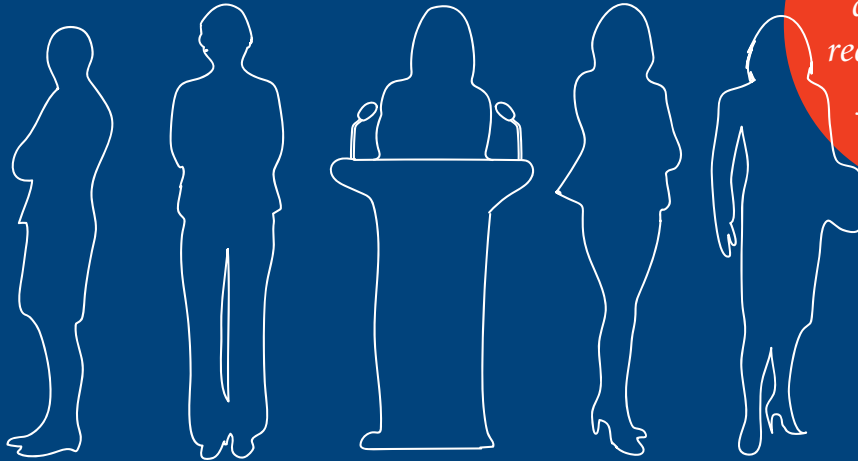


*Key trends,
challenges and
recommendations
for the OSCE*



Second Gender Equality Review Conference

‘FROM COMMITMENT TO ACTION’

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This report should neither be interpreted as official OSCE recommendations based on a consensus decision, nor as the official position of the OSCE Secretariat, or the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights; it reflects opinions expressed individually by participants in the context of this two-day conference.

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FORWARD

As the joint organizers of the second OSCE Gender Equality Review Conference in 2017, we are pleased to present the main results of this event. The Conference aimed to ensure that the important nexus between gender equality, human rights, and comprehensive security advances the Organization's efforts and impact.

The diverse and high-level Conference participation demonstrated the broad commitment to gender equality of all 57 participating States, which all face challenges in achieving gender equality across the three dimensions of security. Over 340 participants, eighty per cent of whom were women, representing OSCE participating States and Executive Structures, international organizations, civil society, and academia discussed strategies and approaches needed to make tangible progress towards gender equality.

We are proud to highlight gains that have been made since the first Gender Equality Review Conference, which took place in 2014. While we note these important achievements in the report, the constructive recommendations from the participants provide us with examples, inspiration, and encouragement to do more. Although substantial progress has been made, implementation of the OSCE gender-related commitments must be intensified. We count on the participating States to increase their efforts to achieve our common goals.

AMBASSADOR CLEMENS KOJA

2017 Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council

AMBASSADOR THOMAS GREMINGER

OSCE Secretary General

MS. INGIBJÖRG SÓLRÚN GÍSLADÓTTIR

ODIHR Director

“

WE ALL BENEFIT WHEN WOMEN'S RIGHTS ARE RESPECTED AND WHEN WOMEN ARE PROTECTED FROM VIOLENCE. WE KNOW THAT WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND EQUAL PARTICIPATION IN THE WORKPLACE LEAD TO SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC GAINS, ALONG WITH SO MANY OTHER SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS. AND WE ARE STRONGER WHEN GIRLS CAN GROW UP AND REALIZE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, AS LEADERS, PEACEMAKERS, ENTREPRENEURS AND CITIZENS OF OUR WORLD.

”

JUSTIN TRUDEAU
Prime Minister of Canada

CONFERENCE SESSION OVERVIEW

The OSCE's Second Gender Equality Review Conference was convened in Vienna, Austria on 12- 13 June 2017 to reflect on progress since the adoption of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the promotion of Gender Equality (Gender Action Plan) and the first Gender Equality Review Conference in 2014, to discuss challenges, share lessons and good practices, and identify recommendations to address gaps in implementing the commitments to promote gender equality. The event was organized by the OSCE Secretariat, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the Austrian Chairperson-in-Office. The conference was attended by a cross-section of representatives of the OSCE participating States, executive structures, civil society organizations and academia. It was opened by a high-level panel session and followed by thematic working sessions focused on six critical themes: women's inclusion in the security sector, women's participation in political and public life, promoting equal economic opportunities for women in the economic sphere, combatting violence against women, institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming, and emerging issues.

The conference provided a platform to discuss more systematic implementation processes and targeted activities across the key OSCE priority areas, while providing space to reflect on emerging issues that impact the promotion of gender equality in the region, including how OSCE's work links to the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

THE CONFERENCE STARTED with a high level opening panel. Speakers provided an overview of progress and challenges in ensuring gender equality centered around the key conference themes. Key-note speakers highlighted the importance of the 2004 Gender Action Plan in 2004, and stressed the leading role of OSCE on mainstreaming gender in security issues, policies and programs, as the largest security organization in the world. The Organization was praised for its essential work in supporting the adoption of National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security, encouraging women's participation in political life, facilitating the development of jurisprudence on women's rights, and engaging with women's organizations to strengthen early warning systems. In their opening remarks, the senior management from the OSCE Secretariat and the ODIHR provided an update on the status of implementation in executive structures. Positive progress was noted on the improvement of internal structures and mechanisms, such as institutionalizing the gender focal points structure and improvements in achieving gender balance within the organization. Positive progress was also noted in regards to women's political representation among OSCE states. At the same time, participants stressed that implementation of key commitments on gender equality has remained uneven, and the OSCE was urged to accelerate progress.

THE FIRST THEMATIC SESSION focused on gender mainstreaming across the conflict cycle and women's participation in the security sector. The panelists argued that the gender perspective must be made an integral part of all security policies, and that while some progress has been achieved we still need to identify ways to break down barriers for women in the security sector. Several speakers discussed the reasons for women's under-representation in the security sector, in particular within the armed forces and law enforcement agencies. They offered various strategies to increase the number and meaningful participation of women in peace and security-related professions and roles. They noted the important role the media and educational institutions can play in transforming stereotypes, changing mindsets and encouraging women to seek a career in security-related professions. Several speakers argued that associations or networks of female professionals are useful platforms for sharing experiences and providing support.

THE SECOND THEMATIC SESSION focused on women's participation in political and public life. The panel highlighted the continued under-representation of women in this area in the OSCE region. It was noted that women entering politics often face double standards and the double burden of household and work responsibilities. Speakers argued that political parties can play an important role in promoting women within their structures and introducing internal quotas to help ensure parity. They also spoke of the particular challenges faced by persons with disabilities or persons belonging to national minorities (such as Roma and Sinti), in particular women, when running for office and called for greater support for removing obstacles to their participation. They reiterated the importance of women's networks and advocacy, as well as combatting gender-based stereotypes.

THE THIRD SESSION focused on equal economic opportunities. Speakers discussed the critical role that women play in managing environmental resources and argued that women are particularly impacted by climate change and should therefore be central to the concept of greening the economy. There was a particular focus on water, a resource that women primarily manage at the household level. Women tend to bear the burden of fetching water in areas where access is poor. Yet they tend to be excluded from decision-making positions in the water sector. The positive example of a country involving women in natural disaster management after floods was noted, with an emphasis on ensuring an active role for women in recovery planning and processes. Speakers also discussed the need to strengthen legal rights and eliminate discrimination, especially in rural areas. They emphasized the need to strengthen women's ownership of key resources such as land and access to credit. Particular barriers in ensuring the economic empowerment of Roma women were discussed. Speakers called for reducing the workload of rural women and enabling their greater access to infrastructure and services.

THE NEXT SESSION centered on the critical issue of gender-based violence. Speakers noted examples of progress, including the existence of positive legal frameworks, the adoption of national action plans to combat violence against women, and training programs for professionals in the justice sector. Yet they also highlighted the challenges of implementing existing legislation on violence against women and the gap between policy and practice. Speakers emphasized the importance of collecting robust data to fully understand

the magnitude of the problem, and to assess whether laws are being effectively implemented. This included a discussion on how to best collect data in order to address the issue of underreported cases, and the need to ensure that data collection and analysis reflect the diverse socio-economic background of groups and issues of vulnerable populations. Several speakers emphasized the importance of addressing gender stereotypes, social norms and behaviors in order to affect positive change. They called for integrated responses to combat gender-based violence.

