context. Some 461 staff members have benefitted from this kind of training during the reporting period, including the gender intensive training co-organized by the Talent Development Unit and the Gender Issues Programme, which counted 64 participants. The provision of specialized training has increased by about 60 per cent between 2017 and 2019. More has been in demand but the financial resources to meet this demand in a systematic and sustainable way are currently insufficient.

The overwhelming majority of executive structures have provided additional specialized gender training to their staff, either by drawing from internal expertise, teaming up with a fellow executive structure, or facilitating participation in external trainings. Specialized trainings typically focused on gender analysis and gender mainstreaming in project work, gender-sensitive language and reporting (see also chapter 4). In addition, gender considerations are integrated in trainings on other topics, although not systematically.

In the Secretariat, senior management has benefitted from an Executive Gender Coaching Programme to strengthen leadership for gender equality, which resulted in jointly formulated management principles and actions. The programme will be rolled out to the senior management across the Organization in the context of an extra-budgetary project, provided the necessary funding can be secured. The Mission to Skopje and the Mission in Kosovo have provided similar gender training to their senior managers.

Beyond training, staff has benefited from many other learning opportunities to increase their knowledge about gender disparities and ways to address them. These include the GFP annual meetings, Gender Power Breakfasts, and MenEngage events organized by the Gender Issues Programme; ODIHR's Women's Power Breakfasts and internal "Gender Talk" sessions with leading experts; the OSCE PA's gender lunches; internal briefings by gender advisers and GFPs; and other events that exposed OSCE staff to different gender aspects.

Some executive structures, like the HCNM, the OCEEA, the Programme Office in Bishkek and the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine used the development or revision of their gender action plans and/or implementation strategy as an opportunity to engage staff in a discussion on gender-related issues in

their work and obtain their buy-in. Gender Focal Points also indicated that individual and concrete assistance for gender mainstreaming provided by colleagues is an important on-the-job learning exercise that has proven particularly useful.

Trainings and awareness-raising initiatives have been on the increase since 2017 and more OSCE staff members were exposed to gender-related matters than prior to the reporting period. This in itself is an achievement in that it demonstrates the increased attention that is paid to gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the Organization. Measuring the impact and concrete changes resulting from gender training is challenging, due to the absence of systematic data on the situation prior to 2017. The learners' feedback from post-training evaluations generally corroborate the usefulness of the training. The assessments provided by the GFPs as part of this review also confirm that gender mainstreaming skills and gender awareness have improved in their respective executive structure. This is also visible in the increase in numbers of projects that include at least basic elements of gender mainstreaming (see also section 2.1. and figure 6) and the new initiatives that have been taken to improve gender equality internally. At the same time, GFPs report about the need to increase the provision of specialized trainings and on-the-job capacity-building both to retain knowledge levels in case of staff turnover, and to help staff mainstream gender in very specialized areas of work. This confirms the findings of the OIO's evaluation in 2018, which recommended that all staff attend the Intensive Gender Training organized by DHR's Talent Development Unit with the support of the Gender Issues Programme to further increase their knowledge and comfort-level with gender mainstreaming concepts and their practical application. The reliance on extra-budgetary contributions for the expansion of advanced training for gender equality, however, challenges the systematic roll-out and sustainability of that kind of capacity-building within the Organization.

1.4. MODERN WORKFORCE PRACTICES AND AN IMPROVED PROFESSIONAL WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Preventing and addressing sexual harassment and preventing sexual exploitation and abuse

The level of sexual harassment revealed by the *2019 Safe Space Survey of UN agencies and the OSCE*⁴ was a call to action for the Organization. The Secretary General held a town hall meeting with the staff of the entire Organization in 2019 to discuss the results of the survey and brief staff about the new anti-harassment measures. Many individual executive structures, for example the Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Mission to Serbia, the Mission to Skopje, the Mission to Kosovo, the Programme Office in Bishkek, the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, the SMM, as well as the Secretariat's Transnational Threats Department took additional steps to support the Organization's anti-harassment policies, buttress related messages, and reinforce ethical behaviour in their teams.

In 2019, the Secretary General launched an Action Plan to prevent sexual harassment and ensure a safe workplace in the OSCE. As part of this plan, DHR, the Gender Issues Programme and the Office for Legal Affairs, initiated the process of revising the Code of Conduct and Staff Instruction 21 to reinforce appropriate staff behaviour. This was coupled with training by the OIO and DHR of staff members from across the Organization in becoming "fact-finders"/investigators of allegations of violations of the OSCE Policy on Professional Working Environment as defined in Staff Instruction 21. 50 percent of the training participants were female. Two new mandatory online courses for all staff/mission members were introduced in 2019, in co-operation with the UN⁵.

⁴ The survey had a 16 per cent response rate. 41.1 per cent of OSCE respondents reported having experienced some form of sexual harassment between 2016 and 2018.

⁵ 'Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Abuse - Working Harmoniously Together'; and 'Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse'.

The Gender Issues Programme played a leading role in the Organization-wide initiative on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. A systematic review was carried out to identify the gaps and challenges to preventing sexual exploitation and abuse involving OSCE staff. A steering committee and taskforce were formed to develop and implement an action plan for the coming period that is based on international best practice.

GOOD PRACTICE: PROMOTING ETHICAL CONDUCT IN OSCE ACTIVITIES

During the international simulation-based training exercise of the project Combating Human Trafficking along Mediterranean Migration Routes (September 2019), the Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, UNODC and UNHCR jointly developed a note that outlined a non-discrimination and anti-harassment policy for the activity. The note, which was distributed to the training participants, aimed to ensure that all participants in the simulation were treated with dignity and respect and were aware of their role and responsibilities in maintaining a positive learning environment free of any form of discrimination, underscoring that no form of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment would be tolerated during the training.

Creating an enabling work environment

Flexible working arrangements are an important part of building an enabling work environment that sustains parity and equal opportunities for all. The implementation of existing options for workplace flexibility remained uneven across the Organization during the reporting period. While some executive structures use staggered working hours, part-time and telecommuting to promote a better work-life balance and help staff balance their work and family roles, others were less permissive in that regard. As part of the Gender Parity Strategy, DHR will therefore more strongly encourage the availability of flexible working arrangements and revise the related policy, including by raising expectations that all managers should have a percentage of their staff availing of some options around flexible working. The experience with remote work gained during the coronavirus pandemic has shown that telecommuting can work well.

Assessing gender dynamics

Important studies and surveys were undertaken or commissioned by executive structures to better understand underlying gender dynamics in the workplace and help to appropriately address them. ODIHR's Human Rights Department for example gathered gender-disaggregated data to assess the impact of management decisions on opportunities for women and men and shared the good practice with other departments. The HCNM developed and conducted a two-tiered research project to empirically track the participation of female and male colleagues during office meetings and investigate gender perceptions among staff. The results were discussed in an office-wide workshop, which will be followed up with more sessions on how to address unconscious bias.

The SMM analysed 86 exit interviews (62 men, 24 women) for elements related to gender dimensions in staff retention in 2018 and followed up with an all-staff survey on recruitment, retention, and the work environment. The creation of a new staff committee and a Code of Conduct task force in the SMM were among the measures that were put in place to deal with the issues that came up during the survey.

In order to better understand the experiences and challenges of female OSCE staff working on matters related to the security sector, the Secretariat's Transnational Threats Department commissioned a qualitative study that explored the impact of existing challenges on the recruitment, retention, and

advancement of women working in the area of the OSCE's politico-military dimension. The study proposed a series of recommendations that are currently being followed up on.

2019 also saw the creation of the Women's Advisory Group on Improving the Working Environment in the Secretariat, a staff-created and staff-driven initiative. The Advisory Group, which is broadly representative of all Secretariat departments and staff levels and is geographically diverse, offers advice to the Secretary General and senior management on issues that affect the working environment. It also engages with Secretariat departments and units, including the Gender Issues Programme, to promote and institutionalize initiatives. For example, the Advisory Group provided feedback to DHR on the gender parity strategy and the action plan to prevent sexual harassment.

GOOD PRACTICE: WOMEN SECURITY AWARENESS

The Security Management Unit (SMU) in the Office of the Secretary General has been building a network of female security focal points across the Organization for the past three years. They are the first point of contact for female colleagues on all issues pertaining to their security. Since 2017, the SMU has also delivered security awareness training for women. Due to the increasing demand and positive feedback from the participants, it was turned into a training-of-trainers for female security focal points in 2018. The training has since been rolled out in eight executive structures. The security awareness training for women promotes a better understanding of women's security needs and includes modules on safer travel for women, surviving as a female hostage, violence against women, domestic violence, and sexual harassment. As a result of co-operation between the SMU and the Gender Issues Programme, including gendered aspects of security in the agenda of the Annual Meeting of OSCE Security Officials also emerged as a good practice in 2019.

