

Online seminar

## **30 years of the Beijing Platform for Action: The role of parliaments**

Thursday, 16 January 2025, 14.00-16.00 CET

In 2025, OSCE participating States, together with the rest of the world, will be marking the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, a central set of international norms on women's rights and gender equality. The Platform for Action covers 12 critical areas of concern that are as relevant today as 30 years ago: poverty; education and training; health; violence; armed conflict; economy; power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms; human rights; media; environment; and the girl child. Strategic objectives are identified for each critical area of concern, as along with a detailed catalogue of related actions to be taken by governments, parliaments and other stakeholders at national, regional and international level.

Reflecting on the last 30 years, the OSCE space has seen far-reaching developments in women's full and equal participation in politics and decision-making. A few of the major achievements include:

- States have tripled the average number of female parliamentarians (31.5%);
- They have adopted ground-breaking gender equality laws;
- States have set up stronger government ministries, agencies and councils that lead on gender equality policy; and
- Twenty-six OSCE participating States have also introduced legislative gender quotas, aimed at decreasing male over-representation and targeting gender-balanced politics in the long run.

Nevertheless, in recent years, the OSCE region has also faced stagnation in further progress, along with backsliding on gender equality and is seeing an unprecedented mobilization against gender equality. As we approach the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, there is a new sense of urgency; a recognition that we are at a turning point for women's rights, that realizing gender equality, women's empowerment and the human rights of women and girls must be a pressing and central task.

A renewed commitment by democratic institutions is needed, including by national parliaments, and this is why the OSCE PA and OSCE/ODIHR are organizing this online seminar.

**Objectives of the seminar:**

- Raise awareness on the importance Beijing Platform for Action in today's context;
- Share lessons learned and good practices among national on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action; and
- Call upon OSCE national parliaments to ensure renewed focus on gender equality issues during 2025.

**Target groups:**

- Members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and their staff
- Members of national parliaments of OSCE participating States and parliamentary staff, with a focus on parliamentarians and staff in charge of gender equality policy
- Representatives of OSCE executive structures
- Delegations of participating States to the OSCE

**Technical information**

The event will be held online, via the Zoom conferencing platform. The online seminar will be held in English language only.

**Contact**

Please contact Anastasiya Griadasova at [Anastasiya.Griadasova@oscepa.dk](mailto:Anastasiya.Griadasova@oscepa.dk) with any questions about registration and participation.

Please contact Saša Gavrić at [Sasa.Gavric@odihp.pl](mailto:Sasa.Gavric@odihp.pl) with any questions about the content.

## Online conference AGENDA

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Moderator: Saša Gavrić, Gender Adviser, ODIHR

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| 14:00-14:10 | Opening remarks<br>OSCE PA President<br>ODIHR Director/Director's Alternate   |
| 14:10-14:45 | Keynote input<br><br>The importance of the Beijing Platform for Action 30 years later<br>Rachel Weston Eschenbacher, Regional Policy Specialist,<br>UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional Office<br><br>Learning from the Inter-parliamentary Union<br>Zeina Hilal, Manager, Gender and Youth Programmes, IPU Secretariat<br><br>Beijing 30+:<br>A critical moment for parliaments to step up on advancing gender<br>equality<br>Saša Gavrić, Gender Adviser, ODIHR   |
| 14:45-15:45 | Interventions by parliamentarians of OSCE national parliaments<br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Short contributions, up to 5 minutes</li><li>• Questions for keynote speakers, up to 2 minutes</li><li>• Parliaments are invited to present concrete examples of good practices and lessons learned on how they ensure parliamentary follow-up activities related to the Beijing Platform for Action</li><li>• Parliaments may also want to mention plans for upcoming activities in 2025</li></ul> |
| 15:45-16:00 | Closing remarks<br>Hedy Fry, OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues  |

Yulia Netesova, Chief of Democratic Governance and Gender Unit, ODIHR