OSCE WPS Roadmap

OSCE-wide roadmap for
the implementation of commitments on
Women, Peace and Security

OSCE WPS Roadmap

OSCE-wide roadmap for the implementation of commitments on Women, Peace and Security

OSCE WPS Roadmap

Chapter 1: Aims and objectives

The OSCE-wide Roadmap for the implementation of Women, Peace and Security (WPS) commitments is a product by the 2025 OSCE Chairpersonship of Finland. In the 50th anniversary year of the OSCE, Finland launches the OSCE-wide Roadmap on WPS to highlight the importance of gender equality and the full, equal and meaningful participation of women for comprehensive security.

The Roadmap places emphasis on concrete, tangible actions that participating States (pS) can undertake to further implementation of the WPS agenda. The menu of options in Chapter 3 is meant to give practical inspiration and ideas to this end. The Roadmap is a living document, and may be updated and complemented along the way.

1.1 Introduction: WPS and the OSCE

The WPS agenda is of key relevance to the goals and mandate of the OSCE. As a regional organisation under the United Nations Charter, the OSCE is well placed to promote and support the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and the nine subsequent resolutions of the WPS agenda in the OSCE region. UNSCR 1325 calls for strengthened across the conflict cycle, from conflict prevention, to peace negotiations and processes, to post-conflict recovery and reconstruction. This is critical to the OSCE's work and concept of comprehensive security. The OSCE[1] actively promotes and undertakes WPS activities throughout the region.

WPS work in the OSCE is grounded in clear commitments by pS. Consensus decisions in which pS express their political will to implement UNSCR 1325 include the decision 4/14 on the Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (2004) (hereafter Gender Action Plan), Ministerial Council Decision (MCD) 3/11 on the conflict cycle, and MCD 14/05 on women in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. As of 2025, 44 of the OSCE's 57 pS and six of its 11 Partners for Co-operation have adopted National Action Plans for WPS (NAPs-WPS).

---

[1] For a definition of the what is meant by the OSCE, please see textbox on page 3.

> ## Box 1
>
> ### The Women, Peace and Security agenda
>
> The Women, Peace and Security agenda guides work to promote gender equality and strengthen women's participation, protection and rights across the conflict cycle, from conflict prevention through to post-conflict reconstruction. It is grounded in UNSCR 1325 (2000), and the nine subsequent resolutions forming the normative framework for the agenda.[2] The agenda is based on four key pillars:[3]
>
> - Participation: Calls for increased participation of women at all levels of decision-making, including in national, regional, and international institutions; in mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict; in peace negotiations; and in peace operations.
>
> - Protection: Calls specifically for the protection of women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence, including in emergency and humanitarian settings.
>
> - Prevention: Calls for improving intervention strategies in the prevention of violence against women, including prosecuting those responsible for violations of international law; strengthening women's rights under national law; and supporting local women's peace initiatives and conflict resolution processes.
>
> - Relief and recovery: Calls for advancement of relief and recovery measures to address international crises through a gendered lens.

1.2 Rationale and purpose of the WPS Roadmap

War and armed conflict have a different impact on women and girls, men and boys. While the majority of combatants in armed conflict are male, casualties among civilians increasingly outnumber those of military personnel and disproportionately affect women, elderly people, children. Women and girls are also disproportionately affected by sexual and gender-based violence in conflict, although men and boys are also affected. And while women may not be in the majority at the frontlines, they are often active as first responders and medical personnel.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and other conflicts within the OSCE region have laid bare the severe impact war and conflict have on women, and the need to do more on WPS. Studies show that women's participation in peace processes results in more durable and stable peace.[4] This is an important reason for stepping up work on WPS across the OSCE's activities. The OSCE is well and uniquely placed to work ambitiously and effectively on WPS. It has substantial expertise working in conflict and post-conflict settings as well as in mediation and mediation support. It provides a

---

[2] WILPF, 'The Resolutions', website accessed January 2025. Available at: Link.

[3] UN She Stands for Peace, 'The Four Pillars of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325', website accessed February 2025. Available at: Link.

[4] Radhika Coomaraswamy, 'A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325', *UN Women* (2015). Available at: Link.

platform for civil society engagement on conflict prevention and resolution concerning the design, development and delivery of projects within OSCE Field Operations.

Currently, WPS activities within the OSCE and the OSCE region are spread across a large number of thematic fields, geographies, and actors. As such, pS often lack a clear picture of what is being done by the OSCE as a whole in the various parts of the organisation, and by other pS in the OSCE region. There is also at times missed opportunity for coordination and collaboration on relevant work between OSCE pS, and between pS and OSCE executive structures and institutions, on WPS issues.

This OSCE WPS Roadmap aims to make the OSCE's collective efforts better visible, and to identify options for more ambitious action for those pS who want to do more to implement WPS commitments. It begins with an overview of the OSCE's WPS commitments, activity areas and comparative value-add (Chapter 2). It sets out a range of concrete optional actions where there is potential to do more (Chapter 3). And it includes further, more detailed insight of OSCE activities across the four WPS pillars, alongside a detailed analysis of good practices on WPS from across the OSCE region and globally (Chapter 4).

Box 2

Note on terminology

When 'OSCE' is mentioned in this document, it refers to the OSCE as a whole including decision-making bodies, Executive Structures, Institutions, and Field Operations. Where specificity around a specific OSCE actor is required, this is clarified in the text.

Chapter 2: Overview of OSCE WPS commitments, activities and value-add

This Chapter provides an overview of OSCE commitments concerning WPS implementation. It also gives a brief thematic overview of the activities undertaken by the OSCE in line with the four Pillars of the WPS agenda (Participation, Protection, Prevention, and Relief and Recovery), which is augmented in Chapter 4. This chapter further discusses the comparative value-add and advantages of the OSCE in advancing WPS goals and implementation.

2.1 OSCE WPS commitments

The OSCE's overarching commitment to gender equality was first spelled out in the Charter for European Security adopted in 1999.[5] In 2000, even before UNSCR 1325 was adopted, the OSCE set out an Action Plan for Gender Issues committing pS to integrate gender issues into security policy.[6] This was followed in 2004 by an Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality,[7] and by a series of related consensus decisions where the OSCE pS committed to support the full implementation of the WPS agenda in the OSCE region.[8] Important among these are MCD 3/11 on the conflict cycle,[9] MCD 7/11 on combating all forms of human trafficking,[10] MCD 14/05 on women in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation,[11] and MCD 7/09 on women's participation in political and public life.[12] In addition, the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) integrates gender perspectives into its work on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA), and the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security.