1.5. IMPROVING INTERNAL MECHANISMS FOR ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY

Gender Focal Points and gender working groups

The role of GFPs remains crucial to support gender mainstreaming in the OSCE. The fact that larger structures have opted for several GFPs to ensure that their staff receives gender mainstreaming support across the entire structure has resulted in a significant increase in GFPs. Nine field operations, ODIHR and the OCEEA have set up co-ordination mechanisms, or cross-departmental GFP networks, gender working groups and, in the case of ODIHR a gender leadership team, to better integrate gender mainstreaming across or within their departments and/or field offices, and monitor the implementation of their respective action plans. This represents an increase in working groups by 16 per cent since 2016.

Ten executive structures have appointed their main or alternate GFP at senior management levels (S4/P5 and above), six of whom are male and four are female. This is an increase compared to 2016 when only three field operations had senior-level GFPs, but it still represents less than 20 per cent of all main and alternate GFPs. The 2018 OIO evaluation recommended appointing more GFPs at senior levels since they are likely to have more influence on decision-making and can set an example if they are actively engaged on gender issues. A few executive structures have, however, indicated that their GFPs have direct access to senior management or that they are systematically involved in decision-making processes. Overall, the percentage of female GFPs has remained higher than that of their male peers, which has only slightly increased from 38 per cent in 2017 to 40 per cent in 2018. The majority of GFPs in field operations with departments for each dimension work in the area of the human dimension (42 per cent) and only very few are based in the politico-military and the economic and environmental

dimension branches of their office. This is indicative of a persistent perception that promoting gender equality is more relevant to the human dimension than other areas of work. The bundling of gender expertise in the third dimension, results in high levels of gender mainstreaming in that dimension which unfortunately does not seem to 'spillover' to the other two dimensions (see figures 7, 8 and 9).

The management of the GFP network has grown in complexity due to the higher numbers of GFPs and the Gender Issues Programme has taken several measures to provide more systematic support to their work. This includes an online collaboration and information-sharing platform on the OSCE Intranet, templates for the use by GFPs, such as standard Terms of Reference for GFPs and a Guidance Note on Gender Action Plans, a roster of trainers on gender equality and gender experts, and a results-based template for Annual Progress Reports, which is used by all executive structures in their reporting. As a result, the Secretary General's annual report to the Permanent Council on implementation of the 2004 Gender Action Plan now focuses much more on results-based reporting. Although there are still significant gaps in the quality of reporting, the template has proven useful to track progress and collect data for a more analytical approach to reporting.

Gender Advisers

The number of gender adviser positions that are fully dedicated to supporting internal mainstreaming efforts has slightly increased from 9 in 2016 to 13 in 2019. The gender advisers are based in ODIHR, the SMM, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and the Secretariat's Gender Issues Programme, bearing in mind that the latter provides gender-related assistance to all Secretariat departments and supports gender mainstreaming work in the other executive structures. The Gender Issues Programme was enlarged by one senior co-ordination adviser and one adviser in 2018 and the Senior Gender Adviser was formally made a direct report of the Secretary General, giving her better access to decision-making within the Secretariat. In the field, only the Mission in Kosovo and the SMM have gender advisers directly reporting to the Head or Deputy Head of Mission and who can provide strategic advice and gender-related support from a central position within the mission. The Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina established a Gender and Youth Office, which reports to the Head of Mission. In its 2018 evaluation, the OIO found that these three field operations had made more progress in gender mainstreaming than their peer structures.

Gender action plans and implementation strategies

At the time of writing, the Secretariat, the HCNM, ODIHR and 13 field operations had a gender action plan in place or were in the process of preparing a new one. In comparison, in 2016, only eight out of the then 17 field operations had a mission-specific gender action plan or strategy⁶. Titles, timeframe and content of the action plans vary according to the executive structure's mandate, size and needs but they all aim for the following objectives, which are line with the requirements of the 2004 GAP:

- deepen the understanding on the issue of gender among staff,
- promote gender equality and a gender-sensitive working environment within the structure,
- ensure that the policy, programmes and activities include a gender perspective,
- promote the considerations of gender issues at all policy levels.

Not all action plans include indicators and benchmarks to measure progress towards the expected results. Second or third generation action plans tend to be more focused in that they integrate lessons learnt from implementation of previous plans.

⁶ See section 1.2. of the 2016 Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the OSCE 2004 Action Plan on Promoting Gender Equality.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Partnerships are crucial for achieving gender equality, so engagement with governments and national institutions in participating States is at the core of the OSCE's gender-related efforts. In the last three years, executive structures have been able to enhance their networks with a broad range of national stakeholders. In the case of field operations, these include relevant ministries, security sector institutions, parliaments and women's caucuses.



UN Women Deputy Executive Director Yannick Glemarec and OSCE Secretary General Thomas Greminger signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the OSCE and the UN Women, 27 September 2018. (UN Women)

Internationally, OSCE executive structures have enhanced their co-operation with several international organizations and institutions to advance gender equality. UN Women is one of the OSCE's key allies in that regard. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UN Women that was signed in 2018 created a more solid foundation for an improved exchange of information and knowledge, as well as joint support for participating States in implementing their commitments to gender equality.

The results from the co-operation between the two organizations include input by UN Women for the OSCE Gender Party Strategy for 2019-2026; exchanges between ODIHR and UN Women country offices in the context of women's political participation and election observation activities in order to ensure women's participation in electoral processes; the joint publication of the Gender and Security Sector Toolkit (together with the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance); and co-chairing of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons. The latter renewed the attention for the gender dynamics of human trafficking. UN Women financially supported the OSCE-led survey on the Well-being and Safety of Women and contributed to the successful joint dissemination of the research findings initiatives. The survey was implemented in conjunction with another important partner, UNFPA, which provided financial support, as well as in-kind support to visibility activities.

Partnerships with other international organizations are often at the core of OSCE hallmark activities, such as the simulation-based training exercises to combat human trafficking, which are the result of co-operation with UNHCR and UNODC. Similarly, the OSCE Scholarship for Peace and Security, which builds the capacities of young women to engage in a career in conflict prevention and resolution, is the fruit of a collaboration with UNODA.

CHAPTER 2: MAINSTREAMING A GENDER PERSPECTIVE INTO OSCE ACTIVITIES, POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

SUMMARY: *The use of gender mainstreaming tools was significantly strengthened and systematized through the provision, by the Gender Issues Programme, of technical guidance that helps OSCE staff determine mainstreaming levels. An important achievement was the inclusion in 2019 of a mandatory section on gender mainstreaming in extra-budgetary project templates. This commits all project managers to apply a gender perspective from the outset of developing their projects.*

The percentage of projects that did not include any gender considerations was significantly reduced and remained below 4 per cent at the end of 2019; the share of projects with basic mainstreaming levels rose from 51 per cent in 2017 to 58 per cent in 2019. This suggests that the gender awareness of staff has increased during the reporting period. The percentage of activities with more advanced gender mainstreaming levels have slightly decreased from 40 per cent to 39 per cent, which in turn is indicative of the need for more advanced levels of training in gender mainstreaming. As gender expertise tends to be bundled in the third dimension, the gender mainstreaming levels are higher in projects pertaining to the human dimension. It is worth noting, however, that the second dimension has made progress in 2019 by increasing the share of fully gender mainstreamed projects to 28 per cent in 2019 (compared to 13 per cent in 2017).

Since 2018, the Organization has paid more attention to reaching gender balance in OSCE-organized events. Men continue to be overrepresented in panels, although there has been a slight improvement in events of the economic and environmental dimension where the number of female speakers increased by 5,9 per cent.