THE FIFTH SESSION focused on strengthening institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming. Several speakers presented country examples that demonstrate successes and lessons for gender mainstreaming within national institutions and policies. Speakers also discussed institutional mechanisms within the Council of Europe and the United Nations System. Speakers noted progress made by the OSCE in critical areas, such as in institutional structures, staffing, the development of gender action plans by field offices, and positive examples of gender specific projects. They also suggested there has been an overall increase in projects within OSCE that are gender mainstreamed and presented a number of lessons and recommendations for OSCE. These ranged from the need for improved accountability, results frameworks, dedicated budgets, training, and dedicated staff with gender expertise.

THE FINAL SESSION was devoted to emerging issues and the way forward on implementing the 2004 Gender Action Plan. Key emerging issues discussed included discrimination based on religion, terrorism, cyber security and threats, including online child abuse and exploitation, particular issues facing youth and internally displaced persons (IDPs), as well as women's movements more generally. The session's participants noted that Muslim women encounter multiple forms of discrimination and are increasingly facing attacks in public spaces or online, especially when visibly or otherwise identifiable as Muslim. Speakers also advocated for a proactive approach to understanding and addressing the gender dynamics in violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT) and suggested that local community interventions are needed to prevent and counter VERLT. Additionally, speakers discussed the need to counter online child abuse and exploitation, which affects women and girls disproportionately, and to address cyber security threats more generally. On other emerging issues, speakers urged the OSCE to better reflect the risks facing internally displaced persons and refugees, whose numbers have increased dramatically in recent times. Speakers from civil society raised the importance of forming cross-cutting coalitions, supported by OSCE and the United Nations, to counter threats to women's rights globally. They also advocated for the establishment of crosscutting coalitions to address the backlash to gender equality and women's rights.

THE CLOSING SPEAKERS SUMMARIZED the key issues discussed during the conference and called for a move from commitment to action to meet the outstanding agreements and accelerate progress on gender equality. Common lessons that emerged during the conference were presented, ranging from the need to develop strategies to engage men and boys in gender issues, strengthen women's networks, address gender-based stereotypes, ensure gender sensitive education and raise awareness of women's potential. The speakers summarized the commitments that have been implemented across the key dimensions that OSCE works in, noting substantial progress, but they also argued that renewed effort is needed in critical areas like improving the representation of women at all levels of decision making, including in conflict resolution and peace keeping, gender and environmental security, improving women's labour force participation and entrepreneurship, improving data collection and training to prevent gender-based violence, as well as implementing the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention).

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

As the largest regional security organization in the world, the OSCE plays an important role in advancing gender equality. The 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality is the primary guiding OSCE document on this topic. It was supplemented by subsequent Ministerial Council decisions, including on women in conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict rehabilitation; preventing and combating violence against women; women's participation in political and public life; and promoting equal opportunity for women in the economic sphere. Several other Ministerial Council Decisions acknowledge the importance of gender mainstreaming.¹ The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide an important framework for the OSCE participating States, with gender mainstreamed in all goals and in particular goal number 16 on peace and justice and goal number five on gender equality. Thirteen years after the adoption of the 2004 Gender Action Plan, this report provides an overview of desk research as well as main recommendations and conclusions discussed at the 2017 Second Gender Equality Review Conference of the OSCE, assessing progress towards achieving gender equality in the region. The report takes into account progress made since the 2014 Gender Equality Review Conference. It highlights efforts, gaps and priorities in five critical thematic areas of OSCE work, paying particular attention to women subjected to multiple forms of discrimination. The report finds encouraging progress in key areas, such as gender mainstreaming within OSCE structures. At the same time, the pace of progress has stalled or reversed in critical areas like women's economic empowerment, and it has been uneven across OSCE participating States. The report therefore includes key recommendations coming out of the Second Gender Equality Review Conference for measures to achieve progress towards gender equality in the OSCE region.

¹The OSCE Ministerial Council has since 1999 adopted several decisions that have specific focus on gender issues: 2000 OSCE Action Plan for Gender Issues (PC.DEC/353); 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (MC.DEC/14/04); 2005 Women in Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation (MC.DEC/14/05); 2005 Preventing and Combating Violence against Women (MC.DEC/15/05); 2009 Women's Participation in Political and Public Life (MC.DEC/7/09); 2011 Promoting Equal Opportunity for Women in the Economic Sphere (MC.DEC/10/11); 2014 Preventing and Combating Violence against Women (MC.DEC/07/14). Furthermore, there are several MC decisions on all three dimensions that have integrated gender issues or called for greater women's participation in OSCE programs and activities. In the 1st dimension there are decisions on the conflict cycle, early warning and mediation support as well as post-conflict rehabilitation (MC.DEC 3/11), SALW (MC.DEC 8/13, MC.DEC 10/14, MC.DOC 3/16), and preventing and countering VERT (MC.DEC 4/15, MC.DOC 1/16); in the 2nd dimension a decision on migration (MC.DEC 5/09), energy sustainability (MC.DEC 5/13) and disaster risk reduction (MC.DEC 6/14); and in the 3rd dimension decisions on improving the situation of Roma and Sinti women (MC.DEC 3/03, MC.DEC 6/08, MC.DEC 4/13), and combating trafficking in human beings (MC.DEC 2/03, MC.DEC 4/06, MC.DEC 14/06).

I.

**GENDER
MAINSTREAMING
ACROSS THE CONFLICT
CYCLE AND WOMEN'S
PARTICIPATION
IN THE SECURITY
SECTOR**

—

“IF WOMEN ARE NOT AT THE NEGOTIATION TABLE AND DON’T PLAY KEY ROLES IN DECISION MAKING AFTER A CONFLICT, PEACE AGREEMENTS ARE UNLIKELY TO BE SUSTAINABLE. WOMEN OFTEN LEAD DIALOGUE PROCESSES TO STOP THE SLIDE INTO CONFLICT AND TO BUILD CONSENSUS AFTER WAR AND RECONCILIATION. MORE WOMEN IN OUR POLICE AND MILITARY MAKE FOR MORE EFFECTIVE INSTITUTIONS TO ENSURE OUR SECURITY.”

LAKSHMI PURI

Deputy Executive Director of UN Women

SUMMARY OF OSCE COMMITMENTS AND KEY ISSUES

Recognizing that the inclusion and empowerment of women in the political-military dimension is critical for comprehensive security, the 2004 Gender Action Plan tasked the OSCE to promote the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, and assist participating States in developing programs that enable women to participate in the promotion of peace and security. Several OSCE Ministerial Council Decisions provide a framework for the integration of a gender perspective in the security domain, including the decision on Women in Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation (MC.DEC/14/05), and the decision on Elements of the Conflict Cycle (MC.DEC/3/11). The 2014 Gender Equality Review Conference report cited positive examples of progress made in this regard, but also

highlighted that in certain areas more needs to be done to fully implement existing commitments. It found that as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the OSCE is in a unique position to lead on a gender mainstreamed security model, given its geographic span across three continents with more than a billion people, its comprehensive approach to security with three critical dimensions and its field operations, allowing the organization to respond to crises as they arise.



ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES



Globally, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of an inclusive approach to security which responds to different security needs of men and women and addresses the differential impact of security policies on them. This recognition and various international commitments have yet to fully translate into concrete and measurable outcomes. Despite a growing trend in women's participation in the armed forces, on average women still make up just 10 per cent of armed forces in OSCE countries, with large variations among the participating States.