2.2 OSCE WPS activities

The OSCE pursues significant action across all four pillars of the WPS agenda. This work is undertaken by the OSCE Secretariat, Field Operations, and OSCE Institutions, including the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

---

[5] OSCE, *Charter for European Security*, Istanbul Document 1999 (1999), paras 23-24. Available at: Link.

[6] OSCE, 'OSCE Action Plan for Gender Issues', Decision No. 353. (2000). Available at: Link.

[7] OSCE, '2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality', Decision No. 14/04. (2004). Available at: Link.

[8] See: OSCE, 'OSCE commitments related to gender equality', *OSCE*, accessed August 2024. Available at: Link.

[9] OSCE, 'Elements of the Conflict Cycle, Related To Enhancing the OSCE's Capabilities in Early Warning, Early Action, Dialogue Facilitation and Mediation Support, and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation', Decision No. 3/11. Available at: Link.

[10] OSCE, 'Ministerial Declaration on Combating All Forms of Human Trafficking', Decision No. 7/11. Available at: Link.

[11] OSCE, 'Women in Conflict Prevention, Crisis management and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation', No. 14/05. Available at: Link.

[12] OSCE, 'Women's Participation in Political and Public Life', Decision No. 7/09. Available at: Link.

Box 3

OSCE actors and their work on WPS

- **OSCE Secretariat:** The Secretariat provides operational support to the OSCE. It advances gender equality and implementation of the WPS agenda to promote comprehensive security- and stability-building. It undertakes a wide range of activities on WPS, including: capacity building; information sharing; support for self-assessment and context-specific approaches across the OSCE; and advocacy on the implementation and monitoring of NAPs-WPS. For more detail on these activities, see Chapter 4.

- **Field Operations:** The OSCE's Field Operations assist host countries in putting their OSCE commitments into practice and fostering local capacities through concrete projects that respond to their needs. This includes support on matters pertaining to WPS. In this document, 'Field Operations' is used as a general term for all OSCE Field presences, irrespective of their mandate or exact name.

- **Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR):** ODIHR is tasked, *inter alia,* with assisting OSCE pS to ensure full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Recognising the importance of this to peace and security, ODIHR's mandate is crucial to advancing WPS goals within the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security.

- **High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM):** HCNM is a conflict prevention institution which works to identify and address causes of ethnic tensions. The HCNM recognises that gender equality contributes to comprehensive security and has undertaken work to highlight the role and issues faced by minority women.

- **Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM)**: The RFoM plays a crucial role in promoting the safety of women journalists as part of its broader commitment to media freedom and gender equality. By aligning with the WPS agenda, the RFoM underscores the essential role of women journalists in fostering peace, security and democratic resilience.

- **OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA):** The OSCE PA places a high priority on the WPS agenda, integrating it into its core activities and adopting multiple resolutions on the issue.[13] It emphasises the crucial role of parliaments in promoting gender equality in political and public life.

An overview of the OSCE's WPS work is provided here, but readers are encouraged to read Chapter 4 for more detailed information and examples of OSCE activities under each of these areas of WPS.

- **Participation**: The OSCE has undertaken a range of practical support to women mediators including through support to networks of women mediators, and in support of women's

---

[13] OSCE PA, 'Compilation of OSCE PA Resolutions related to gender equality (1992-2024)', OSCE. Available at: Link.

meaningful participation in security sector institutions through provision of training and skills development. It has also promoted and led learning and the development of thematic expertise focusing on Participation, for example organising regional conferences and seminars on promoting women's participation in law enforcement.

- **Protection**: The OSCE provides capacity building and knowledge exchange in support of survivors of violence. It further undertakes a range of activities pertaining to the prevention and monitoring of gender-based violence (GBV), which is highly relevant to addressing the harmful norms and power dynamics which lead to, or worsen, conflict-related GBV.

- **Prevention**: The OSCE's activity under the Prevention pillar includes the development of guidance and toolkits on topics such as how to better integrate gender perspectives into work on disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction and management, and how to prevent GBV in times of conflict. It undertakes a range of knowledge and awareness-raising activities relevant to prevention, and delivers practical support and training on topics including conflict prevention and resolution through arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

- **Relief and recovery**: The OSCE undertakes work to enhance inclusive and gender-sensitive humanitarian responses, including through the Extra-Budgetary Support Programme for Ukraine.

Centre in Ashgabat work on women in peacebuilding

As part of longstanding co-operation with the Institute of International Relations and the International University for Humanity and Development, the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat has organised capacity building activities for 234 female students to enhance their knowledge on the role of women in peacebuilding. This initiative has strengthened the national diplomatic corps in Turkmenistan by equipping women diplomats with essential skills critical to conflict prevention and resolution. High-level diplomats from OSCE pS delivered presentations on neutrality, negotiations, women in diplomacy, effective negotiation strategies and inclusive participation in promoting peace and security.

OSCE Mission to Montenegro support to women police officers

The OSCE Mission to Montenegro supported the Montenegrin Women Police Association to organise the Global Conference on Gender Equality in the Police in March 2024. The event hosted 70 participants (16 men and 54 women) from more than 20 countries. Over two days, participants exchanged good practices and experience on women's empowerment in the security sector, and ways to promote and strengthen women's equal participation and representation across all areas of policing.

2.3 OSCE value-add

The 2024 Independent Evaluation of the Implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (2018-2022) offers an in-depth assessment of the comparative advantages the OSCE demonstrates in its WPS work.[14] It highlights that the OSCE is generally able to respond quickly to emerging needs (for example, by developing knowledge products and guidance). It further notes that the OSCE has a role to play in supporting pS to implement their gender equality commitments, due to factors including: the strong expertise it can offer on politico-military and security issues; and its political neutrality, which helps it to navigate sensitive gender-related issues. The above points add to the relevance, and value-add, of the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security to WPS implementation.

The OSCE's Gender Issues Programme in the Office of the Secretary-General plays an important role in promoting the implementation of the WPS agenda, including by organising training and sharing good practices. The OSCE's strong field presence and its long-term, sustained engagement with

---

[14] Office of Internal Oversight, 'Independent Evaluation of the Implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (2018-2022)', *OSCE* (2024). Ps. 24-25. Available at: Link.

national governments, civil society and local communities puts it in a good position to enhance WPS implementation by supporting change management, advising on removal of discriminatory practices, and undertaking targeted interventions on the inclusion of women in decision-making. The size of the OSCE as an institution means it is able to offer gender equality and WPS expertise at scale, including through OSCE Gender Focal Points and personnel at Field Operations level. The OSCE PA Annual Session resolutions consistently call for the strengthened implementation of UNSCR 1325, with key resolutions adopted in Vancouver (2023), Birmingham (2022), Berlin (2018), Oslo (2010) and Kyiv (2007).

