



EUROPEAN UNION

Economic and Environmental Implementation Meeting Vienna, 15 November 2022

The way ahead for the OSCE region – Enhancing women’s leadership role and their full, equal and meaningful participation in economic and environmental activities

EU Closing Statement

1. We would like to again thank the Polish Chairpersonship and the Office of the Coordinator for organising this meeting. It was a valuable occasion to take stock of the implementation of the OSCE commitments in enhancing women’s leadership role and their full, equal and meaningful participation in economic and environmental activities.
2. We would like to thank all the panellists for sharing their experience and expertise with us. The shared examples and best practices should not merely remain a subject of this meeting; rather, we hope that our discussions spill over to subsequent dialogues regarding new initiatives.
3. As highlighted by the speakers, advancing women’s economic empowerment in our societies is an essential component of a comprehensive approach to security in the OSCE region. We welcome the discussion on women’s equal labour market participation and how to tackle discrimination against women in order to remove structural employment barriers.
4. Also, we appreciate the mention of quality education and its value as a core prerequisite for advancing women’s economic empowerment. Women’s disproportionate share of care work should also be emphasised, as the full and meaningful participation of women in the economic sphere as well as in decision-making can only succeed if all the barriers are considered.

5. At the same time, we reiterate our strong support to the Ukrainian women who have been disproportionately impacted by Russia's ongoing war of aggression. The impact of the energy and food crises have posed additional burdens to women and girls, especially in rural areas of the country. Lack of access to social services, including schools and community centres have increased the care burden of local women who bear the brunt of the care work for their family members. The European Union and its Member States will continue to support Ukraine for as long as it takes.
6. Women must participate in all decision-making platforms as part of the Women, Peace and Security agenda (WPS), to achieve de-escalation, conflict prevention, mitigation and other processes in pursuit of peace and security in Ukraine and beyond.
7. Our discussions also illustrated that in order to act decisively on enhancing women's participation in economic and environmental activities, it is paramount to strengthen international cooperation, with a view to enabling participating States to apply effective political, legal and economic measures across the OSCE region.
8. We reinstate our support for the valuable work done by the OSCE's autonomous institutions and field missions, as well as the Secretariat. In this regard, we would like to mention the close cooperation of the EU, with organisations such as the Council of Europe, the United Nations and the OSCE on gender equality and women's empowerment initiatives. Furthermore, we would like to highlight the continuous support of many EU Member States to the OSCE's projects through additional financial contributions, as well as through their expertise.
9. The EU reaffirms its strong commitment to continue efforts to promote the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in the development and implementation of economic and environmental activities, with a view to achieve gender equality. We believe that the OSCE has a relevant and valuable role to play in assisting participating States' efforts to achieve this target.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ALBANIA*, UKRAINE, and the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, the Potential Candidate Countries BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA* and GEORGIA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as ANDORRA, MONACO and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