Negative global trends are also reflected within the OSCE executive structures, where the number of women with police and military expertise remains very low. There has been progress in the inclusion of a gender perspective, including a steady increase in gender mainstreamed projects within OSCE's politico-military dimension. The Organization promotes the women, peace and security agenda through a range of activities, including the production and dissemination of tools and guidelines, capacity building and support to policy development (including National Action Plans and Strategies). The

² This estimate is based on the following sources: OSCE Information Exchange on the code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, 2016; and NATO Annual Review on Gender in Military, 2015.



3%

of the military
in peacekeeping
operations
are **women**



the majority
employed as
support staff³

For OSCE,
ONLY 14%
of monitors in the Special
Monitoring Mission
in Ukraine were women
at the time of the
Conference.

OSCE has been an active contributor to global efforts to implement UNSCR 1325 through contributing to and organizing workshops and events for key stakeholders. The OSCE Gender Section has carried out activities on National Action Plans on 1325, including the 2016 National Action Plan Academy for 14 participating States, in order to address challenges, including low women's participation in the security sector.

OSCE gender and security activities seek to systematically integrate a gender perspective into the delivery of security and within security institutions through guidance and capacity building.

The Organization's Field operations, Institutions and the Secretariat support participating States to prevent and counter discriminatory practices in the security sector and to integrate a gender perspective into security issues, including the prevention and countering of violent extremism and radicalization that can lead to terrorism (VERLT). The OSCE Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, has offered courses to women leaders since 2014 to increase the presence of women among border security forces in OSCE countries. These courses aim to improve professional competencies of participants and promote effective cross-border cooperation. Women's participation also remains low in police forces in OSCE participating States and OSCE field operations have worked to reduce discriminatory practices and to empower female police officers.

FROM 1990 TO 2016

14

peace agreements
signed by representatives
of women's groups⁴

1400

peace agreements
signed worldwide

³ United Nations. 2015. Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Available online: http://www.unwomen.org/~media/files/un_per_cent20women/wps/highlights/unw-global-study-1325-2015.pdf.

⁴ International Peace Institute, Reimagining Peacemaking: Women's Roles in Peace Processes, 2015.



RECOMMENDATIONS

LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK IN PARTICIPATING STATES

- + Addressing women's underrepresentation in the security sector should become a priority and the focus of attention for participating States as well as OSCE executive structures.
- + Participating States should nominate more women as candidates to work in the field of politico-military issues.
- + National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security need to be developed in an inclusive way, involving different groups and include concrete measures to increase women's participation in the security sector.
- + Participating States should use the OSCE to accelerate national, regional and international commitments on Women, Peace and Security, and continue to focus on the implementation of these commitments.



Out of **150 HEADS OF MISSION** of OSCE field operations to date, **ONLY 11 HAVE BEEN WOMEN**⁵

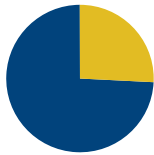


When women are included in peace processes there is a 20% increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least 2 years, and a 35% increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least 15 years.⁶

- + There is a need to strengthen support for women's organizations working in the area of conflict prevention and resolution and to support these organizations to become sustainable.
- + Participating States need to accelerate efforts to collect and share best practices in the OSCE region on how to promote women's participation in the security sector, including in the military, the police, and border security and management services.
- + Transforming deep-seated norms and biases that contribute to women's under-representation in the security sector is critical. One way to do so is through giving greater visibility to women working in the security sector, and showcasing female police and military officers as role models, including through the media.
- + Efforts to address gender-based discrimination, including sexual harassment, in the security sector should be strengthened through appropriate policies, awareness raising, training, and monitoring.

⁵ UN Women, Facts and figures. Peace and security, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures>, consulted in June 2017.

⁶ OSCE, Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan on the Promotion of Gender Equality, 2016. Data until 29th December 2016.



Women make up **26%** of the EU's civilian Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) missions⁷

OSCE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

- + There is a need to fully integrate a gender perspective into the OSCE's work across the conflict cycle, and to improve the understanding of why gender-mainstreaming enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of the OSCE's security mandate and related activities.
- + Gender mainstreaming of OSCE activities and efforts to increase women's participation are essential steps to achieve an effective and efficient security sector that takes into account the security needs and perceptions of the whole population.
- + The OSCE should enhance its efforts to recruit more women for positions in the politico-military dimension. Attention should also be paid to language used in recruitment, to ensure that job postings, for example, do not contain language or requirements, such as military ranks, that might unintentionally deter or disqualify female candidates.

OSCE PROGRAMMES, STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES

- + The OSCE should develop and implement more targeted projects and activities to address remaining challenges, such as the low number of women in the security sector and related fields of expertise like VERLT, cyber security and the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.
- + The OSCE should support establishing women's networks and regional platforms for women in the security sector to facilitate networking, learning, and sharing of experiences.
- + The development and implementation of special measures are needed to achieve gender balance, as women continue to be under-represented in the prevention, management and resolution of conflict worldwide.
- + To close data and knowledge gaps, the OSCE and other international organizations should invest in gender-sensitive and responsive conflict analysis and in collecting and analyzing sex-disaggregated data.
- + A gender perspective is critical to addressing the emerging threat of violent extremism and radicalization, as women and men are both being radicalized and are key to opposing radicalization. OSCE field missions can facilitate improved sharing of knowledge and good practices to strengthen the role of women, including through women's organizations, in countering violent extremism.

WOMEN in peace processes between 1992 and 2011:



2% - CHIEF MEDIATORS
4% - WITNESSES AND SIGNATORIES
9% - NEGOTIATORS⁸

⁷ Meiske, Maline, "Gender Balancing in CSDP Missions." Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich, 2015.

⁸ UN Women, Facts and figures. Peace and security, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures>, consulted in June 2017.

II.
**PROMOTING
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
FOR WOMEN
IN THE ECONOMIC
SPHERE**



“ENFORCING WOMEN’S ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY AND IN THE PROTECTION OF ENVIRONMENT SHOULD BECOME A PRIORITY FOR THE OSCE AND ITS PARTICIPATING STATES. WE NEED TO GRANT WOMEN ACCESS TO FINANCIAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO LET THEM BECOME REAL ECONOMIC PLAYERS. IT’S NOT JUST A MATTER OF GENDER EQUALITY: WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN ITSELF IS A DRIVER FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH.”

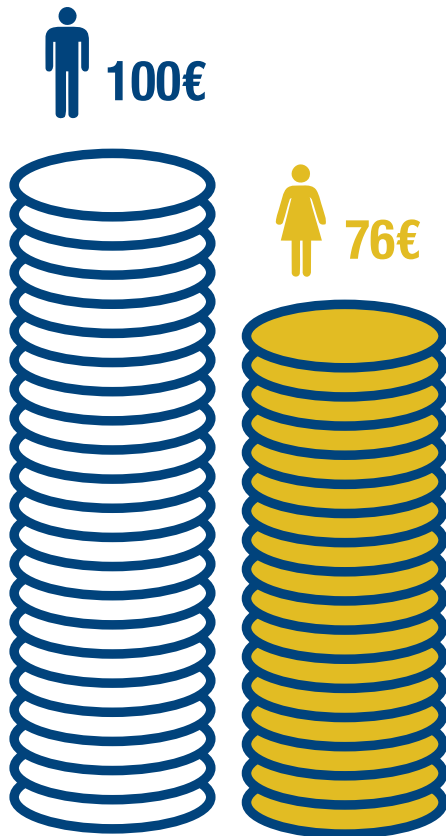
AMBASSADOR ALESSANDRO AZZONI
Permanent Representative of Italy

SUMMARY OF OSCE COMMITMENTS AND KEY ISSUES

Ensuring equal access to economic resources is an important priority in the 2004 Gender Action Plan. The Ministerial Council Decision 10/11 calls for promoting equal opportunity for women in the economic sphere and for specific measures to overcome barriers that hinder women’s economic empowerment. The 2014 review found this to be an area with little positive progress, plagued by a lack of coordinated and strategic response and limited information sharing on policies and good practices.



ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES



GENDER PAY GAP⁹

At the current pace, it will take

170 YEARS

to close the gender pay gap.¹⁰

Despite a growing recognition of the importance of women's economic empowerment for sustainable growth, progress around the world has been uneven. Restrictions to women's participation in the labour market are costly, as their increased participation has been a key driver of growth in Europe over the past decade.¹¹ A recent study by Mckinsey found that if "women participate[d] in the economy identically to men... [it] would add up to \$28 trillion, or 26 per cent, to annual global GDP by 2025." Another recent study found that by improving gender equality in the European Union, GDP per capita in the region would increase by 6.1 per cent to 9.6 per cent by 2050, which amounts to 1.95 to 3.15 trillion euro.¹²

Yet globally, just about half of women are in the labour market, compared with 76 per cent of men. For some women belonging to minorities, such as Roma and Sinti women, labour market prospects are particularly challenging. In some areas, the employment rate for Roma women is as low as 16 per cent.¹³ Women's labour force participation even decreased in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia between 1990 and 2013, and it varies widely among OSCE participating States. Though the share of women in informal employment is lower among citizens in the OSCE area than in other regions, women who work informally are particularly vulnerable (e.g. migrant workers or domestic workers excluded from

⁹ UN Women, Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016: Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights, 2015. - ¹⁰ World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2016. Available online: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/>. - ¹¹ World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2016. - ¹² European Institute for Gender Equality, Economic Benefits of Gender Equality in the EU, 2016. - ¹³ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey: Roma – Selected Findings, 2016

Data from France, Germany, Sweden and Turkey suggest that
WOMEN EARN BETWEEN 31% & 75% LESS THAN MEN
over their lifetimes.¹⁴

labour protections).¹⁵ When women do work, they earn less than men, making 76 euros for every 100 euros a man makes globally on average.¹⁶ Women's educational gains have not narrowed the pay gap. Globally, there is currently close to parity in primary and secondary education. The remaining gender gaps in primary and secondary education are just 2 per cent and 3 per cent, respectively. The rate of enrolment of females in tertiary education has surpassed that of men.¹⁷ In OECD countries, the first time entry rate to tertiary education for women under 25 is on average 11 percentage points higher than for men.¹⁸ Yet women's lower earnings persist across every level of education. The average gender pay gap is estimated to be 24 per cent globally.¹⁹ Discrimination, occupational segregation and greater constraints for women in balancing employment and family responsibilities are some of the culprits. The pay gap has increased in some OSCE participating States, and narrowed in others.²⁰ This difference in performance among states is under-pinned by varied levels of legal protections. Twenty-two OSCE

participating States lack a law that prohibits discrimination in hiring practices. A number of OSCE countries have occupational restrictions for women, even though the World Bank found that the wage gap is lower in countries that have no job restrictions on women's work.²¹

At the OSCE, there has been an increase in the total number of the second dimension projects with some gender mainstreaming, but a decrease in economic projects that report to be fully gender mainstreamed since 2014. OSCE activities have focused on areas like ensuring balanced participation of women and men among participants, experts and on panels focused on environmental issues, gender sensitive migration and migrants' rights, or women's entrepreneurship training.

¹⁴ UN Women, Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016: Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights, 2015. - ¹⁵ UN Women, Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016: Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights, 2015. - ¹⁶ UN Women, Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016: Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights, 2015. - ¹⁷ World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2016. - ¹⁸ OECD, Education at a Glance 2017: OECD Indicators, 2017. - ¹⁹ UN Women, Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016: Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights, 2015. - ²⁰ UN Women, Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016: Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights, 2015. - ²¹ World Bank Group, Women, Business and the Law. Getting to Equal, 2015



RECOMMENDATIONS

LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK IN PARTICIPATING STATES

- + Greater access to property rights and land, financial and natural resources is essential for ensuring women's economic empowerment. Participating States should support projects that increase women's awareness of their rights and how to access the resources.
- + Efforts should focus on raising women's financial and business knowledge, creating a positive enabling environment and supportive policies for women entrepreneurs, and strengthening their skills through capacity building and mentoring programs. These efforts should particularly target rural women, and women from minority communities, such as Roma and Sinti women.
- + Participating States should support women in ensuring private and working life balance through adequate policies. Further support should be directed to ensuring paid maternity and parental leave, particularly by encouraging men to share responsibilities related to the family and to take paternity leave, flexible forms of employment such as telecommuting, and support for re-entry into work and retraining after parental leave.

OSCE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

- + Within OSCE programs, the economic and environmental dimension requires additional capacity building, technical assistance and provision of supportive tools to help projects incorporate gender elements.
- + Specific gender trainings for environmental and economic issues would increase the capacity of OSCE professional staff to include gender aspects in their work.

OSCE PROGRAMMES, STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES

- + OSCE should support the identification and removal of legal barriers to women's full economic participation, such as those restricting women from working in certain jobs or industries, and advocate for measures such as non-discriminatory hiring and recruitment policies and equal pay for equal work.
- + There should be more exchanges and cooperation within OSCE and among participating States to share legal and other good practices and lessons learned on women's economic empowerment.
- + While promoting equal opportunity for women in the economic sphere, particular attention should be paid to women facing multiple forms of discrimination, on grounds of their ethnicity, race, religion, disability and/

or age. Targeted, complementary interventions are recommended to encourage their greater economic participation. This includes identifying and supporting projects that would ensure economic opportunities for Roma and Sinti women.

- + Women are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, but they are also critical resource managers and problem solvers who play an important role in the green economy. Given the threat to security that climate change and environmental issues represent, this area should be prioritized, and women should be a central focus of any such efforts.

- + OSCE should support activities to understand and address women's role in the informal economy, including paid and unpaid labor, in particular in post-conflict situations, when supporting equitable economic opportunities is needed in order to not further entrench gender inequality.



of OSCE participating States have a law that mandates non-discrimination in hiring (in labor codes, or other laws and regulations, such as gender equality laws or penal codes).²²

²² Women, Business and the Law database. Available online: <http://wbl.worldbank.org>, consulted in June 2017.

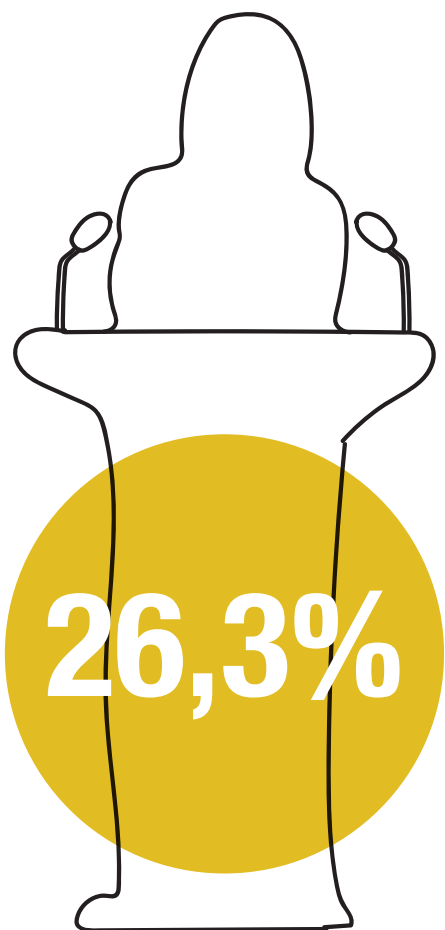
III.
**ADVANCING
WOMEN'S
PARTICIPATION
IN POLITICAL AND
PUBLIC LIFE**



**“WE MUST CONTINUE TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUALITY,
WOMEN’S RIGHTS AND WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION
ACROSS THE OSCE PARTICIPATING STATES, ACROSS
POLITICAL LINES, ACROSS RELIGIOUS LINES,
ACROSS ANY LINES. WOMEN’S RIGHTS ARE CRUCIAL
TO HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY, STABILITY AND
PROSPERITY IN THE OSCE REGION, AND WE MUST NOT
ALLOW THESE RIGHTS TO BE COMPROMISED.”**

MS. KATARZYNA GARDAPKHADZE
First Deputy Director of ODIHR

²³ OSCE Ministerial Council Decision 7/09 on Women’s Participation in Political and Public Life, Art 1.