Specific institutions within the OSCE also bring value-add to its WPS work. ODIHR is an important example. It occupies a key role by promoting a gender-responsive[15] and human rights compliant delivery of security by institutions within OSCE pS. ODIHR's long-standing and strong working relationships with security sector institutions on security sector governance and reform facilitates impactful and trust-based co-operation on WPS, enabling the prioritisation of the human dimension of security within these institutions. ODIHR often works closely with civil society in these efforts, including with DCAF - Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance to support security sector reform.

Field Operations within the OSCE are also well-networked, including through the Gender Focal Points network, which enables peer learning and the exchange of good practices between the different jurisdictions in the region, and between different levels (from the local level up into the national and regional level). In a second example, the OSCE, UN Women, and the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders have met under the OSCE's commitment as a member of the (WPS-HA Compact) to discuss challenges and opportunities for joint action.[16]

Regular coordination on WPS between the OSCE and other relevant institutions - such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), UN Women, and the EU - takes place in the form of the EU informal Women, Peace and Security Task Force, which was set-up in 2009 and meets in Brussels. Chaired by the European External Action Service, it gathers EU officials from the European Commission and EU member states to share information on WPS agenda implementation. The OSCE, NATO, UN Women and civil society are regularly invited to participate.[17]

For a mapping of other institutions and organisations of relevance to the OSCE region and OSCE WPS goals, please see Chapter 4.

---

[15] 'Gender-responsive' is defined as work which addresses gendered *effects* of conflict; while 'gender-transformative' refers to work which addresses gendered *causes* of conflict.

[16] OSCE, 'OSCE, UN Women and the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) join forces to support women's leadership in peacebuilding and conflict resolution', webpage accessed February 2025. Available at: Link.

[17] EPLO, 'UNSCR 1325 and gender mainstreaming in the EU', webpage accessed August 2024. Available at: Link.

Chapter 3: Menu of Optional Actions

This Chapter sets out concrete optional actions pS could take forward to accelerate the implementation of WPS commitments in line with OSCE frameworks.

The Chapter does not aim to provide an exhaustive list of actions to which pS could commit. It rather sets out optional actions which would be most useful and impactful in advancing WPS goals. The options set out in this Chapter are evidence-based, drawing on consultation with the OSCE Secretariat, pS and civil society experts to determine and cohere a range of views around what would be most effective. This Chapter further draws on the analysis set out in Chapter 4 of OSCE and global good practices which have been impactful in advancing WPS goals to date, aiming to replicate and build on successes, and address gaps.

Pledging to WPS Actions

Participating States are encouraged to pledge to individual actions, choosing from the menu of optional actions below. By pledging, pS commit themselves to working towards implementing the action in question through their work in the OSCE.

Pledging implies that states select 1-5 actions from the list below and notify the Chair about their selection. pS are expected to choose actions that raise the level of ambition with respect to their engagement on WPS. The Chair encourages pS to form partnerships between themselves in order to advance a particular action or topic.

A list of current actions and pS pledges will be annexed to the Roadmap as a living document to be updated regularly.

3.1 Diplomatic action

1 **Reaffirm commitment to WPS and the Gender Action Plan (2004), which is the most comprehensive document in the OSCE to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.**

For example:

- Advocate for areas of the Gender Action Plan which require updating (for example, on the current blindspot around the transnational threat of climate change, and to enhance language to include reference to gender-responsive and gender-transformative work which more concretely addresses the gendered causes and effects of conflict).

- Deliver statements in Ministerial Council meetings and domestically on the importance of gender-mainstreaming to comprehensive security.

- Make strong statements on the importance of WPS to comprehensive security in national security plans, and in NAPs-WPS.

2 Use Chairpersonships and positions of responsibility to advance WPS commitments.

pS which take up positions of normative power - including OSCE Chairpersonship, Chairpersonship of the Forum for Security Co-operation, non-permanent and permanent membership of the UN Security Council, committee Chairpersonship, and Presidency of the European Union and Council of Europe - could use these positions to advance the WPS agenda. For example:

- Release strong statements, Chairperson and Presidency priorities and documents pertaining to WPS and efforts to advance OSCE WPS commitments.

- Use these periods to platform the important role and perspectives of civil society on matters pertaining to WPS.

- Address gaps in the OSCE's current collective work on WPS: for example, limited work undertaken on Relief and Recovery; insufficient reporting on and funding for NAPs-WPS which leads to failures of accountability and implementation; and to advance OSCE acknowledgement of and commitment to addressing emerging WPS challenges (such as climate change as a transnational threat).

3 Implement WPS commitments taking into account persons in vulnerable and marginalised positions.

pS could for example:

- Undertake intersectional analysis of the critical issues affecting the most marginalised and vulnerable across the OSCE, including women and girls with disabilities, women and girls from national minorities or in other vulnerable or marginalised positions, to inform their practical advocacy to address those issues.

- Undertake steps to collect disaggregated equality data reflecting the intersectionality of gender and vulnerable groups, such as women and girls with disabilities, women and girls from national minorities or in other vulnerable or marginalised positions.

- Undertake measures to ensure equal and inclusive participation of national minority women in political and public decision making, including by establishing specific channels of consultation that could facilitate the contribution of national minority women to conflict prevention.[18]

---

[18] HCNM, 'Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Social and Economic Life and Explanatory Note', *OSCE* (2023). Available at: <u>Link</u>.

- Provide targeted and continued support for persons in minority, marginalised and vulnerable positions with practical actions, including support to OSCE executive structures and institutions, to build their knowledge and skills on how to advance WPS goals in support of those persons.
- Provide targeted and continued support for Roma and Sinti.

3.2 Operational — multilateral level

4	Continue concrete action to advance the agenda.

pS could continue to build on the good practice and activities evidenced in this Roadmap by committing to continued, concrete action to advance the WPS agenda. For example:

- Integrate the WPS agenda into OSCE mediation efforts. The Co-Chairs of the Geneva International Discussions are currently developing a Platform for Inclusive Mediation to strengthen their joint engagement and exchange with, among others, women-led NGOs. pS involved in other mediation efforts could learn from such initiatives and adapt the processes in which they are engaged with the support of guidelines like the 'Inclusion of Women and Effective Peace Processes' toolkit.[19]
- Ensure women's participation and decision-making influence in relief and recovery efforts. While Relief and Recovery work has received less attention in the OSCE region, pS could conduct reviews of their Relief and Recovery work in other contexts to determine the extent to which women are effectively consulted in these efforts.