2.1 LEVELS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN OSCE ACTIVITIES

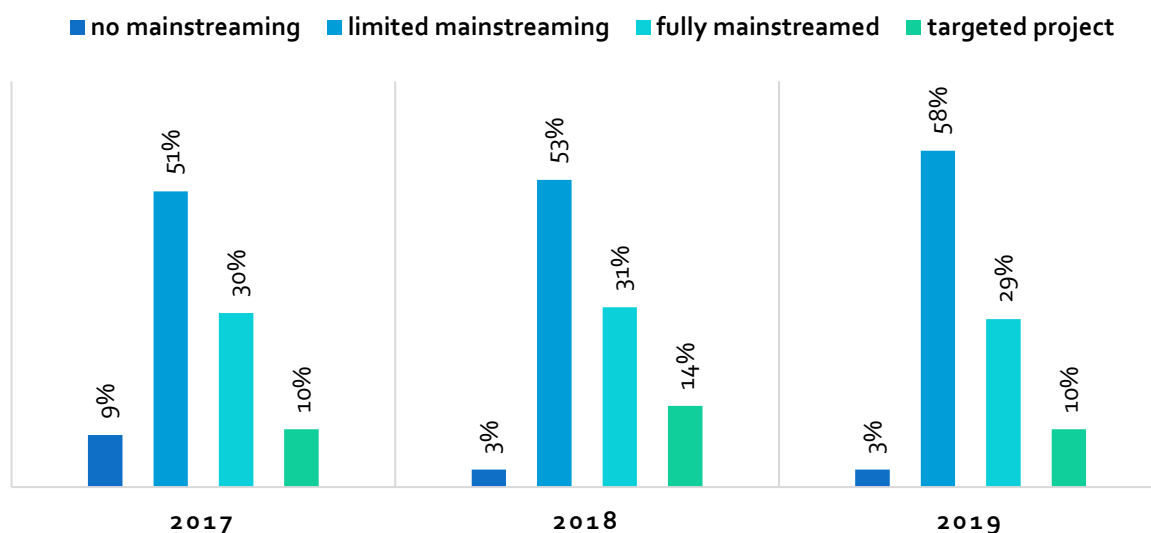
The consistent use since 2017 of tools to measure the level of gender mainstreaming in projects has contributed to more effectively track institutional progress in this area. The diagrams below show how the Organization has evolved in terms of integrating a gender perspective in its programmatic activities. At the same time, the data must be seen as indicative due to some limitations and the subjectivity of the tool. Over the past three years, the Gender Issues Programme has developed and refined the technical guidance for the allocation of gender mainstreaming levels. This enhanced clarity on the criteria and the guidance has been included in the annual training on project management delivered by the CPC's Programming and Evaluation Support Unit. Since 2019, all extra-budgetary project-related templates include provisions for mandatory gender mainstreaming and detailed instructions to ensure the integration of gender perspective in projects.

A comparison of the levels of gender mainstreaming in OSCE projects shows that overall, the share of projects that are not gender mainstreamed has decreased from 9 per cent in 2017 to 3 per cent in 2018 and 2019. Conversely, there has been an increase in the number of projects that included some gender considerations from 51 per cent to 58 per cent, which is due to measures to ensure the participation of women in OSCE activities. Efforts to improve the number of female participants and beneficiaries in

OSCE-organized activities were particularly pronounced in the first dimension where the share of projects that contain some gender consideration was at 72 per cent in 2019, compared to 62 per cent in 2018 and 67 per cent in 2017.

The rate of projects that were fully mainstreamed remained relatively stable, ranging between 30 per cent in 2017, 31 per cent in 2018, and 29 per cent in 2019. The percentage of projects that specifically target gender equality, however, has decreased by 4 per cent in 2019 compared to the previous year (14 per cent).

Figure 6: Gender mainstreaming levels across all projects



A look at the gender mainstreaming levels by dimension confirms the trend since 2016 (and before) of higher mainstreaming rates in the human dimension and in projects listed as cross-dimensional than in the remaining two dimensions. The economic and environmental dimension has, however, seen a notable improvement in terms of fully gender mainstreamed projects by increasing the related level from 13 per cent in 2017 to 28 per cent in 2019. Throughout the reporting period, the percentage of projects that were not gender mainstreamed remained low (0-3 per cent) in the third dimension and in cross-dimensional activities. In the first and second dimensions, where the share of non-mainstreamed projects stood at 10 per cent and 12 per cent in 2017, the levels were reduced to 4 per cent and 3 per cent by 2019.

Figure 7: Level of gender mainstreaming in the politico-military dimension

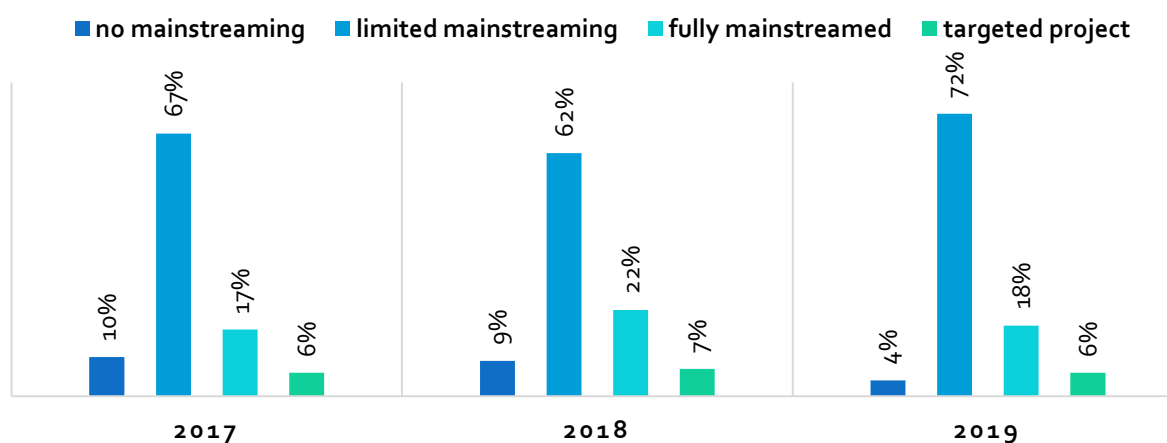


Figure 8: Level of gender mainstreaming in the human dimension

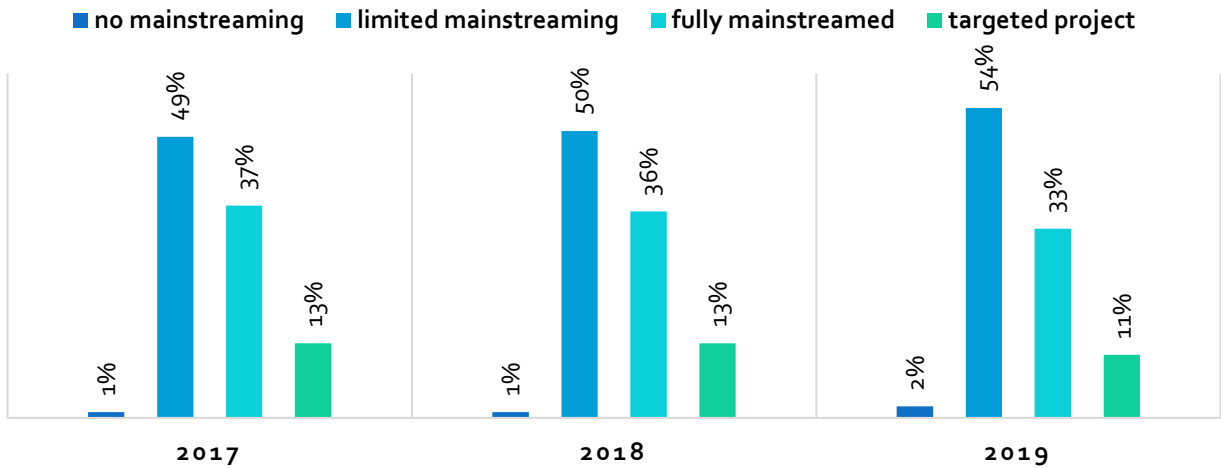


Figure 9: Level of gender mainstreaming in the economic and environmental dimension