OF WOMEN
*in lower house of national
parliaments in OSCE
participating States,
in May 2017²⁴*

SUMMARY OF OSCE COMMITMENTS AND KEY ISSUES

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is mandated to assist OSCE participating States in promoting women's political participation, monitoring and reporting on women's participation in elections, and strengthening democratic institutions for advancing gender equality, as described in the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. OSCE MC Decision 07/09 on Women's Participation in Political and Public Life calls on the participating States to "consider providing for specific measures to achieve the goal of gender balance in all legislative, judicial and executive bodies, including security services". The 2014 review found a continued under-representation of women in public institutions, with a wide disparity among participating member states, and unsatisfactory progress on ensuring gender parity in politics. Specific commitments have been also undertaken regarding the situation of Roma and Sinti women, and in particular towards ensuring their effective and equal participation in public and political life.²⁵

²⁴Excluding the Holy See. Inter-Parliamentary Union, Women in Politics, 2017. - ²⁵See the OSCE Action Plan for Roma and Sinti and MCD 4/13.



ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Women's under-representation in democratic institutions continues to be an issue across most OSCE participating States. Women's representation in decision making bodies, such as at ministry levels, is at about a quarter of the share of men in such positions across OSCE participating States. These figures vary widely across countries, with shares of women in some countries 50 per cent or higher, but in others in single digits. The legislative domain has seen little progress. The share of women in the lower house of parliament in OSCE member states stands at 26.6 per cent as of May 2017, and this represents only a marginal improvement since the 2014 review when there were 25.3 per cent of women in national parliaments. Approximately one third of the OSCE participating States have reached the target of 30 per cent of women in parliaments promoted by the Beijing Platform for Action. Only three OSCE countries²⁶ have reached the target of 40 per cent of women in national parliaments stemming from the Council of Europe Recommendation Rec(2003)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making. If maintained at this pace of change, without further active intervention, gender parity in OSCE national legislatures will not be achieved until more than half a century from now.²⁷

OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is mandated by the 2004 OSCE Gender Action Plan to “assist the OSCE participating States in developing effective measures to bring about the equal participation of women in democratic processes...” and it works actively across the OSCE region and with a wide array of actors including women's parliamentary networks, political parties and civil society to advance political participation of women. Many of the activities have a particular focus on women facing multiple discrimination, such as women of Roma and Sinti origin, or women with disabilities. ODIHR facilitates and supports institutional change, knowledge sharing and capacity building for advancing women's representation, role and influence in political and public life, particularly in decision-making positions.

Through its election observation activities, ODIHR examines women's participation as voters, candidates and elected representatives; their involvement in leadership roles within state institutions, electoral commissions and political parties; and how the legal framework and media structures affect women, as well as men.

²⁶ Women in national parliaments. Inter-Parliamentary Union, May 2017. - ²⁷ See ODIHR, Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan, available here: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/78432>

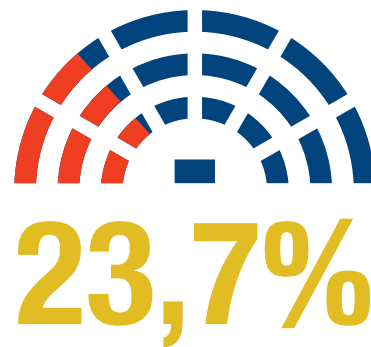


RECOMMENDATIONS

LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK IN PARTICIPATING STATES

- + All political actors should be encouraged to promote equal participation of women and men in political parties, with a view to achieving better gender-balanced representation in elected offices at all levels of decision-making, in accordance with the Ministerial Council Decision 7/09 on Women's Participation in Political and Public Life. Participating States should work with political parties and parliaments to make their structures, rules, procedures and programmes gender sensitive and women friendly.
- + Participating States are encouraged to take part in exchange of good practices in the area of women's political empowerment, which could be facilitated by ODIHR as the best placed entity within the OSCE system for such initiatives.
- + Participating States should support organization of international women's fora, establishment of network of women's NGOs in the OSCE region along with capacity building programmes for women leaders.
- + A renewed commitment of the participating States is needed to advance the participation of women in political and public life through specific measures, including possible legislative and policy measures to facilitate a more balanced participation of women and men in political and public life and especially in decision-making. Specific attention should be paid to the participation of women facing multiple discrimination, such as Roma and Sinti women or women with disabilities.

- + To advance women's political participation, participating States need to demonstrate political will to the cause by introducing and strengthening strategies that promote balance between private and professional life, developing mentoring programs for women candidates, and ensuring financial access to resources for women candidates and politicians.
- + Participating States should support comprehensive gender mainstreaming of all their state programs and policies, appoint gender focal points to support gender mainstreaming efforts and support gender budgeting initiatives.



women in ministerial positions in OSCE member states, as of January 2017²⁸

²⁸ Excluding United States, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Uzbekistan, and the Holy See. Inter-Parliamentary Union, Women in Politics, 2017.

OSCE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

- + OSCE should encourage the institutionalization of gender equality principles in OSCE institutions, such as the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly through, for example, promoting gender balanced delegations.

OSCE PROGRAMMES, STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES

- + Promoting women's solidarity as a requisite for further change and advancing women's rights in the OSCE region along with cooperation with civil society and women's organizations and building gender equality coalitions is encouraged.
- + Continuing work with democratic institutions, such as political parties and parliaments to make their structures, rules, procedures and programmes gender sensitive is necessary for further advancement of women's participation in political and public life.
- + Ensuring exchange of good practices from OSCE participating States where specific measures and institutionalization of gender equality principles have made a meaningful impact remains desirable.
- + Promoting diversity in public and political life by ensuring participation of all underrepresented groups, such as migrant women, minority (including Roma and Sinti) women etc. in OSCE activities.
- + Further measures are needed to strengthen the capacities of women to stand for public office, as well as to support non-biased discussion and portrayal of male and female politicians in public life. Participating States, OSCE and civil society organizations should support such efforts.

IV.
**PREVENTING VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN**

■

“THERE HAVE BEEN 13 OSCE-WIDE COMMITMENTS IN [THE AREA OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN]. THESE COMMITMENTS COVER MANY FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, RANGING FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT. THERE IS MUCH MORE THAT WE CAN AND SHOULD BE DOING NOW, AND WORKING TO ACHIEVE A REGIONAL PLAN FOR ACTION SHOULD BE AMONG THEM.”

AMBASSADOR MELANNE VERVEER

Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Gender

SUMMARY OF OSCE COMMITMENTS AND KEY ISSUES

Gender-based violence is a violation of human rights and a critical, often hidden problem that threatens the emotional, physical, and economic safety and security of its victims. Victims span classes and cultures and include women and men, boys and girls, though women and girls are disproportionately impacted. Women from poor households, refugees, certain minorities and migrant women are also particularly vulnerable.²⁹ Gender-based violence takes many forms and includes domestic violence, sexual violence in conflict, sexual harassment, harmful practices and emerging issues such as online violence against women. It is often rooted in gender-related factors, such as the ideology of men's entitlement and privilege over women and social norms regarding masculinity.³⁰

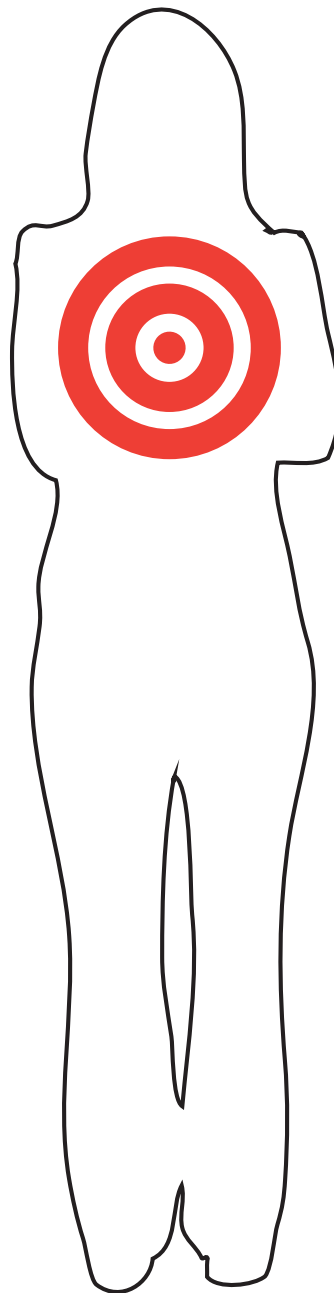
²⁹ OSCE. 2016. Combatting Violence against Women in the OSCE Region. - ³⁰ CEDAW Committee, General Recommendation 35 on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19, 2017.