5	Continue and build upon coordination efforts to advance WPS goals collaboratively.

pS could do this both between multilateral organisations, and between delegations within the OSCE. For example:

- Create platforms in the OSCE for partnerships and 'twinning' between delegations to further develop NAPs-WPS. pS who have developed NAPs-WPS already could partner, or 'twin' with pS who have not yet developed a NAP to provide accompaniment and guidance to support their development of a first NAP-WPS. The OSCE Secretariat and institutions could be asked to provide technical expertise and support to these endeavours.
- Continue to coordinate and build collaborative efforts on WPS with other international organisations and multilaterals such as the UN and Council of Europe. Practical means of doing so includes continuing to provide funding for OSCE projects such as the Women and Men Innovating and Networking for Gender Equality (WIN) and Capitalising on the Human Dimension Mandate to Advance Gender Equality (CHANGE) projects, which aim to co-operate and establish synergies between the OSCE and other institutions.

---

[19] OSCE, 'Inclusion of Women and Effective Peace Processes: A Toolkit', *OSCE* (2019). Available at: Link.

6 Commit to practical support to strengthen networks aiming to advance WPS goals.

This Roadmap has evidenced good practice among networks in the OSCE, which work to advance WPS. pS could commit to sustained, practical support for their work. For example:

- Commit to continued support for the WPS Focal Points Network (spanning the OSCE, the EU, the CoE and UN Member States). This is an effective forum for the sharing of knowledge products and guidance documents on WPS, and can be leveraged as a forum to meet with and share WPS good practice with other institutions working on WPS in the OSCE region.

- Undertake coordinated action with the OSCE's gender equality networks - and wider networks of women's rights organisations, women-led organisations and other civil society actors - to provide normative and practical support to their work. pS could do this through joint coordinated political action such as statements at MCs, allocating funding to support networks, offering convening spaces, and engaging on technical issues and emerging challenges like women's role in digital spaces.

7 Support and promote the role of men in advancing WPS goals.

The role of men, in all their diversity, in advancing WPS goals is critical and often under-resourced and -prioritised. pS could commit to supporting and promoting men's role further. For example:

- Learn from and replicate events like the 2023 Barbershop Conference for Military Advisors and Forum for Security Co-operation to create spaces for men to share experiences on and agree means through which they can become actively engaged in promoting gender equality and WPS goals.

- Fund and establish men's networks for WPS and WPS mentorship, and support existing networks with substantial participation of men (such as the military advisor group (MAOSCE), to promote and encourage men's participation in work pertaining to WPS. This would help to encourage male allyship in this area, ensuring the onus is not entirely on women to advance WPS.

- Undertake work with military advisors to determine how male military leadership can demonstrate practical commitment to WPS in their work, including - for example - taking personal responsibility for WPS goals.

8 Undertake annual reporting on measures by security sector institutions to implement WPS commitments.

Acting in compliance with the Forum for Security Co-operation voluntary reporting and the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and the supplemental questionnaire, pS could for example:

- Make every effort to submit the OSCE CoC reporting and the supplemental questionnaire on measures taken by security sector institutions to implement WPS and human rights commitments.

- Integrate national civil society input into the reporting to ensure full transparency.

- When part of the Forum for Security Co-operation Troika, ensure security dialogue topics focus on WPS, drawing on the voluntary reporting.

9 **Ensure continued funding for WPS work, and undertake efforts to improve funding modalities.**

To support, and grow, the existing good practice on WPS within the OSCE, pS could commit to continued funding and improved funding modalities. For example:

- Commit to strategic investment to support existing areas of OSCE gender work. pS could advocate for or commit to ring-fenced funding in the Unified Budget, or strategic allocation of extra-budgetary funding, to support existing OSCE models and roles which promote WPS and gender goals. This includes funding for more Gender Adviser positions in Field Operations to complement the role of Gender Focal points, and contributions for the continuation of impactful projects like WIN and CHANGE.

- Review funding conditions for OSCE gender and WPS projects. At present, the project management burden for projects like WIN is multiplied by stringent donor requirements such as strict activity earmarking and short timeframes for activity implementation. pS who contribute funds to these projects could review their requirements, in consultation with project teams, and work out areas to improve and make funding conditions more flexible to reduce administrative burden.

3.3 Operational – national level

10 **Develop a first NAP-WPS, ensuring broad consultation and ownership in doing so.**

NAPs-WPS are invaluable tools to translate the WPS on the ground and implement international commitments, including those set out within OSCE frameworks. These OSCE pS who have not yet developed a NAP-WPS could:

- Develop their first NAP-WPS. With over 70% of OSCE pS having adopted NAPs to date, there is a wealth of experience across the OSCE on good practices and lessons learned, which could support the outstanding 30% of OSCE pS to develop comprehensive and effective first NAPs-WPS.

- Ensure broad consultation on NAP development, from the outset, at all levels of and in different departments of government and with civil society. This will support widely-held buy-in for, and ownership over, the NAP and support efforts to deliver NAP objectives at local levels. It will also ensure that responsibility for NAP implementation moves beyond governmental departments which typically are accountable (e.g., Ministries of Defence and

Foreign Affairs) to include other relevant Ministries such as those accountable for domestic affairs.

<div style="background-color:#cfe0cf;padding:10px;">

11 **OSCE pS who have a NAP-WPS, and are committed to develop further editions, could draw on OSCE support and guidance to support effective implementation.**

</div>

The Secretariat Gender Issues Programme has been actively supporting pS with developing NAPs, including through facilitating workshops between pS to share good practices. OSCE pS could continue to draw on and learn from this support, for example, by:

- Developing monitoring and evaluation systems for ensuring effective implementation.
- Ensuring detailed, gender-sensitive and sufficient budget for NAP-WPS implementation, including allocations for specific agencies or initiatives where required.
- Ensuring clear and coherent actions under each goal set out within the NAP-WPS.
- Supporting and facilitating exchanges of experiences at regional and national level through conferences with civil society actors and government stakeholders.

<div style="background-color:#cfe0cf;padding:10px;">

12 **Ensure emerging challenges and transnational threats like climate change and cyber security are included in NAPs-WPS.**

</div>

Climate change, and other transnational threats like the spread of mis- and dis-information, have deep implications for WPS goals and commitments. pS could:

- Take a step further than including only narrative reference to these issues by including specific results and commitments on these areas within their NAPs-WPS.
- Work closely with other pS to advance work, collaboratively, in these areas for example by sharing learnings and good practice.