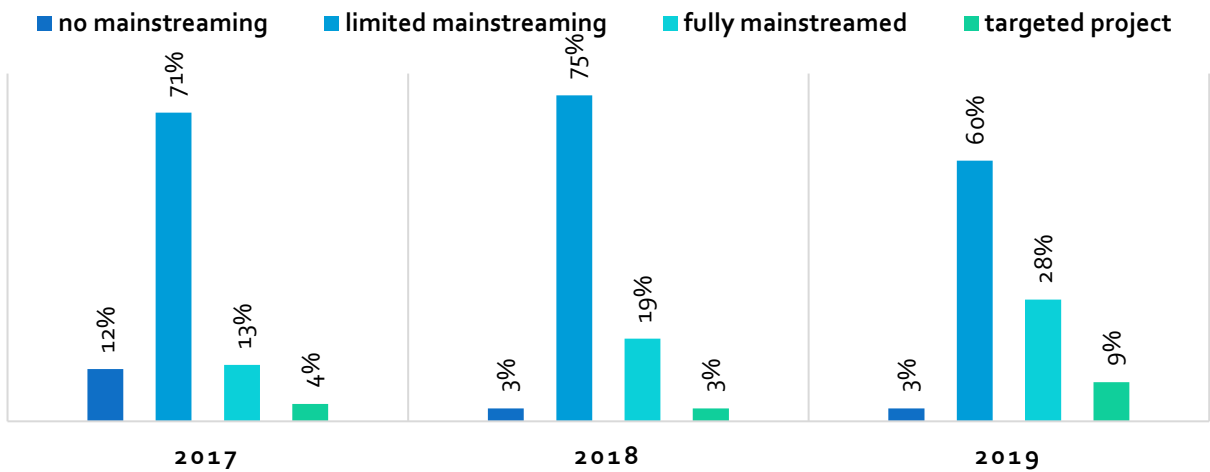
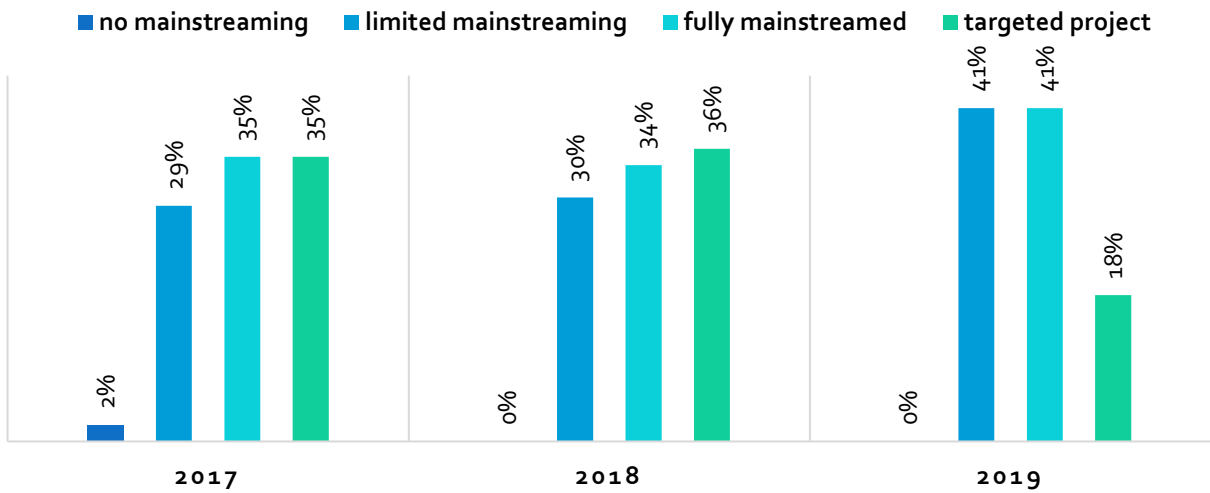


Figure 10: Level of gender mainstreaming levels in cross-dimensional projects



GFPs have highlighted a few factors that challenge further progress in fully gender-mainstreaming programmes and projects:

Misperceptions among staff that gender mainstreaming is the responsibility of the GFP, that it is not relevant in every subject area, or that it takes resources away from core programmatic activities continue to exist despite the many ongoing training and awareness-raising activities. Efforts to convey why gender-mainstreaming matters must therefore be enhanced.

Operationalising the link between theoretical knowledge and actual gender-mainstreaming measures can be difficult. Also, gender considerations are often included in the project design but dropped when facing the realities of implementation. More hands-on support by the Gender Issues Programme and GFPs is needed in that regard, in particular in specialized areas.

Finally, the use of gender mainstreaming practices often depends on project context and sectors and is more accepted in areas where gender equality is already embedded and well-received by project beneficiaries and partners. In other areas, external stakeholders do not always see the value of gender mainstreaming, which poses a notable challenge to gender mainstreaming and the balanced participation of women and men in OSCE projects.

GOOD PRACTICE: STEPPING UP GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE SECOND DIMENSION- THE PROGRAMME OFFICE IN BISHKEK

The Programme Office in Bishkek has placed particular emphasis on the development of gender-specific indicators for projects in the economic and environmental dimension and has recently drafted a related toolkit for the development of future projects in that dimension. The indicators are built on recommendations following a review of all the Office's projects for gender mainstreaming carried out in 2018. They do not only relate to the actual project activities but also extend to outreach activities, for example to avoid the reinforcement of the male entrepreneur stereotype in promotional materials. The Office has also developed a monitoring and evaluation plan, which includes SMART gender indicators and will be used for internal assessments of projects upon their completion.

Furthermore, in 2019, OCEEA started collecting sex-disaggregated data related to external consultants and implementing partners engaged in its projects with a view to ensuring equal representation among the contractors taking part in activities related to the second dimension.

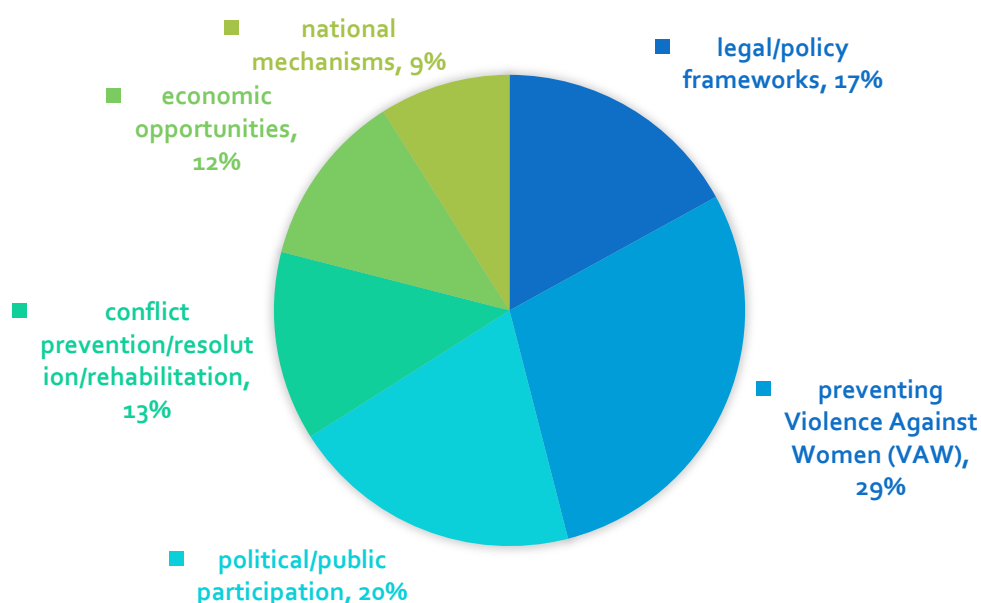
***SUMMARY:** OSCE executive structures were able to achieve some key results in supporting participating States in the 2004 GAP's six key thematic areas of non-discriminatory legislation and policies; prevention of violence against women; political and public participation of women; women's participation in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction; economic empowerment; and national mechanisms for the advancement of women.*

While all these areas were covered by OSCE executive structures, an analysis of the number of activities per thematic area reveals that most activities were targeted to combat violence against women and advance women's political participation, showing that these were key priorities for the Organization during the reporting period. The type and nature of the operational activities greatly varied according to the requests by participating States and ranged from legislative and institutional support to empowering individual women. The key achievements can be roughly categorized as follows:

- *Strengthened legal and policy frameworks, including stronger promotion of the human rights of women and girls, also in the actions of law enforcement; and improved responses to gender-specific rights violations.*
- *Improved institutional capacities to design and implement policies and programmes that reflect the needs and interests of women and men.*
- *Improved representation in national institutions by increasing the numbers of women. Increased capacity for political and public participation and decision-making, including strengthened knowledge and skills of women for participation in democratic bodies and in their communities; better capacities of women's organizations; and increased influence of women and women's organizations in public decision-making.*

During the reporting period, the OSCE's gender-related work was spread relatively evenly over the thematic areas. The statistical outlier is the area of preventing and addressing violence against women, which accounted for 29 per cent of gender-related activities. This was followed by the area of women's equal participation in political and public life, which represented 20 per cent of activities using different entry points and approaches such as work with parliaments and political parties; education of girls; encouraging equal representation with a focus on law enforcement agencies; and support to women to run for political office. 17 per cent of the activities in support of the 2004 GAP implementation centred on support to non-discriminatory legal and policy frameworks. Encouraging women's participation in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction was a focus area in 13 per cent of activities. Work in this area included support to the implementation of UNSCR 1325, involving women in dialogue efforts, as well as conflict resolution activities, and increasing the share of women in the security sector. 12 per cent of the activities promoted equal opportunity for women in the economic sphere, with a focus on female entrepreneurship. 9 per cent of the activities were about assisting participating States with building national mechanisms for the advancement of women.