According to the WHO,

35%

*have experienced physical
and/or sexual violence
in their lifetime*

Given OSCE's comprehensive approach to security and the importance of individual security of women and men, violence against women is a priority issue for the Organization. The 2004 Gender Action Plan, followed by MC Decisions 15/05 and 7/14 on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women outline priority areas for intervention. The 2014 gender review cited positive activities within OSCE structures and field operations, highlighting in particular the establishment of the MenEngage Network to promote non-violent masculinity norms and efforts to engage men. OSCE's activities in the area of combating violence against women have particularly taken on board the idea that engaging men is critical to the success of many interventions focusing on advancing gender equality.





47

*participating States have domestic violence legislation*³¹

49

*have legislation that specifically addresses sexual harassment.*³²



ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Understanding the magnitude of violence against women and assessing progress over time continues to be an issue. Only 11 per cent of women who experience sexual assault report it.³³ A survey in 28 EU countries found that half of women surveyed experienced sexual harassment, 43 per cent experienced psychological violence by a partner, and 22 per cent of women experienced sexual or physical violence by a partner.³⁴ Gender-based violence has economic consequences. One study found that violence against women costs the EU 226 billion euros per year.³⁵ Research to better understand the magnitude of the problem and to devise responses has been ongoing in OSCE member states. To help fill data gaps, 43 countries in the OSCE region have conducted different types of surveys over time on violence against women.

OSCE executive structures and institutions work to support participating States to combat gender-based violence through a wide range of projects and initiatives, at the local, national, regional and global level. In 2016, the OSCE Gender Section in co-operation with the German Chair-in-Office organized a high-level conference to share good practices and identify ways forward on combatting violence against women. It also recently launched a study in 10 participating States on the wellbeing and safety of women. The office of the Representative for the Freedom of the Media is implementing a project on the online safety

44 OSCE participating States have signed and **24** ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention).

³¹ OSCE. 2016. Combatting Violence against Women in the OSCE Region. - ³² Women, Business and the Law database. Available online: wbl.worldbank.org, supplemented by State Department Human Rights Reports. - ³³ OSCE. 2016. Combatting Violence against Women in the OSCE Region. - ³⁴ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. 2014. Violence against women: an EU-wide survey - ³⁵ Walby, Sylvia and Philippa Olive. 2013. "European Added Value of a Directive on Combatting Violence Against Women." European Union. Available online: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2013/504467/IPOL-JOIN_ET\(2013\)504467\(ANN02\)_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2013/504467/IPOL-JOIN_ET(2013)504467(ANN02)_EN.pdf)

of female journalists, and the ODIHR reviews upon request national legal frameworks, including those on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Many OSCE field operations also implement a range of activities, from engaging men and boys in communities to become allies in ending gender-based violence, to support to maintaining a national statistical database on violence against women.

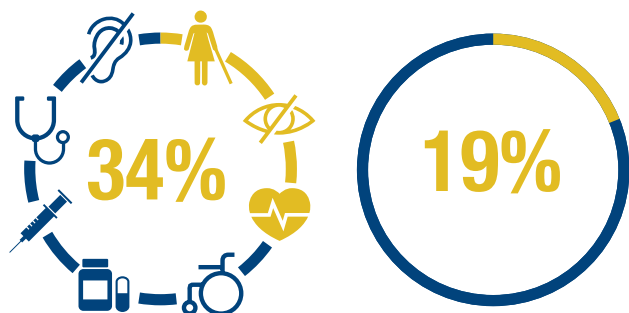
The legal and policy framework in most OSCE participating States has improved and many countries have adopted laws and national action plans to combat violence against women and girls. Forty-seven OSCE participating States have passed laws addressing domestic violence,³⁶ and 49 participating States have legislation that specifically addresses sexual harassment. In addition, 44 OSCE participating States have signed and 24 have ratified the Istanbul Convention.³⁷ This is an increase since the 2014 gender review when 21 OSCE participating States had signed and 15 had ratified it. The Istanbul Convention sets comprehensive standards to prevent and combat violence against women, and provides guidance for policy development, resource allocation, data collection and research, and measures for prevention and protection.



RECOMMENDATIONS

LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK IN PARTICIPATING STATES

- + OSCE and participating States should work together to prepare and implement an OSCE-wide regional plan of action to address violence against women.
- + Participating States that have not ratified the Istanbul Convention should do so. OSCE should provide support to participating States to ratify and implement the Convention.
- + Additional focus should be placed on concrete actions to support the implementation of OSCE commitments and national legal and policy frameworks which aim to combat violence against women. This includes continuing efforts to harmonize national law with the international standards and the Istanbul Convention and improving the monitoring laws that have been put in place, to ensure that they are indeed being



34% of women with a health problem or disability reported having experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a partner in their lifetime, compared to 19% of women without a health problem or disability, according to an EU-wide survey.³⁸

³⁶ OSCE. 2016. Combatting Violence against Women in the OSCE Region. - ³⁷ Available online: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/210/signatures> - ³⁸ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. 2014. Violence against women: an EU-wide survey

implemented.

- + Data is critical to ensure that there is an adequate understanding of the magnitude and of the impacts of gender-based violence. Participating States and OSCE should continue to prioritize comprehensive collection of disaggregated data and statistics regarding all forms of violence.
- + Urgent action is needed to ensure the safety of women and children who are victims of various forms of violence in conflict, and to meet their needs for secure shelter, childcare, education and employment.
- + The OSCE and participating States should support capacity building and training programs for the judiciary, public prosecutors and law enforcement.
- + A focus on challenging stereotypes also needs to be more fully integrated into national education systems and curriculums of Participating States.
- + Participating States need to develop comprehensive, multi-sectoral responses to combatting gender-based violence, and allocate sufficient funds and resources to these efforts. This applies to the work of international organizations, bilateral cooperation, cooperation between legislative authorities, law enforcement agencies and social services, such as crisis centers providing psychological and legal support to victims and engaging in preventive work with disadvantaged families.

OSCE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

- + Male OSCE officials should serve as role models in promoting non-violent masculinity. They could be enlisted as key partners and promoters of relevant messages through awareness raising and a public dialogue in support of the OSCE survey on gender-

based violence, or through efforts to promote a culture of zero tolerance for sexual harassment.

- + OSCE should continue to promote an institutional culture of zero tolerance for sexual harassment in the workplace. Training that may be already provided on this through the General Orientation induction program or through the Learning and Development Unit in the Department of Human Resources should be reviewed and strengthened, as needed.

OSCE PROGRAMMES, STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES

- + OSCE should use the data from the ongoing OSCE survey on the well-being and safety of women as an opportunity to fill critical data gaps, and to raise awareness and facilitate public dialogue, across OSCE participating States and through the MenEngage Network.
- + An OSCE-wide campaign against gender stereotypes led by political leaders aimed at changing mindsets and social attitudes should be rolled out.
- + Trafficking in human beings is an urgent issue, and women and girls remain the primary victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. The dramatic increase in the number of refugees and internally displaced persons, the expansion of armed conflict zones, and the rise of terrorism are exacerbating the problem. Particular attention should be paid to increasing the cooperation among state bodies in the investigation of crimes committed against these women and children, and putting in place measures to prevent them.

