



## OSCE Chair-in-Office visits Albania

OSCE Chair-in-Office Ian Borg, visited Tirana, on 13 November, reaffirming the OSCE's commitment to strengthening regional security and its continued partnership with Albania. He met with President Bajram Begaj, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Igli Hasani and civil society organizations working on gender equality and gender-based violence. Chair-in-Office Borg also met the staff of the OSCE Presence, expressing his strong support and appreciation. He encouraged Albania to continue making best use of the Presence's expertise.

## #NoExcuse for gender-based violence

Kicking off the 16 Days against Gender-based Violence, we organized a workshop for staff and residents of national shelter for domestic violence victims, on 27 Nov. The workshop provided women with practical skills to write curriculum vitae and motivation letters. It also focused on how staff can better support victims during job search, helping them reintegrate into society, as well as on handling domestic violence cases using victims-oriented approach. The Presence aims to continue vocational trainings, according to the shelter's needs.



16 DAYS OF  
ACTIVISM AGAINST  
GENDER-BASED  
VIOLENCE



## International Election Working Group meets civil society

On 1 November, the Presence hosted an insightful meeting of the International Election Working Group with some main civil society organizations actively working on elections. They informed participants from the OSCE participating States and international organizations in Albania of their views on the current electoral environment, the challenges they face, and shared their perspectives aimed at making the upcoming elections more fair, inclusive and accessible to different communities.



## Young people say no to weapons during OSCE awareness campaign

November marked the conclusion of our youth awareness campaign on risks of firearms, focused on gender-based violence. The outreach activities were organized with Interior Ministry, State Police and engagement of local officials, civil society, Local Safety Councils, students and teachers. Over 550 students delivered powerful anti-violence messages through artistic performances in Elbasan, Shkodra and Lezha theatres. The events were part of our SALW project funded by EU, Germany and France.



## SPAK, police officials in study visit to Italy



Prosecutors of the Special Structure against Corruption and Organized Crime (SPAK) and high officials of the Albanian State Police conducted a study visit to Italy focused on operational aspects of financial investigations, from 4 to 7 November. The main objective of the visit was to support these institutions in their activities to combat money laundering of illegally acquired capital and implementing asset recovery measures with a view to strengthening and reinforcing the fight against transnational organized crime.

## Legal Clinic for people in need opens in Elbasan

A Legal Clinic was inaugurated at the University of Elbasan, on 11 November, in which lecturers and fifth-year law students will offer free legal advice to people in need. The establishment of the legal clinic was made possible thanks to a two-year co-operation between the University and the Presence, which, among others, donated computers, law literature and organized training sessions for the engaged students. The clinic will also serve students, helping them put into practice the knowledge accumulated during the learning process.



## Workshop "Role of media in electoral process"



On 18 November 2024, the Presence and the Central Election Commission organized a technical workshop titled "Elections 2025: The role of media in the electoral process – Challenges and opportunities". The event brought together regulatory bodies, media professionals and civil society representatives to discuss ways to improve the media environment and media's coverage of elections. Earlier this year, the Presence and the CEC organized two technical workshops focused on voter education and vote buying.

## Simulation exercises against human trafficking

Our 2nd simulation-based training on human trafficking brought together 50 professionals to address complex cases, from 19 to 21 November. Through role-playing, participants enhanced their skills in victim-focused investigations, including tackling technology-facilitated trafficking. The training event built on the success of the first training in 2021, which was the first of its kind in Albania. The training was part of the OSCE's project "Advancement of the anti-trafficking training capacities", funded by the United States of America, Norway and Italy.



## Invigorating Local Safety Councils



On 4 November, Ambassador Michel Tarran and Lezha Mayor Pjerin Ndreu attended a meeting of the Local Safety Council in Lezha aimed at reviving this Council as a valuable forum for a safer community. A similar meeting took place in Shkodra, on 6 November. Both meetings stressed the importance of co-operation among stakeholders to raise awareness on dangers and misuse of small arms and light weapons. The OSCE Presence is a main supporter of the establishment and functioning of Local Safety Councils throughout Albania.



## Enhancing environment governance, security



November saw the organization of several events on enhancing environmental governance and security. They included: an open lecture in Gjirokastra University to raise awareness and promote engagement, on 12 November; a meeting in Jergucat to discuss challenges and opportunities in Dropull municipality, on 13 November; and a visit for young people to Korça water treatment plant and Maliq landfill, on 16 November. Reducing illegal logging was the focus of a regional workshop in Peshkopi, on 6-7 November.

## Pasztory: Public trust is key to justice reform

Addressing a roundtable on justice and fight against corruption organized by the Albanian Helsinki Committee, on 25 November, Deputy Head of Presence Clarisse Pasztory stressed that public trust is key to justice reform. She spoke about the Presence's support to justice institutions in their transparency and public outreach. "One active role we seek to strengthen is civil society's capacity to act as a watchdog of public institutions," Pasztory said, speaking alongside senior justice officials.



## Implementing Nelson Mandela Rules in prisons



Nelson Mandela, who spent 27 years in prison, inspired the Nelson Mandela Rules – UN standards aimed at protecting the rights of prisoners and preventing torture. From 19 to 21 November, together with the General Directorate of Prisons, we organized a training for 35 senior prison staff on these important rules. The training – based on a new manual developed by the OSCE/ODIHR and Penal Reform International – provided participants with the knowledge and practical tools needed to implement these rules in their day-to-day work.