Figure 11: Number of activities per thematic area (2017-2019)



3.1. ENSURING NON-DISCRIMINATORY LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

During the reporting period, executive structures have provided crucial support to non-discriminatory legal and policy frameworks, either by mainstreaming gender considerations in legislation or specifically targeting laws that protect women’s rights. Among the highlights of the OSCE’s work in that area are ODIHR’s legislative reviews, which addressed gender and diversity aspects in 12 out of 19 reviews undertaken in 2019. In the area of addressing hate crimes, ODIHR’s expert roundtables on gender-based hate crimes increased understanding among practitioners, civil society advocates, prosecutors, and academics on emerging themes and issues affecting people who suffer multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, violence and marginalization. These discussions also paved the way to **conceptualize what intersectionality**—that is discrimination on multiple grounds—**means in the lived experiences of victims** and operationalize intersectionality on day-to-day work on hate crimes and discrimination.

Supporting the development of national counter-discrimination strategies

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Mission supported Roma women, mainly via the Roma Women Network ‘Success’, with a **gender review of existing Local Roma Action Plans** and the development of a gender mainstreaming methodology for the integration of gender perspectives in these action plans. It also helped Roma women in five communities to present themselves as potential leaders. As a result, **a young Roma woman from Mostar was elected to the Bosnia and Herzegovina Council of Ministers Roma Advisory Board.**

The Mission to Montenegro developed a handbook for municipal officers on gender mainstreaming and non-discriminatory policy frameworks, which included a draft local action plan model. The model was **used by four municipalities in 2019.** Supported by the Mission, Montenegro adopted a **National Strategy to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings 2019-2024 that is fully gender mainstreamed** and contains, inter alia, measures to implement recommendations from the Convention on the Elimination

of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO).

The Mission to Skopje assisted with the drafting of the **new Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination**, including provisions on gender equality, inter-sectional discrimination, public sector duty for promoting equality, data collection on grounds of sex and gender, equal gender representation within the national equality body, possibility for acting as amicus curiae and initiating actio popularis in cases of gender-based discrimination. It further supported the **creation of the national Anti-Discrimination Coordinative Body**, in which members from state, non-state and independent institutions and civil society organizations are participating.

3.2. PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Understanding the magnitude of gender-based violence

The OSCE-led survey on the Well-being and Safety of Women is a landmark initiative by the Gender Issues Programme implemented during much of the reporting period. It has **generated important evidence on the prevalence of violence against women in South Eastern and Eastern Europe**, both in conflict and non-conflict settings, which can be used by decision-makers to improve policies and services. The findings were presented in 30 reports (including local translations) and provide a first baseline for the region that is comparable to EU data on violence against women. Two thematic reports provide a detailed analysis of violence against women in conflict and on the experiences of women from disadvantaged groups. The survey results were widely disseminated and used to raise awareness of the issue (see also chapter 4). As a result, local stakeholders (governmental and non-governmental) and international organizations, including UNFPA, UN Women and UNICEF have been **using the research data** for the development of strategic documents, policy briefs, and **work on the Istanbul Convention and the Beijing +25 processes**.

Strengthening legislation and law enforcement action

During the reporting period, many OSCE executive structures have worked with governments to adopt, strengthen and implement national laws and policies and strategies to end the violence against women and girls. The Programme Office in Nur-Sultan has co-operated with the Ministry of Internal Affairs on a public monitoring of legislation and law enforcement practices in the area of prevention of domestic violence. As a result of this exercise, **changes were made to relevant national legislation**.

In Kyrgyzstan, the Programme Office in Bishkek facilitated the work of the expert working group under the Office of the President on **monitoring the implementation of new criminal legislation** with special emphasis on gender-based violence. It also supported the development of an **amendment to the Criminal Procedure Code** on strengthening the protection of victims of gender-based violence. By the end of 2019, the draft law was developed for further action. It also helped to establish a local public council, which supports the work of the mobile police reception team of the Issyk-Kul province's territorial police department in preventing and combating violence against children and women. To date, the initiative has led to **more than 10 cases of violence against children and women being registered** and support to these families was provided by relevant local government agencies.

The Mission in Kosovo has worked with the Ministry of Justice on the **inclusion of a new article in the Criminal Code, which defines domestic violence as a crime**. Based on insights gained from its long-term assistance to the Kosovo Police, the Mission identified the need for gender sensitive services in domestic violence cases in police stations. It therefore provided equipment for **three interview rooms** that are used for domestic violence cases. The rooms are designed in a way that provides victims of domestic and gender-based violence with a safe and friendly environment, and are equipped with computers, cameras, sofas, beds, and toys for children.

In North Macedonia, the Mission to Skopje supported the drafting of the **new Law on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** and the new Criminal Code, which **incorporate Istanbul Convention commitments**, pending adoption in 2020.

The Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine assisted the Ministry of Interior with the **development of subordinate legislation** enabling police officers to better protect domestic violence survivors. It also helped the police form and train **multi-disciplinary domestic violence response teams**. This was coupled with extensive training for **hotline operators**, and the equipment of **five interactive training rooms** at police training institutions, as well as the development of anti-domestic violence police **training curricula**.

GOOD PRACTICE: ENHANCING SERVICES FOR WOMEN BELONGING TO MINORITIES

In Montenegro, the Mission supported **10 Roma and Egyptian women to be accredited as 'confidential persons'** by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. A 'confidential person' is a legally recognised specialised service, compliant to the Istanbul Convention, that supports victims of domestic violence in articulating their cases before institutions and official bodies and prevents discrimination of Roma and Egyptian women and girls. **Seven women and girls have asked for this service since April 2019.**

Capacity building for criminal justice practitioners and law enforcement officials to respond to gender-based violence was a core activity for a number of executive structures, including ODIHR, the Transnational Threats Department, the Mission to Moldova, the Presence in Albania, the Mission to Skopje and the Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The latter also supported two local women's NGOs in conducting **trial monitoring of gender-based violence cases** in both entities. Within this project, around 200 cases of gender-based violence were monitored in order to assess the judicial response to domestic violence. Trial monitoring remains the main means of collecting data on the number of gender-based violence cases that are processed by domestic courts and offers direct insights into procedures and possible biases of court and defence officials.

GOOD PRACTICE: COMBATING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON BOTH BANKS OF THE DNIESTER/NISTRU RIVER

During the reporting period, the Mission to Moldova increased its efforts to bring together interlocutors from both banks of the Dniester/Nistru River to tackle domestic violence issues and build confidence between the sides of the Transdnestrrian conflict settlement process. It implemented some 22 activities focused on addressing domestic violence during which around 210 representatives from NGOs, shelters, social service providers, psychologists, and lawyers from both banks of the River interacted to address the common challenge. These initiatives contributed to inclusion of domestic violence issues in the negotiation agenda of the Human Rights sub-Working Group within the framework of the settlement process.

Education, prevention and protection

OSCE executive structures made steady progress in raising awareness about violence against women targeting the general public and the media, and specific groups such as school children and teachers and the media.

Considering that domestic violence often goes unreported, the OSCE Mission to Montenegro and the Gender Issues Programme produced relevant **promotional and educational material** that was disseminated in all Montenegrin cities and launched an online resource containing help and information to support efforts to prevent and combat violence against women. With the support of the Mission, a **database that contains disaggregated data as per the Istanbul Convention** was introduced in late 2019 in the Police Directorate and Centres for Social Welfare. It will allow keeping anonymous records of the number of reported cases, repetition of violence acts and developing risk assessment and protection plans.

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo held a series of **capacity building activities on violence against women** for professionals working in the social, educational, judicial, law enforcement, health and media sectors. It also supported the **establishment of eight municipal co-ordination mechanisms** for the prevention of and combat against domestic violence. One of these was established in Prishtinë/Priština and as an immediate result, the municipality allocated 100,000 Euro to renovate the shelter for domestic violence victims in this municipality.