V.
**OSCE INSTITUTIONAL
MECHANISMS
FOR GENDER
MAINSTREAMING**

—

“WHILE WE ARE MAKING PROGRESS, THERE IS STILL A LOT TO BE DONE. THIS REVIEW CONFERENCE PRESENTS US WITH A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO IDENTIFY CREATIVE SOLUTIONS TO ADDRESS THE REMAINING GAPS AND CHALLENGES. AND WHILE WE FOCUS ON WHAT WE NEED TO DO TO IMPLEMENT OUR GENDER COMMITMENTS AND HOW WE NEED TO DO IT, WE SHOULD NOT FORGET THE REASON WHY. GENDER EQUALITY, APART FROM BEING A MATTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS, IS A PREREQUISITE FOR ACHIEVING AND MAINTAINING PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE OSCE REGION.”

AMBASSADOR PAUL BEKKERS

Director of the Office of the Secretary General, OSCE

SUMMARY OF OSCE COMMITMENTS AND KEY ISSUES

The 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality mandates gender mainstreaming within OSCE's structures and working environment, activities, policies, and programs. OSCE encourages the development of gender action plans and strategies, applies a Gender Marker system to track gender-responsiveness across projects, and has piloted a Gender Marker at the program level. The 2014 review recommended a number of actions to strengthen institutional approaches for gender mainstreaming, including through the appointment of gender focal points in each structure and appointing full time, experienced gender advisers in field operations and institutions, conduct regular review of achievements in Gender Action Plan implementation, and increased collaboration with other international entities and processes (e.g. Helsinki+40).



*of OSCE Missions in 2016
were headed by women*



ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

OSCE has continued to make progress in mainstreaming gender within its institutional structures and program

activities. Among OSCE staff, the percentage of women in professional posts in 2016 was 50 per cent. Yet women are less likely to be in senior management positions, representing 28 per cent of staff at that level in 2016, a slight decrease compared to the previous five years. In addition, men are less likely to work in the human rights dimension, while women are vastly underrepresented in the politico-military dimension.

There are some positive trends visible in gender mainstreaming in OSCE projects. The 2016 annual evaluation report on the implementation of the 2004



10 OUT OF 17

*field missions have mission-specific Gender Action Plans or Implementation Strategies.*³⁹

Gender Action Plan showed a significant increase in projects reported to have a gender mainstreaming element, including increases in the critical politico-military and the economic and environmental dimensions, from 318 in 2014 and 317 in 2015, to 378 in 2016. Thirteen percent of these projects had gender equality as a principal objective. However, since the total number of projects is not known, it is unclear whether this number reflects an increase in the percentage of overall projects with a gender component. With 10 out of 17 field operations developing gender strategies or action plans, field operations are making concrete efforts to address gender inequality. OSCE has also further institutionalized the Gender Focal Point Network as was recommended in the 2014 review, though with mixed success. In 2017, sixty-one Gender Focal Points work across the organization to facilitate gender mainstreaming. Yet persons appointed to these positions come from varied

backgrounds, have an interest but not necessarily prior expertise in gender, and devote different amounts of time and effort to gender work. This presents challenges to ensuring the focal point network remains an effective resource. Experience shows that dedicated gender expertise and a relevant technical background are important for effective gender mainstreaming. While gender focal points are a step in the right direction, only two OSCE field operations currently have dedicated gender advisors at the international professional level and four have national officers working specifically on gender issues. To formally support gender mainstreaming efforts at ODIHR, the Gender Working Group, established in the office, developed a 2017-2018 ODIHR Gender Mainstreaming Roadmap outlining six priority areas, such as strengthening gender mainstreaming in the project cycle and ODIHR's outreach.

³⁹ This reflects the number of field operations during 2016, OSCE 2016 Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality



RECOMMENDATIONS

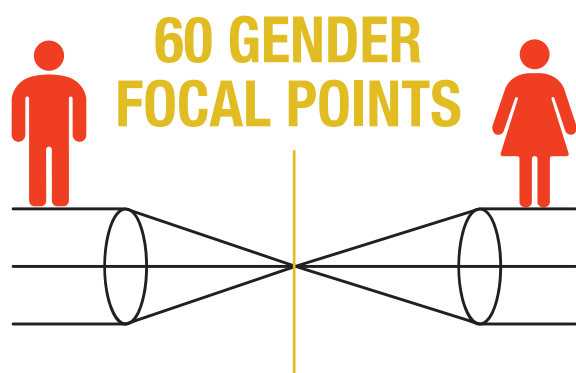
PARTICIPATING STATES

- + As prescribed by the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, participating States, individually and collectively, bear the primary responsibility and are accountable to their citizens for the implementation of their commitments on equality of rights and equal opportunities for women and men. They should continue demonstrating their commitment to making equality between women and men an integral part of policies both at State level and within the Organization.
- + OSCE bodies and Participating States should ensure that OSCE events continue to be gender inclusive, and also promote the participation of men on gender equality focused panels, as well as enable disadvantaged men and women to voice their concerns directly at such forums.
- + OSCE and Participating States should continue to mobilize men in support of equality through initiatives such as the OSCE MenEngage network. There is a continued need to work with men on masculinity norms and changing mind-sets through a variety of creative approaches and capacity building.

OSCE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

- + All OSCE staff, including senior management, should undergo gender training. Targeted training is needed to enable staff to understand and apply gender equality principles in specific thematic areas. The introduction of gender coaching to support OSCE senior managers in mainstreaming gender issues through improved approaches to leadership and organizational change is a step in the right direction.
- + Consideration should be given to hiring additional full time gender advisors for field operations with relevant expertise.
- + While gender advisors and gender focal points are responsible for working on gender issues, other OSCE staff should also be held accountable for working towards gender equality and the implementation of OSCE's various gender commitments. This responsibility could be institutionalized through tools such as performance goals and evaluations.
- + The OSCE gender focal point structure would benefit from a standardized approach, including provision of standard terms of reference for the position, appointment of persons with more relevant technical backgrounds, higher seniority, and expectations for dedicated time to be devoted to gender work. It would also be beneficial to elevate the profile of the gender focal points and provide greater recognition for their work.

- + OSCE should continue to examine trends and address barriers to women's participation at all levels of OSCE decision-making, particularly in management and the fields of expertise that are underrepresented. This includes increased efforts to identify and attract qualified female candidates.



*in field operations,
Institutions and the Secretariat
support their offices to mainstream
gender in OSCE's policies
and activities⁴⁰*

PROGRAMMES, STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES

- + As a critical tool for gender mainstreaming, the completion of gender action plans should be mandatory for OSCE field operations as well as other executive structures. OSCE could also facilitate increased sharing of practices on implementing these plans across field missions, require periodic updates, and support missions to incorporate priority topics of engaging men and addressing multiple forms of discrimination.
- + There is a need to clearly assign responsibility within OSCE for the implementation of its Gender Action Plan. To support implementation, a strong accountability framework is needed, with clear performance indicators to assess progress, and a budget. This includes the full roll out of the Implementation Road Map for the Secretariat, which will guide all Departments in the Secretariat to systematically integrate gender into their work and report on the results.
- + There is a need at OSCE and among Participating States to more proactively put in practice existing tools for gender mainstreaming, and to develop improved tools for gender analysis. Within OSCE, particular attention should be paid to ensuring gender mainstreaming along the project cycle and basic gender analysis tools to guide implementation.
- + OSCE should strengthen efforts to communicate the achievements and positive results on gender mainstreaming within the organization.

⁴⁰ OSCE 2016 Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality.