<div style="background-color:#cfe0cf;padding:10px;">

13 **Identify and commit to addressing persistent challenges and issues undermining the effective pursuit of WPS goals.**

</div>

25 years on from the introduction of UNSCR 1325, there remain many persistent challenges to WPS implementation. pS could undertake detailed, targeted action within their jurisdictions to address these. For example:

- Take concrete action to increase representation of women in leadership positions, including representation of younger women. pS could conduct reviews of representation of diverse women in their political and security sector institutions and structures, as well as analysis to understand where key barriers to women's meaningful participation are, and develop means for addressing those barriers at all levels. They could also review their secondment policies to enhance women's leadership and representation, and put in place long-term succession planning. This will be critical to addressing ongoing challenges with regards to women's representation in leadership positions across the OSCE.

- Support the establishment of women's networks and associations in the security sector. OSCE-supported networks in law enforcement and countering violent extremism, such as the 1st Regional Network of Police Women in Central Asia, have proven effective in promoting women's inclusion in the security sector. pS could learn from these positive examples and commit to the establishment of and/or support for similar networks within their own jurisdictions. They could draw on the convening power of the OSCE Executive Structures to do so, and to strengthen focus on WPS implementation at the operational level in the face of adverse political conditions.

14 Commission gender-sensitive regulatory impact assessments.

To determine the extent to which they are effectively mainstreaming WPS goals throughout their structures and institutions, pS could:

- Commission assessments to determine the extent to which they are mainstreaming gender throughout their policies and laws, with the support of OSCE Field Operations where applicable.

- Commission human rights and gender-specific assessments using ODIHR's facilitators guide[20] to contribute to proper respect for, protection and promotion of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of armed forces personnel.

3.4 OSCE Executive Structures and Institutions

15 Work with pS to develop a range of standards to guide OSCE pS WPS commitment implementation.

The OSCE Secretariat and institutions could:

- Work with pS to develop standards to support OSCE-wide implementation of WPS commitments on areas including: mainstreaming gender equality into security sector reform initiatives; active engagement of women's rights NGOs and civil society in implementing the WPS agenda (emphasising the involvement of organisations working with women in all their diversity); and, active involvement of men and boys in implementing the WPS agenda at regional, national and local levels.

- Work with pS to develop standards or guidelines for developing NAPs-WPS, which could include recommendations for the pS on development, localisation and monitoring of NAPs, based on good practice.

- Conduct training with defence personnel to help them conduct gender assessments (for example, building on ODIHR's existing work in this area).

---

[20] ODIHR, 'Human Rights and Gender Assessment in the Armed Forces – Facilitators Guide' (2024). Available at: Link.

16 **Undertake proactive, consistent and targeted action to promote women's leadership.**

OSCE Executive Structures and Institutions could:

- Work closely with OSCE Field Operations and Directors of Human Resources to undertake efforts to create an enabling environment for women to be Heads of Field Operations; for example, by supporting their efforts to promote professional growth and flexible working arrangements to create an enabling environment for women's advancement through Field Operations teams.

- Set quantitative and qualitative targets for meaningful participation of women in all their diversity. Qualitative targets on the extent to which women can fully participate in delegations' work could be developed to ensure representation is not meaningless.

17 **Senior leaders within OSCE Secretariat, Institutions, Field Operations and pS could demonstrate their clear leadership on, and commitment to, critical WPS issues.**

This 'sets the tone from the top' and helps to ensure issues of particular relevance to different contexts receive adequate attention. This could be achieved through leaders' setting professional objectives pertaining to WPS, for example on implementation of the Gender Action Plan (2004).

Chapter 4: Examples of OSCE activities and WPS good practice

This Chapter sets out a more detailed explanation of OSCE activities across the four pillars of WPS. While non-exhaustive, this aims to provide readers with an illustrative and informative overview of this work.

This Chapter also sets out analysis and examples of good practice, both from within the OSCE region and globally, across four key areas of WPS: strengthening the normative framework; concrete actions to advance the agenda; financing, implementation and accountability; and adapting to emerging challenges. This aims to provide readers with inspiration for their own commitments and activity through the examples of both good practice and gaps in current approaches. Finally, this Chapter sets out a mapping of other actors and institutions with a WPS mandate and sphere of influence within the OSCE region.

4.1 Detailed overview of OSCE WPS activities

4.1.1 Participation

The OSCE has undertaken a range of **practical support to women mediators**.

- The OSCE Secretariat has established an Interregional Network of Women Peacebuilders across Central Asia, Eastern Europe, and the South Caucasus to provide in-depth insights into the challenges and opportunities for implementing WPS resolutions through its Women and Men Innovating and Networking for Gender Equality (WIN) project.

- It has supported the development of a network convening 20 women peacebuilders and security sector representatives working on localising Ukraine's NAP-WPS, focussing in particular on the emotional well-being of women peacebuilders by offering a safe space for participants to recover and strengthen their resilience.

- Field Operations have established mentoring initiatives to support the work across government ministers and sectors in North Macedonia, and delivered negotiation skills training for women mediators in Moldova.

The OSCE has developed practical guidance on **inclusion of women in peace processes**.

- The mediation support team has developed a toolkit on the Inclusion of Women and Effective Peace Processes, which offers practical guidance for OSCE mediation actors on how to support the inclusion of women in peace processes through direct participation, linking official process unofficial initiatives and including a gender perspective into peace processes.[21]

---

[21] OSCE, 'Inclusion of Women and Effective Peace Processes: A Toolkit', *OSCE* (2019). Available at: Link.

The OSCE has undertaken practical support to enhance **women's meaningful participation** in politics and security sector institutions.

- Since 2016, the OSCE Field Operation in Tajikistan, has contributed to the Advancing Women's Public and Political Participation project which includes activities ranging from training, women's leadership skills development and supporting the drafting of gender action plans for political parties. The Field Operation has also supported the Tajikistan Ministry of Internal Affairs to establish and build the capacity of 19 Gender Sensitive Police Units, which aim to adopt victim-centred practices to handle domestic violence cases.

- In Kyrgyzstan, the Field Operation has worked in close partnership with ODIHR to provide support to the Kyrgyz Association of Women in the Security Sector, and in Kazakhstan the Field Operation has implemented a number of activities on promoting leadership for women in the security sector.