The Programme Office in Bishkek supported the Kyrgyz Association of Women in the Security Sector and the Parliament in raising awareness about the root causes of violence against women, its consequences and possible solutions. As a result, a **resolution and recommendations to increase co-operation among relevant government structures** was submitted to **the relevant parliamentary committees and government office departments**.

In Uzbekistan, the Project Co-ordinator developed a **toolkit for police officers** on methods to work with potential offenders and prevent acts of violence to protect the rights of victims of domestic violence.



"Erkinay" is the story of a bride-kidnapped girl.

The OSCE Academy in Bishkek has focused on education measures to prevent the harmful traditional practice of bride kidnapping, aiming to change attitudes on girls' rights. In addition to training **school children** from nine secondary schools, the Programme Office in Bishkek published and disseminated the **book 'Erkinay'** -the story of a bride-kidnapped girl in fairy-tale style. The book was also turned into an animated film **that is available on YouTube**. An **information leaflet** was also made available in the Kyrgyz and Russian languages containing **information about assistance for women** who face violence or were bride kidnapped.

ODIHR has introduced an innovative way to ensure the safety and security of human rights defenders by way of the Umbrella app in English and Russian languages. The app is downloadable for free on iOS and Android since 2019 and human rights defenders can **learn how to prevent and react to sexual assault** by consulting the relevant section in the application. Informal **feedback from human rights defenders**, confirms their regular use of the application.

Combating trafficking in human beings (THB)

With women and girls representing the majority of identified victims of human trafficking, this area has remained on many executive structures' agenda. The Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (OSR/CTHB) continued to advocate for the need for **gender-sensitive anti-trafficking measures** in line with relevant Ministerial Council decisions. Among its many activities is the training initiative on combating THB along (Mediterranean) migration routes. Since 2016, the project has **trained 529 practitioners from 55 participating States, seven Partners for Co-operation, and six West and Central African Countries**. 57.5 per cent of the participants were women, including 36 per cent from fields that are traditionally dominated by men, such as law enforcement, financial investigation, and prosecution. In March 2019, the SR/CTHB also chaired a side event on the margins of the 63rd UN session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW63). Co-hosted by ODIHR, the event was dedicated to States' obligations to address demand under the Palermo Protocol while preventing the trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation.

ODIHR's counter-trafficking activities were multifaceted and included policy advice, awareness-raising and capacity-building for state authorities and civil society. For instance, law enforcement agencies in a number of participating States were **trained in gender-sensitive interview techniques**.

The Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan supported the development of the **new anti-trafficking law that includes the non-punishment and non-prosecution principle**. In Montenegro, the Mission provided **recommendations to police, prosecution, and the judiciary** for the investigation of THB cases, including non-punishment principles for victims of trafficking.

In the past three years, the OSCE Mission to Serbia has worked in partnership with Serbia's institutions and civil society in further **strengthening the National Referral Mechanism**, the development of counter-trafficking polices, and building of the capacities of relevant mechanism and institutions. It has also been extensively supporting the implementation of the 2017 National Strategy against Human Trafficking and the accompanying Action Plan.

3.3 ENSURING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE

Equal representation and gender expertise in governmental institutions

Because equal representation and participation of women and men in public institutions is crucial to realising gender equality, OSCE executive structures have supported participating States to improve gender balance and know-how in public service functions. The Mission to Montenegro provided training to women police officers and supported the **development and monitoring of the Action Plan for Increasing the Number of Women in the Police**. In Ukraine, the Project Co-ordinator supported the Ministry of Interior in holding nationwide forums to promote gender equality and women's advancement in law enforcement careers. The initiative resulted in the **development of recommendations for the promotion of girls and women in law-enforcement and military careers**. Building on a mentoring programme for female police officers, the Mission to Skopje and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy jointly established a **women-to-women public sector mentoring initiative**. It includes women from nine ministries, the Assembly and independent institutions and has already showed positive results as several of its participants were promoted.

GOOD PRACTICE: EQUAL REPRESENTATION IN POLICE SERVICES

Since 2004, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo has supported the Association of Women in the Kosovo Police (AWKP) in its efforts to ensure that women are not only part of the police but are adequately empowered to build a gender and ethnically balanced police service. During the reporting period, the Mission developed an advanced programme that strengthened leadership and operational commanders' skills of women police officers. As a result, and following regular Kosovo Police procedures, six women were promoted from the rank of lieutenant to the rank of Captain - which represents 11.32 per cent out of 53 promotions in 2018. The Mission also helped the Kosovo Police to develop a Human Resources Strategy and an Action Plan 2016-2020 that includes affirmative measures during the recruitment process. As a result, the number of female candidates who undertook police training as cadets increased by 30 per cent.

Access to political careers and female leadership in public life

Executive structures have advanced women's leadership through various initiatives. At the core of this work was training for women political candidates to help build their capacities. The Programme Office in Bishkek promoted the adoption of the law on a minimum 30 per cent quota **for women in local councils which was adopted** in 2019. Following the new law's entry into force, the Programme Office and ODIHR conducted a series of **training seminars on political leadership at local level for some 203 women** in all provinces of Kyrgyzstan. During the local council elections in the Saruu village in Issyk-Kul province in September 2019, **women gained 43 per cent of the seats in the council**, electing the first woman chairperson of the council there. The Presence in Albania launched the OSCE Women's Municipal Excellence Program in 2019, which trains female local politicians. In Poland, **50 aspiring women candidates strengthened their skills** ahead of the 2018 local elections in a training organized by ODIHR, the School of Leaders, and the Association Polish Congress of Women. **A record number of women, 45,8 per cent of all candidates, ran for elected office** in the October 2018 local elections and won around 30 per cent of offices.

Beyond formal politics, the OSCE has also provided civic education and promoted female leadership in civil society initiatives. The Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine organized 214 pre-elections community meetings in local communities. The invited local community leaders – women comprising approximately 75 per cent – increased their **knowledge about decentralization and elections issues**. The Programme Office in Bishkek supported the **expansion of the Women Initiative Groups network** to all seven provinces of Kyrgyzstan to support women in their role of local problem solving. Previously, these groups had only been active in the southern regions of the country. ODIHR has also supported a number of women's rights initiatives, for example the Women's Congresses in Poland and Ukraine.

The Programme Office in Dushanbe and the HCNM focused on empowering girls – the Programme Office in the context of a **summer camp for 50 Tajik girls**, the HCNM by involving girls of pre-school and secondary school age, and from higher education institutions in mother tongue based multi-lingual education programmes in Central Asia. This has contributed to an increase in the number of girls with a minority background **completing 11 years of secondary education and enrolling into higher education**.

GOOD PRACTICE: THE SCHOLARSHIP FOR PEACE AND SECURITY



Participants of the OSCE Scholarship for Peace and Security at the training course on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, Vienna, 12 February 2018. (UNODA)

Preparing a new generation of young women to contribute to peace and security is the objective of the OSCE Scholarship for Peace and Security, a training in conflict prevention and resolution through arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, with a specific focus on OSCE-relevant instruments. To date, 170 young women have benefitted from a scholarship by the OSCE to take part in the training that is held in co-operation with UNODA.

"One day I hope to get a seat at a negotiation table and make it a point to promote an inclusive, sustainable approach to peacebuilding and security, one with human rights at its core."

-Participant of the OSCE Scholarship for Peace and Security, training course.

Work with parliaments and political parties

During the reporting period, work with parliaments was a focus area in promoting the participation of women in political and public life. Building on ODIHR's expertise and OSCE Field Operations' efforts, significant progress was made in several parliaments becoming more gender-sensitive, producing laws that work for women and men, and improving parliamentary integrity. Three parliaments (Albania, Montenegro, and North Macedonia) have developed **gender action plans**, and three parliaments adopted **codes of conduct (Albania, Georgia, and North Macedonia)**, which include gender equality provisions.