VI. EMERGING ISSUES

-

THE MOST RECENT RESOLUTION NUMBER 2242 ADOPTED BY THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL ON THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF 1325 ADDED THE EMERGING THREAT OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND RADICALIZATION TO THE 1325⁴¹ MANDATE AND RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANT ROLE THAT WOMEN PLAY, PARTICULARLY THROUGH WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS IN COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM. A GENDER PERSPECTIVE IS CRITICAL, AS WOMEN ARE BOTH BEING RADICALIZED AND ARE KEY TO OPPOSING RADICALIZATION.

AMBASSADOR MELANNE VERVEER

Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Gender

THIRTEEN YEARS SINCE THE OSCE GENDER ACTION PLAN WAS DRAFTED, the core issues and the activities it mandates to strengthen gender equality have remained relevant and critical. At the same time, global trends in the area of gender equality, along with the evolving nature of security concerns and changing political and socio-economic dynamics among participating States have required stronger emphasis on an emerging set of issues. Globally, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals have set the stage for tackling both gender inequality and security concerns through a series of concrete targets. Many of these goals are directly relevant to OSCE's mission, and OSCE participating States are pursuing their implementation.

Other global trends have particular relevance to OSCE and its agenda. Since 2004, the world has experienced a number of new threats and security challenges, including the growing threat of terrorism. Issues relating to refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons (IDPs) are becoming more and more relevant for OSCE participating States. Cyber security has become more acute, and is a security concern with gender-specific manifestations. Research has found that women are more likely to be harassed online. Yet they are much less likely to be employed in information security, and as such have not equally contributed to shaping the cyber security field with their perspectives and preferences in a manner that would help make them safer. Finally, of particular relevance to OSCE is how some groups such as youth and women

⁴¹ The Security Council resolution 2242 was adopted in 2015, which includes reference to the important role of regional organization in the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda.

can be mobilized to support gender equality and address these emerging threats. If not adequately addressed, these issues impede the implementation of the gender action plan and its commitments.

SPEAKERS CALLED ATTENTION to the multiple forms of discrimination faced by, for example, Muslim women, including attacks in public spaces and online. They called for a consistent approach to addressing violence regardless of the identity of the victim or perpetrator, and expressed the need to be cautious about stereotypes against Muslim women as potential terrorists. A call was made to engage communities rather than alienating them, and to consistently keep in mind that women have very different experiences depending on which community they identify with and experiences they have. It was noted that indicators of potentially violent radicalization are more easily detected by people within communities rather than by state authorities, reiterating the need to work with strong local leaders and with women at the community level. Speakers also raised the need to be proactive in looking at the intersection of gender and terrorism. Though OSCE was among the first to address gender through its work on combatting transnational threats, more work is needed.

THE DISCUSSANTS RECOMMENDED stronger emphasis on internally displaced women in OSCEs work. They noted that the number of IDPs has increased in recent times and that the diversity of displaced women should be an important consideration. They urged the OSCE to adapt the 2004 Gender Action Plan to the new reality that a large share of IDPs are women and girls, even though the plan does to some extent address issues facing women in displacement.

Online child abuse and exploitation was also discussed as a growing concern. With girls more likely to become victims of online cyber bullying, the need to address this crime by working together with law enforcement and other authorities was emphasized. Addressing this issue can be complex, given the multitude of factors that put children at risk, ranging from age, gender, disability, and ethnicity, to the family's socio-economic status, among others.

PANELISTS ALSO POINTED OUT that OSCE is in a unique position to make use of a vast range of human capital and different perspectives, including in particular those of young women, to increase their participation in prevention and resolution along the conflict cycle. OSCE has been effectively tapping into youth through youth advisory groups that have consultant functions. Such initiatives could be further highlighted and supported, and their issues advocated for.

FINALLY, participants spoke about the changing global rhetoric on gender issues, a regression on gender equality in some instances, and a declining prominence of human rights on the global agenda since OSCE's Gender Action Plan was first drafted. Women's movements in some regions, such as the Balkans, are leading efforts to counter the discourse against equality. Crosscutting coalitions uniting religions, political factions and other groups are needed, and these could be supported by international and regional organizations, including the OSCE. Such coalitions could also be deployed to advocate for a needed shift in funding from war to peace priorities.



RECOMMENDATIONS

PARTICIPATING STATES

- + Participating States should work with law enforcement and other authorities to counter online child abuse and exploitation, which disproportionately affects girls, recognizing the complex nature and motivations for engaging in such abuse.
- + Participating States should nominate more women to work on transnational threats to help narrow the significant gender gaps that remain at the staffing level of these programs.
- + Participating States should ensure a consistent approach to addressing violence regardless of the identity of the victim or perpetrator, and avoid stereotyping of Muslim women and men as potential terrorists. They should instead seek opportunities to engage with women and men at the community level as supporters in countering violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism.

OSCE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

- + OSCE should conduct a review of its mandate and consider whether new commitments are needed to more effectively address the intersection of gender equality and emerging threats such as those of terrorism, cyber threats and issues facing IDPs, refugees and migrants.

- + OSCE should commission a technical review that includes a thorough assessment of the most critical emerging issues and their current and likely future impact on gender equality and on the implementation of the OSCE Gender Action Plan. The technical review should recommend how identified gaps should be addressed through supplementary actions to the OSCE Gender Action Plan and throughout OSCE operations.

OSCE PROGRAMMES, STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES

- + OSCE should increase efforts and funding for work on the intersection of gender issues and transnational threats, and it should carry out more inter-disciplinary and integrated work on gender and terrorism.
- + OSCE should build upon prior successful examples and continue to support and engage young women and men through youth advisory groups in addressing the conflict cycle.
- + OSCE should support civil society in advocacy efforts and strategies to shift funds away from war to peace building, and to achieving the SDGs.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS



THE SECOND GENDER EQUALITY REVIEW CONFERENCE FACILITATED DIALOGUE ACROSS FIVE CRITICAL DIMENSIONS OF OSCE'S WORK AND A SET OF IMPORTANT EMERGING ISSUES. INTEGRAL TO THE CONFERENCE SESSIONS WAS A FOCUS ON IDENTIFYING A SET OF PROACTIVE NEXT STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OSCE AND PARTICIPATING STATES TO ACT UPON IN ORDER TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY. THIS SECTION SUMMARIZES THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED NEXT STEPS ACROSS THE DIMENSIONS OF OSCE'S WORK THAT EMERGED FROM THESE DISCUSSIONS.

Politico-military dimension

- + Support and endorse an **OSCE-wide action plan on Women, Peace and Security** to more systematically apply UN Security Council Resolution 1325 to the work of the organization.
- + **Prioritize addressing women's under representation in the security sector**, focusing on participating States as well as OSCE executive structures.

Economic and environmental dimension

- + Prioritize capacity building for OSCE staff to **more effectively integrate gender within OSCE's economic and environmental dimension**.

Human dimension

- + **Renewed commitment of participating States' institutions to strengthening the participation of women in political and public life** through specific measures, including legislative and policy measures to facilitate a more balanced participation of women and men in political and public life and especially in decision-making.
- + Support the implementation of OSCE commitments and national legal and policy frameworks that aim to combat violence against women.

Cross-dimensional

- + Support and engage **in more cross-dimensional work in the OSCE** between the human, the environmental and economic, and the politico-military dimensions.
- + Increase **attention to issues that women facing multiple forms of discrimination** encounter, in particular Roma and Sinti women, and women with disabilities.
- + **Commission a technical review at OSCE for a thorough assessment of the most critical emerging issues**, their impact on gender equality and on the implementation of the OSCE Gender Action Plan.
- + Participating States should support the **organization of international women's fora** and the establishment of **networks of women's NGOs** in the OSCE region along with **capacity building programmes for women leaders**.
- + **Assign clear responsibility within OSCE for the implementation of its Gender Action Plan**, including a strong accountability framework with performance indicators to assess progress, and a budget.
- + **Continue to mobilize men in support of gender equality** through initiatives such as the OSCE MenEngage network.

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