- In Albania, the Field Operation has provided support to address challenges for women's participation in politics including through the OSCE Women's Municipal Excellence Programme and through co-operation with ODIHR and the Central Election Commission (CEC) to deliver a gender assessment of CEC activities.

- The OSCE Mission to Montenegro has facilitated the exchange of good practice on women's participation in security sector institutions, including supporting the Montenegrin Women Police Association to organise the Global Conference on Gender Equality in the Police in 2024.

- The Secretariat supported the establishment of a regional network of women in law enforcement and border management agencies in Central Asia, alongside ODIHR.

- ODIHR has developed a methodology to support the protection and promotion of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of armed forces personnel.[22]

- Other practical support is provided through ODIHR and DCAF - Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance's Gender and Security Toolkit.[23]

The OSCE has promoted and led learning and the **development of thematic expertise** in line with the Participation pillar. Examples include:

- The Secretariat Gender Issues Programme has organised regional conferences and seminars on promoting women's participation in law enforcement in Central Asia, a 2024 OSCE Asian conference including a panel on WPS which focussed on strengthening synergies between the OSCE and the Asian Partners for Co-operation in advancing global commitments to WPS, and a 2024 Asian Partners for Co-operation Group meeting, co-organised by North Macedonia and Japan, on good practices regarding taking women's meaningful participation from norm to practice.

- The Secretariat has established the OSCE Scholarship for Peace and Security training programme on conflict prevention and resolution through arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation focussing on OSCE-relevant instruments, with a gender perspective in mind.

- Field Operations have hosted a range of roundtable events and meetings to strengthen knowledge and understanding on women's Participation. These include a two-day roundtable

---

[22] ODIHR, 'Human Rights and Gender Assessment in the Armed Forces - Facilitators Guide' (2024). Available at: Link.

[23] ODIHR, 'Gender and Security Toolkit', *OSCE* (2019). Available at: Link.

on gender mainstreaming for border personnel from the state border, customs and migration services in the provinces of Turkmenistan, and a meeting on women's participation in policing in Uzbekistan.

- ODIHR holds quarterly coordination meetings with the Civic Solidarity Platform's Working Group on Women and Gender Realities in the OSCE, and has worked with the Armenian and Moldovan governments to provide insight around women's participation to inform the development of their NAPs-WPS.

- HCNM has raised awareness on how the effective participation of national minority women in public life contributes to conflict prevention and is in the interest of pS.

4.1.2 Protection

The OSCE provides **capacity building and knowledge exchange** in support for survivors of violence.

- Through its WIN project, the OSCE Secretariat provides support for survivors of violence in partnership with the Women Against Violence Europe Network.[24] This work promotes capacity building and exchange of promising practices between women's specialist services.

- The Secretariat has established an exchange platform for women civil society leaders and service providers from Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and other regions to foster the sharing of good practices for addressing GBV in conflict.

The OSCE undertakes a range of activities pertaining to the **prevention and monitoring of GBV**. Work which aims to address GBV is highly relevant to addressing norms and power dynamics which lead to, or worsen, conflict-related GBV.

- ODIHR has provided training for officers of penitentiary and correctional institutions on preventing and addressing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and training for oversight mechanisms on integrating the issue of SGBV in detention monitoring. It has developed guidelines on this topic.[25]

- ODIHR has developed a factsheet explaining the characteristics of SGBV committed during armed conflict, the applicable international law, and providing an overview of international and domestic efforts to hold perpetrators accountable.[26]

- The OSCE RFoM launched the Safety of Female Journalists Online (SOFJO) project to address the growing threats faced by women journalists.[27] It focuses on combating gendered disinformation, providing safety resources, and promoting policies to counter both online and offline violence.

4.1.3 Prevention

The OSCE undertakes a range of **practical support and training activities** on Prevention.

---

[24] OSCE, 'Inclusion of Women and Effective Peace Processes: A Toolkit', *OSCE* (2019). Available at: Link.

[25] See: ODIHR, 'Quick Guide on Preventing and Addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Places of Deprivation of Liberty', OSCE (2024). Available at: Link; and ODIHR, 'Preventing and Addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Places of Deprivation of Liberty', OSCE (2019). Available at: Link.

[26] ODIHR, 'Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Armed Conflict', OSCE (2022). Available at: Link.

[27] RFoM, 'Safety of Female Journalists Online', *OSCE*. Webpage accessed March 2025. Available at: Link.

- The OSCE Secretariat delivers training and capacity building on gender equality, including with policewomen's associations on addressing firearm misuse and GBV in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and specialised training on addressing gendered manifestations of violent extremism in online spaces, with a focus on media and information literacy, through its INFORMED project.
- Field Operations conduct training in this area, including a workshop for members of the working group on gender and diversity in mine action in Tajikistan, and a national training course on human rights-compliant and gender-sensitive approaches in the investigation of online terrorist-related crimes in Uzbekistan.

The OSCE's activity on Prevention includes the **development of guidance and toolkits**. These include:

- The 'Preventing and responding to gender-based violence during the war and in post-war settings' toolkit and training manual developed as part of WIN, and a guidebook and training course on using gender as an analytical framework for improving work on preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalisation.
- In 2023, the Secretariat developed guidelines for the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Uzbekistan to better integrate gender perspectives into its work on disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction and management.

The OSCE undertakes a range of activities around **knowledge and awareness-raising**.

- The OSCE Secretariat has supported the design, implementation and monitoring of national awareness campaigns on the dangers of small arms and light weapons and their impact on women in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia.
- The Secretariat has conducted research on the role of women as actors in organised crime to better understand gender-specific risk factors and vulnerabilities for their recruitment into criminal networks.
- OSCE Field Operations conduct knowledge and awareness-raising activities; for example, in North Macedonia, the Field Operation conducts workshops to improve public safety and trust in law enforcement, providing a platform for women to voice security concerns and suggest solutions.

4.1.4 Relief and recovery

Examples of activities in this area include:

- OSCE Secretariat efforts to enhance inclusive and gender-sensitive humanitarian response in Ukraine, in co-operation with the State Emergency Service of Ukraine and in line with Ukraine's NAP-WPS for 2021-2025. This has been advanced, for example, through the OSCE Secretariat Extra-Budgetary Support Programme for Ukraine and the WIN project.[28]
- The OSCE Field Operation in Tajikistan is focused on improving the waste sector management and sanitation situation, especially in rural and disaster-prone areas of Tajikistan. The Field Operation is seeking to enhance the role and participation of women in the water sector, and is supporting the Syrdarya River Basin Forum through which women

---

[28] OSCE, 'OSCE Secretariat Extra-Budgetary Support Programme for Ukraine', *OSCE*. Webpage accessed February 2025. Available at: Link.

can voice their ideas, concerns and beliefs, and discuss their visions on improving water management in Tajikistan.[29]

4.2 Analysis of WPS good practice from the OSCE and beyond

4.2.1 Strengthening the normative framework

Examples from the OSCE

Developing the regional normative framework

The normative framework for advancing WPS within the OSCE is fairly well developed. The OSCE's commitment to gender equality and WPS in the 1999 Charter for European Security and 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, as well as the related Ministerial Council Decisions, is good practice, evidencing the role that the OSCE has played in advancing the regional normative framework on specific issues.