The Mission to Montenegro has provided a series of gender trainings to members of parliament and parliamentary staff who, as a result, have **increased their skills to review legislation through a gender**



The 5th National conference of the Women's Parliamentary Network, Belgrade, 15 December 2017. (OSCE/Milan Obradovic)

lens. The parliamentary **Gender Equality Committee is now a recognized champion of gender equality.** Executive structures also supported the creation of parliamentary networks of female MPs. Notably, the Programme Office in Dushanbe has **helped establish the Women Alliance caucuses in Tajikistan's Parliament.** In Serbia, the OSCE Mission and ODIHR have been supporting the Women's Parliamentary Network (WPN) in the National Assembly since 2017. This has helped **women politicians to advocate for women's rights.** Similarly, the Mission to Skopje **supported the creation of the Women Parliamentarian's Club (WPC)** to foster cross-

party co-operation between female legislators. The WPC promoted the **introduction of a 50 per cent zipper system electoral quota**, which is currently in parliamentary procedure. In order to increase the participation of young women from minority communities in mainstream politics, the HCNM

sponsored a number of **women representing national minorities for internships with political parties in Georgia**.

In addition, executive structures worked with political parties to attain gender equality in politics. ODIHR, often in collaboration with OSCE field operations, **supported 43 political parties in eight participating States** with its gender audit methodology, by assessing their internal political party processes, structures, and activities, helping to identify discriminatory practices, and recommending ways for improvement. Based on the audits, **28 parties have adopted gender equality plans**, resulting in improved and institutionalised gender equality practices.

GOOD PRACTICE: GENDER AUDIT TOOL FOR POLITICAL PARTIES



ODIHR's Gender Audit of Political Parties is available online in English and Russian language for self-assessment by political parties and is on a confidential basis. Political parties can enter their own information and receive an automated report assessing how gender-sensitive their

party structure, processes, and programmes are. Examples of good practice are provided, encouraging active inclusion of gender issues in all aspects of party life, from party leadership to candidate selection.

3.4. ENCOURAGING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN CONFLICT PREVENTION, CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND POST-CONFLICT REHABILITATION

Women in the security sector

The topic of women in the security sector has attracted increased attention in the OSCE, since its inclusion in the 2017 Gender Equality Review Conference. ODIHR's baseline study on the issue, published in 2018, has provided OSCE participating States, civil society and other stakeholders with **new data and information on women's participation in the armed forces** in the OSCE Region, as well as a set of good practices.

In order to set up an appropriate legal framework for equal opportunities of women in the armed forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the OSCE Mission supported the Ministry of Defence with harmonizing relevant rulebooks, and a code of ethics with the Law on Gender Equality. The **amended rulebooks and code of ethics** were submitted to the Minister for approval.

In the area of border management, the Transnational Threats Department set up the OSCE Gender Equality Platform in Border Security and Management, which **trained GFPs to become trainers in their respective border services** and produce gender strategies. In its work with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, the Department **worked towards an increase in the number of women in the OSCE Mediterranean Network on Border Security** and placed gender mainstreaming in border security on the Network's agenda. More specifically, it initiated a discussion on sexual harassment in the border police. The Centre in Ashgabat has provided **gender mainstreaming training to border guards** from Turkmenistan and Afghanistan, which focused on sharing good practices on facilitating women's entry

into the field. A post-evaluation test measured the participants' gained knowledge, as well as their **broader understanding of the gender concept**. Promoting female leadership in border management and security has also been a long-standing priority of the Border Management Staff College. The College's courses have always been gender mainstreamed but since 2018, it has introduced a **staff course that is open for only female participants**. 2018 also saw a **record high of 58 per cent of female staff course participants**.

Supporting implementation of UNSCR 1325



Participants at the workshop of the National Action Plan Academy to support the implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in the OSCE organized by the Gender Issues Programme. (OSCE/ Salko Agovic)

The Gender Issues Programme has supported the **design of women, peace and security (WPS) national action plans (NAPs)** through the development of a guidance note and multi-country and one-country workshops held in 12 participating States, thereby contributing to an increasing number of NAPs in the OSCE region. Today, 36 participating States (63 per cent) have a NAP in place. In 2019, the Gender Issues Programme prepared an assessment study on progress made in WPS implementation in the OSCE region, which provided **insights into trends and challenges** in implementation. ODIHR's work in support of UNSCR 1325 included **training for police officers**

and investigators and civil society representatives in Albania. The training was devised after the **adoption of Albania's 1325 NAP**, the development of which was supported by ODIHR and the OSCE Presence in Albania. ODIHR also delivered capacity building training to Kyrgyz National Human Rights Institutions and civil society organizations to contribute to stepping up the implementation of the 1325 Action Plan.

The Programme Office in Bishkek enhanced capacities of police, local self-government bodies and members of the Women's Initiative Groups on **the implementation of the National Plan for UNSCR 1325** in the Batken, Jalal-Abad, Issyk-Kul and Osh provinces. In addition, a training module on UNSCR 1325 was piloted across Kyrgyzstan.

In Montenegro, the OSCE Mission **supported mainstreaming gender in the Police Directorate**, as outlined in the Police Strategy, Montenegro's National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325, and the draft Action Plan on Women, including through targeted training of police officers.

Conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation

The OSCE Dialogue Academy for Young Women organized by the OSCE Mission to Serbia and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo has been active since 2017. It has **raised the capacities of 72 young women leaders** from Belgrade and Prishtinë/Priština in women's rights and peacebuilding, as well as reconciliation and trust-building in their respective communities. These young women have in turn organized different activities in both societies, which reached **hundreds of young people from both societies**.

To promote confidence-building measures on both banks of the Dniester/Nistru River, the Mission to Moldova **trained some 467 legal professionals (205 men and 262 women)** from both banks on the gender dimension of legal issues. The activity included a **mentorship programme for NGOs working on women's issues** and consultations were held at civil society clubs on issues related to the settlement process, including on the specific needs of women.

GOOD PRACTICE: LEVERAGING CO-OPERATION FOR THE INCLUSION OF WOMEN IN PEACE PROCESSES



Launch of the toolkit on inclusion of women and effective peace processes, Bratislava, 5 December 2019. (OSCE)

The preparation of the publication *Inclusion of Women and Effective Peace Processes - A Toolkit* is a good example of how co-operation among executive structures can be leveraged for gender equality. The toolkit makes actionable proposals for OSCE mediation actors, the OSCE Chair, participating States, and executive structures on how to increase women's inclusion in official negotiation processes in the OSCE area. It is the result of joint work between the Gender Issues Programme and the CPC's Mediation

Support Team. In addition, civil society representatives and international partners were consulted during the research and drafting process, which took two years. The preparation process contributed to raising awareness on the lack of women mediators in the OSCE. The toolkit also provided the opportunity to support the OSCE Mission to Moldova with the analysis of how a gender perspective could be integrated in negotiation topics of the Transdniestrian Settlement Process, and provided room for discussion with women peacebuilders in the OSCE region.

The role of women in preventing and countering violent extremism that leads to radicalization

Women play a vital role in preventing the spread of extremist ideology and activity and executive structures have empowered women to more effectively play that role. The Transnational Threats Department has for example launched the *Leaders Against Intolerance and Violent Extremism Initiative*, which provided **train-the-trainer courses on the prevention of violent extremism for women leaders** in South-Eastern Europe. With a view to improving the understanding of gender dynamics in the prevention and countering of violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (P/CVERLT), it also published a related **handbook for law enforcement agencies** in English, Russian and - following interest expressed by the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation- also in Arabic.

3.5. PROMOTING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE

OSCE work to economically empower women included support to the creation of conditions that are conducive for women to participate in existing markets, capacity building to give them better access to employment and ensuring meaningful participation in economic decision-making. OSCE executive structures also made a difference for individual women by helping them to become entrepreneurs and find employment, in particular in the more remote, rural areas.

Since January 2019, the OCEEA has promoted a gender-responsive social and economic environment in Armenia. Its activities have **expanded socio-economic opportunities** for women in vulnerable situations, especially in rural communities, and improved the effectiveness of support services provided by the network of the Women Resource Centres. These include the facilitation of skills acquisition, support to creating income-generating activities, and measures to improve life-work balance. In addition, the OCEEA has worked with the relevant government authorities to promote a positive eco-

system for socially impactful businesses in the country, as a way to support the economic inclusion of vulnerable groups, especially women.

In 2017 and 2018, the Gender Issues Programme supported the **establishment of mentor networks for women in Ukraine, Armenia, and Belarus**. Key results included the creation of a practical roadmap for creating mentor networks and the establishment of six networks reaching more than 200 women in the OSCE region, including Roma and rural women. In 2019, 11 NGOs from Belarus received a general introduction to establishing mentor networks and seven NGOs were equipped with more in-depth skills and knowledge. At least **two NGOs have already established their own mentor networks** as a result of the training. The Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina also chose mentoring to empower women economically by collaborating with the non-profit organization Foundation 787 to provide **business training and mentoring to single mothers**.