## Bringing together Assembly, Constitutional Court

Around 35 legal advisers from parliament and the Constitutional Court came together, on 1 November, to exchange views on the Constitutional Court's landmark "Guide on Constitutional Court case-law on individual constitutional complaint 1998-2023", published with the support of the Presence. The participants engaged in discussions with the authors of the Guide and deliberated how it could be utilized in practice. The roundtable was supported by the Presence and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.



## Transition to e-Legislation platform



On 15 November, we supported parliament in hosting the 4th Inter-Institutional Task Force Meeting on e-Legislation, with Swiss funds. The meeting gathered 24 representatives from government, President's Office, Official Gazette, ICT National Agency, Ministry of Justice and other ministries. The presentation focused on the Portal's functionalities. Assembly's Secretary General stressed the importance of continuing joint efforts for full transition to e-Legislation by 2028, acknowledging the progress and asking for further support to future sustainable solutions.

## Voter education for youth and Roma minority



In view of 2025 parliamentary elections, together with the Central Election Commission we organized voter education sessions for youth in Peshkopi, on 5 November, and for the Roma minority in Tirana and Elbasan, on 21 and 27 November, aiming at promoting their engagement in Albania's democratic processes. The meeting with youth also served to introduce RINKrijon, a youth competition. These events are part of our project in support to electoral reform and processes in Albania, funded by Sweden, Switzerland, U.S. Mission to the OSCE and Poland.

## Youth learn about Albania's Communist past

Law students of Tirana University joined our forum on the findings of the publication "Trials of the communist nomenclature (1993-1996)" by the Institute for Democracy, Media and Culture, on 5 November. The event encouraged students' discussions on the subject of the communist past, with a focus on nomenclature trials. On 11 November, the Presence organized a visit for students of Tirana University and international Erasmus students at Bunk'art I museum to learn about the communist past of Albania.



## Women and men's role for peace and security



How can boys and men contribute in promoting the Women, Peace and Security agenda? At a #YouthTalk organized with our Youth Advisory Group, on 7 November, we discussed this with young people and a panel consisting of MP Andia Ulliri, Member of Tirana Municipal Council Gлиндxhet Madhi and civil society activists. The role of women, civil society and youth for peace and security was the focused of a national conference "Women, Peace and Security" co-organized with national and international partners, on 5 November.

## Raising awareness on personal data protection

Together with the Information and Data Protection Commissioner, we were in Korça, on 14 November, to present the findings on unified recommendations for schools and the training module on data protection online. The event gathered over 100 participants – school directors, teachers, students and parents – from Korça Regional Pre-University Directorate institutions. The inclusion of all relevant actors is critical in disseminating information about legislation and procedures and raising awareness on data protection.



## More dialogue with human rights institutions



Enhancing dialogue between national human rights institutions and municipal and civil society representatives is the goal of a series of roundtables that the Presence is organizing with the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination. The first two meetings took place in Peshkopi, on 13 November, and in Tropoja, on 21 November. Speaking at the events, Commissioner Robert Gajda encouraged participants to increase co-operation with national human rights institutions, foster the development of joint strategies and establish a functional network.



## Training on cybercrime, electronic evidence



On 20 November, together with the High Prosecutorial Council, we organized a training on "Cybercrime and electronic evidence", in Vlora. Twenty-five prosecutors and judicial police officers from Vlora Prosecution Office participated in the training, which focused on the challenges of investigating and prosecuting cybercrime offences, as well as on how to practically handle electronic evidence. Through practical insights and peer-to-peer sessions, participants gained practical skills and knowledge for addressing cybercrime-related challenges in Albania.

## Against radicalization, violent extremism

About 145 police officers from Durrës, Shkodra, Kukës, Korça and Pogradec police directorates attended our training sessions aimed at preventing radicalization and violent extremism. Organized in partnership with the National Co-ordination Centre on CVE during October – November, these sessions focused on equipping law enforcement officials from border, community policing and general patrol structures with the knowledge and strategies needed to identify, prevent and respond to emerging threats related to violent extremism and radicalization.



## Criminal offences in public procurement



Together with the School of Magistrates, on 7 and 8 November, the Presence organized a training on investigation and adjudication of criminal offences related to public procurement. The programme was designed based on the areas of interest expressed by SPAK prosecutors and judges of the Special Court against Corruption and Organized Crime, who were also the main beneficiaries of this activity. The event aimed at strengthening their capacities to investigate high-level corruption and transnational organized crime groups.

## Together against environmental offenses

Fifty-two prosecutors, police officers and environmental inspectors from Shkodra, Lezha, Kukës, Berat, Korça and Elbasan joined our training events on identifying, investigating and prosecuting environmental offenses, from 18 to 21 November. Special focus on strengthening interinstitutional co-operation. The training sessions built upon a baseline assessment on inspection, investigation and punishment of environmental contraventions and crimes, as well as on a training needs assessment on environmental governance, both initiated by the Presence.



## Implementing strategy on crime victims



The OSCE Presence is supporting the implementation of the Intersectoral Strategy for the Protection of Crime Victims 2024-2030. On 19 and 20 November, with the Ministry of Justice, we conducted a training for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Strategy. Together with the responsible institutions, the training served as a platform to review the special measures foreseen by the National Strategy Plan, evaluate their implementation so far and point out the areas that need improvement.