However, elements of the OSCE's normative framework are out of date. The 2004 Action Plan has not been updated since, and the WPS agenda has not featured significantly in Ministerial Council Decisions since 2018. The significant politicisation of the WPS agenda, and acknowledgment that gender equality is subject to dispute and dissent globally and within the OSCE region, means that a recent evaluation concluded that an update of the Action Plan is not possible in the current climate.[30] Nevertheless others have highlighted that revision of this framework document is needed in order to adapt it to the evolving international political environment and to include lessons the organisation has learned in recent years.

Knowledge products for operationalising the framework

The OSCE has developed excellent knowledge products through individual projects including WIN and CHANGE. These products, particularly the Guidance Note on Enhancing Gender Responsive Mediation,[31] the Gender and Security Toolkit developed jointly by ODIHR and DCAF - Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance,[32] a WIN project toolkit for OSCE staff to encourage men's engagement on gender equality work,[33] SOFJO Guidelines for Monitoring Online Violence Against Female Journalists,[34] and the OSCE-led survey on violence against women[35] support wider understanding of how to implement the WPS agenda, and are critical to mainstreaming gender equality.

---

[29] OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe, 'Environmental activities', *OSCE*. Webpage accessed August 2024. Available at: Link.

[30] Office of Internal Oversight, 'Independent Evaluation of the Implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality', *OSCE* (2022). P. 21. Available at: Link.

[31] OSCE, 'Enhancing Gender-Responsive Mediation: A Guidance Note', *OSCE* (2013). Available at: Link.

[32] ODIHR, 'Gender and Security Toolkit', *OSCE* (2019). Available at: Link.

[33] OSCE WIN, 'Engaging Men in Gender Equality at the OSCE: A Toolkit for OSCE Staff', *OSCE* (2022). Available at: Link.

[34] RFoM, 'Countering online violence: Guidelines for monitoring online violence against female journalists', *OSCE* (2023). Available at: Link.

[35] OSCE, 'OSCE-Led Survey on Violence Against Women: Main Report', *OSCE* (2019). Available at: Link.

Applying the normative framework to the institution

The OSCE Secretariat has progressed its commitments to gender-mainstreaming by institutionalising gender equality in recruitment processes, human resources policies, orientation and ad hoc training. This institutional approach to implementing the normative framework is further highlighted in learning products including the Institutional Mechanisms as Critical Actors for Gender Equality[36] and the Updated Guidelines on Gender Mainstreaming in Aarhus Centres Activities.[37] Further examples of positive initiatives include an Executive Gender Coach Programme for senior leadership, an anti-bias programme in the Secretariat, a mentoring programme for women in middle management positions, and use of a new performance management process to strengthen accountability.[38] This is good practice indicating how the normative framework can be developed and defined with regard to the institutional application thereof.

Examples from other regions

Non-permanent UNSC members' work to strengthen the normative framework

The UNSC has, since the introduction of UNSCR 1325 in 2000, been responsible for advancing the global normative framework for WPS through the adoption of nine subsequent thematic resolutions. However, resistance from some UNSC permanent members, particularly over inaction for maintaining peace and security in Syria and Ukraine, has created a legitimacy crisis and created challenges for the UNSC's work in this area.

Against this backdrop, UNSC non-permanent members have demonstrated good practice in advancing the agenda. This is evident in the case Resolution 2467 (2019) on the prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence, and Resolution 2493 (2019) on the development of context-specific approaches for women's participation in all UN-supported peace processes. Of importance in ensuring the success of these resolutions were non-permanent members - particularly South Africa and other African states - who pushed for practical and measurable steps to advance WPS regionally.[39]

Regional advancements on preventing violence against women and girls

Regional organisations can play an important role in strengthening issue-specific elements of the normative framework. For example, in 2014 the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights adopted a resolution which calls upon States parties to the African Convention on Human and Peoples' Rights to prevent violence against women and children in conflict, and to guarantee reparations to victims.[40] This - along with the Commission's call upon States parties to ensure that survivors of rape, incest and sexual assault have access to safe abortions - marked an important normative advance.[41] This practice indicates how the global WPS framework can be adopted,

---

[36] OSCE, 'Institutional Mechanisms as Critical Actors for Gender Equality: A Review from the OSCE Region', *OSCE ODIHR* (2023). Available at: Link.

[37] OSCE, 'Updated Guidelines on Gender Mainstreaming in Aarhus Centres Activities', *OSCE* (2021). Available at: Link.

[38] OSCE, 'Towards Achieving Gender Parity: New Global Approaches?', *OSCE Secretariat* (2018). Available at: Link.

[39] Catherine O'Rourke and Aisling Swaine. 'Heading to twenty: perils and promises of WPS Resolution 2493', Blog: *LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security* (2019). Available at: Link.

[40] ACHPR, 'Resolution on the Situation of Women and Children in Armed Conflict', (2014). Available at: Link.

[41] Radhika Coomaraswamy, 'A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325', *UN Women* (2015). P. 31. Available at: Link.

adapted, and advanced by regional institutions to build relevance and accountability for States parties at regional levels.

4.2.2 Concrete actions to advance the agenda

Examples from the OSCE

The OSCE has operationalised its commitment to gender equality through a range of concrete actions, with a 2024 independent evaluation confirming the OSCE has achieved tangible results.[42] This section sets out concrete actions according to the four pillars of the WPS agenda: participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery.