The Mission to Montenegro assisted the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development with the review of its policies and programmes to assess if government incentives are equally accessible to men and women. The analysis showed that women applicants accounted for 11,47 per cent, that they received 9,6 per cent of available funds, that affirmative measures were lacking and that generally, women were in a disadvantaged position compared to men. Recommendations were presented to the Ministry and the result was its commitment to initiate **gender-responsive budgeting as a tool to economically empower women** as from 2020 and develop financial instruments to support women from rural areas cover their lack of collateral and start their own business.

The Programme Office in Bishkek supported the Entrepreneurs Support Centres (ESC) with the organization of Business Management courses (a 'mini' MBA course) for regional entrepreneurs and the provision of coaching to local business owners. The ESC proactively involved aspiring businesswomen and achieved a range of **35- 42 per cent of female participation in this traditionally male dominated sphere**. 39 female entrepreneurs enhanced their skills in strategic and financial management, human resource management, marketing, and sales. The business advisory services provided by these Centers resulted in more than 30 new business entities being established and more than 12 enterprises improving their performance. The impact of these training activities can be already seen, as a **network of hostels run by women-entrepreneurs with disabilities** increased its customer flow by 30 per cent and brand awareness increased by 40 per cent. In another example, a **confectionary company run by a woman** was able to expand its production and open a new point of sale. The Batken ESC also provided extensive consultations to a **local private women entrepreneur** resulting in the **opening of a new private primary school**.



Participants while completing a task on marketing homestay business, Dushanbe, 9 July 2019. (OSCE/ Farhod Nabiulloev)

The Programme Office in Dushanbe has been supporting the creation and consolidation of the **Women Resource Centers** in Tajikistan. Besides legal and psychosocial counselling (relevant for the Office's work to prevent and combat violence against women), the Centres offer vocational courses for women. In the period between 2017 and 2019, 5986 persons benefited from vocational courses. **1165 of them found a job** in different governmental and non-governmental structures whereas others **established their own small sewing/bakery business**.

During 2017-2019, the Programme Office in Nur-Sultan built the **financial management and marketing capacities of women entrepreneurs** to promote their economic activity in non-urban areas. It also trained women in promoting green technologies in villages. In addition, the Office supported the consolidation of a **regional network of women entrepreneurs in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan**. In partnership with the coalition for green economy and development G-Global, the Office organized two Rural Women's Forums in 2018 and 2019, gathering some 620 representatives of national and local government, development and financial institutions, business structures, international organizations, public associations and delegations from 14 regions of Kazakhstan. The forums have become **major events in Kazakhstan dedicated exclusively to women from rural areas**.

The Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan facilitated **training for more than 300 women managers** in business administration through tailored training courses at the Westminster International University in Tashkent. At a more institutional level, a country-wide gender-disaggregated **research and situation analysis on labour migration** was conducted and delivered to policymakers.

The Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine has viewed the economic empowerment of vulnerable persons as a measure to prevent human trafficking. It has helped establish social enterprises with non-governmental organizations which created jobs for women and men at risk of being trafficked, as well as for former victims of trafficking. Three social enterprises established with the PCU's support became fully functional and **created 35 new jobs, 33 of which are held by women**.

3.6. BUILDING NATIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

OSCE executive structures have contributed to strengthening national mechanisms for the advancement of women by supporting the executive branch such as national councils, committees or ministries in charge of gender equality, and strengthening parliaments and women caucuses in parliaments. Much of the work in this area focused on strengthening institutional capacities of governments in implementing gender equality strategies, NAPs or frameworks to counter violence against women. The Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan for example has worked with the Committee of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Women's and Gender Issues, and the Women's Committee of Uzbekistan on a series of round-table discussions on women's participation in political and public life across the country and has thereby contributed to building a sustainable **platform to enhance women's political participation**. It has also provided members of the Women's Committee Apparatus with management training and briefings on international standards on women's rights and gender equality.

The OSCE Mission to Serbia assisted the development of the new National Action Plan for the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 – Women, Peace and Security. Compared to the previous NAP, the NAP 2017-2020 has an additional focus on the involvement of women at the local level. The Mission also supported the **Government's Coordination Body for Gender Equality** with drafting the Government's report on the implementation of NAP 1325 for the period from June 2017 to December 2018.

GOOD PRACTICE: THE UKRAINIAN CONGRESS OF WOMEN

In 2017, ODIHR initiated the development of the concept of the Ukrainian Congress of Women, modelled on the Polish Congress of Women. The Congress is a platform for Ukrainian women that increases their co-operation, visibility and outreach to combat gender-based stereotypes and influence law and policymaking. ODIHR co-financed the Ukrainian Congresses of Women, starting from their first event in 2017. The most recent Congress took place in Kyiv in December 2019 and brought together more than 700 gender activists from all over Ukraine. In addition, the Congresses attract foreign parliamentarians, government representatives and international organizations and leading gender experts, and draw substantial media attention. They usually ignite animated discussions on gender equality and the status of implementation of gender equality legislation and international commitments, thereby increasing public awareness on gender equality and building momentum for change.

Another focus area in strengthening national mechanisms for the advancement of women was the evaluation of implementation of national policies and legislation. The Mission to Skopje's support to assessing the implementation of the **Law on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men** in 2019 is a case in point. The assessment will build the basis for the working group for the revision of the law, to be appointed in 2020.

VISIBILITY AND COMMUNICATION

Gender balance plays an increasingly important role in OSCE communications. Executive structures have stepped up efforts to ensure that texts and visuals in visibility and outreach products ensure equal representation of women and men and reflect female and male perspectives. In 2018, the Secretariat's Communication and Media Relations Section analysed news items on the OSCE website for their incorporation of a gender-perspective: 13 per cent of the news items covered gender equality as the main topic and 37 per cent of the items included some gender considerations. In addition, 56 per cent of the photos showed both men and women. The gathered data provides the baseline for a follow-up monitoring, which will take place in November 2020.



The '16 Days' campaign reached a record number of 35 million people in 2019 thanks to concerted efforts by OSCE executive structures and UNFPA.

Advocacy is a key part of the OSCE's gender-related communication. The annual *16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence* is one of the most important opportunities for the OSCE to highlight its work in this area. The majority of OSCE field operations have been using the occasion to organize public awareness events and draw attention to specific gender-related issues.

The 2019 edition themed *End the Silence* shared the findings from the *OSCE-led Survey on Well-being and Safety of Women* to inform the public about the prevalence of violence against women and initiate a discussion about the extent of the problem and its consequences. The combined outreach (including through social media and funded

through extra-budgetary contributions), which was co-ordinated between the Secretariat, field operations in South Eastern and Eastern Europe, and UNFPA, reached over 35 million people. This is a considerable increase compared to the 16 Days of Activism campaign in November 2017, which reached some 215,000 people through social media and the OSCE website.

The OSCE *MenEngage* Network has been an important entry point for the OSCE to garner support for women's rights and gender equality among male heads of delegations to the OSCE and their military advisers. At the end of 2019, the Network counted 21 members from 14 OSCE delegations, and the OSCE Secretariat. During the reporting period, the Presence in Albania, the Mission to Skopje, the Programme Office in Dushanbe and the Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan were instrumental in the creation of *MenEngage* networks in their respective host country, and supported them in their campaign activities.

The safety of female journalists was the advocacy topic in the Representative on Freedom of the Media's signal initiative 'Safety of Journalists Online' (SOFJO). In a bid to raise awareness and inspire change, the Representative's office and the International Press Institute presented the documentary *A Dark Place*, in December 2018. It highlights the experiences of female journalists who have been affected by online harassment. The documentary was screened in 16 different countries 2019 at film festivals and events and has attracted new audiences for the OSCE.



Important public awareness activities included the Mission to Skopje's 2019 anti-rumour campaign, which challenged negative prejudices and stereotypes on grounds of sex and gender, and counter-trafficking campaigns as the ones implemented by the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine. The SMM's gender-related communication activities included important campaigns to elevate women's visibility in peace and security initiatives. Videos featuring a woman field manager in the SMM and people (most of them women) living in towns near the contact line who speak about their hardship were seen by an audience of some two million people. The SMM also introduced a new series of web stories entitled 'Women on the Contact Line' presenting both active female community leaders in the east and SMM personnel.