Participation

In 2021, OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid launched the OSCE Networking Platform for Women Leaders including Peacebuilders and Mediators. This platform connects women mediators and peacebuilders who are active in the OSCE region. It provides a space for learning, networking and sharing good practices to strengthen their ability to meaningfully engage in and influence peace processes at all levels.[43] The establishment of this Network is a clear example of a practical step to help advance the WPS agenda; members reflect on the importance of the Network as a space for skills development, and fostering solidarity between members to support them to continue to take action in challenging environments.[44]

In 2019, following a significant drop in representation of women from P3 to P4 levels, the OSCE's Department of Human Resources commissioned a study to explore the reasons for this. This found that unconscious bias was one of the most significant barriers to career progression. Subsequently, learning offerings on unconscious bias were expanded, including a campaign at the Secretariat in 2020.[45] As a result, the OSCE has considerably improved gender parity among its seconded, professional and senior management positions.[46]

PS have also used their NAPs-WPS to prioritise and commit to support for women mediators and women-led organisations in peace processes. For example, Norway's third NAP highlighted an "increase in the number of women participating in peace negotiations and peace processes" as an important output, and named Colombia as a priority country in which to focus its efforts.[47]

---

[42] Office of Internal Oversight, 'Independent Evaluation of the Implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality', *OSCE* (2022). P. 63-64. Available at: Link.

[43] OSCE, 'OSCE Networking Platform for Women Leaders including Peacebuilders and Mediators', *OSCE Secretariat* (2021). Available at: Link.

[44] OSCE, 'OSCE Networking Platform for Women Leaders including Peacebuilders and Mediators', *OSCE Secretariat* (2021). Available at: Link. See insights from women leaders Annika Söder, Ayşe Betül Çelik and Oksana Potapova.

[45] OSCE, 'Special Progress Report on the Implementation of the 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (2017-2019)', *OSCE* (2020). P. 9. Available at: Link.

[46] That said, achieving equitable representation of women in some positions remains a challenge; women still account for less than 30% of senior management staff at the OSCE. See: Office of Internal Oversight, 'Independent Evaluation of the Implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality', *OSCE* (2022). P. 25. Available at: Link.

[47] Norwegian Ministries, 'National Action Plan: Women, Peace and Security, 2015-2018' (2015). Available at: Link.

Protection

The OSCE-led survey on violence against women, conducted in 2018, indicates that 70% of women in the OSCE region, or an estimated number of 16 million women, have experienced some form of sexual harassment, stalking, intimate partner violence or non-partner violence (including psychological, physical or sexual violence) since the age of 15.[48] Both the OSCE Secretariat and OSCE pS are demonstrating good practice in efforts to protect women and girls from this shocking level of violence. The OSCE's zero-tolerance approach toward sexual abuse, abuse and harassment requires consistent actioning of policies and implementation mechanisms as well as clear support from leadership at all levels.[49] In 2023, the OSCE developed staff training modules on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), supporting the rollout of Staff Instruction No.21.Rev2. The focus on PSEA has also expanded to Field Operations' work; in 2023, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo co-organised workshops for high school students on the topic of sexual violence and harassment, which aimed to pave the way for improved reporting and awareness.[50]

Prevention

ODIHR's CHANGE project has advanced good practice on efforts to prevent conflict and violence against women and girls. The project has supported practical activities including developing a toolkit to address violence against women in politics, and establishing a Young Women's Political Academy for young women leaders from Georgia, North Macedonia, Poland and Uzbekistan to familiarise them with international standards and commitments on gender equality and preventing violence against women in politics.[51]

Annually since 2018, the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre implements the OSCE Scholarship for Peace and Security training programme for youth from the OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation, on conflict prevention and resolution through arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. This Extra-Budgetary Project continues to contribute to advancing empowerment of youth and women towards their full, equal and meaningful participation in the decision-making processes at all levels, with emphasis on the politico-military aspects of security.[52]

OSCE Field Operations are also demonstrating good practice in this area. The OSCE Programme Office in Kyrgyzstan is supporting a network of Women's Initiative Groups and the creation of the Kyrgyz Association of Women in the Security Sector.[53] This Association aims to promote gender equality in the security sector by uniting women across Kyrgyzstan's law enforcement agencies, security, and law and order sectors, and creating a space for the exchange of good practice with national and international counterparts. These efforts indicate strong attention and focus on this WPS pillar within the OSCE.

---

[48] OSCE, 'OSCE-Led Survey on Violence Against Women: Main Report', *OSCE* (2019). P. 32. Available at: Link.

[49] OSCE, 'Professional Working Environment', Staff Instruction No. 21/Rev.2 (2022). Para 6.3 Available at: Link.

[50] OSCE Mission in Kosovo, 'OSCE Mission in Kosovo concludes workshops on sexual violence and sexual harassment for high school students', OSCE (2023). Available at: Link.

[51] ODIHR, 'The CHANGE Update: Collectors' Edition, November 2021 to May 2023', *OSCE* (2023). See ps. 17 and 20 respectively. Available at: Link.

[52] OSCE, 'Scholarship for Peace and Security in the OSCE area', webpage accessed March 2025. Available at: Link.

[53] OSCE, 'Gender equality', OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek, webpage accessed August 2024. Available at: Link.

Relief and recovery

Analysis shows that this WPS pillar consistently receives the lowest level of policy and programming support within the OSCE.[54] However, substantial focus has been afforded in this area to the war in Ukraine where Ukrainian women stand at the forefront of humanitarian responses. Since 2022, women led organisations in Ukraine have pivoted their work to provide essential services and humanitarian assistance to vulnerable women and girls, and to support survivors of gender-based and conflict-related sexual violence.[55] In 2023, under the WIN-supported OSCE Networking Platform of Women Peace Leaders including Peacebuilders and Mediators, the OSCE supported women's leadership in peace processes and conflict resolution. Ukrainian women welcomed the networking platform provided by the OSCE as a unique opportunity to connect diverse women mediators and peacebuilders and to provide them with a safe space to share experiences and shape common strategies.[56]

Examples from other regions

Participation

The UN is making efforts to 'lead by example' with regard to increasing women's participation in peace processes and conflict resolution efforts. In the 2022 report of the UN Secretary General on WPS, UN contributions to this effort in Sudan were highlighted as good practice, in particular UN support to the formation of a five-woman observer team of gender experts and for their presence inside the 2021 negotiations between the transitional Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North Abdelaziz al-Hilu faction.[57] The integration of gender issues was achieved by encouraging a minimum 40% target for women's representation in party delegations, as well as consulting, convening and ensuring the political participation of diverse women's rights advocates and offering gender expertise and capacity building to the Sudan mediation team.

Protection

A 2023 survey of 458 women's and queer rights activists across 67 countries found that 75% of respondents had faced threats or harassment over the past three years, representing a 15 percentage-point increase on a previous survey conducted in 2021.[58] In an example of good practice to help address this challenge, the UN Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund introduced in 2022 a funding window for women human rights defenders and was able to provide support to 214 women and their 553 dependents.[59]

---

54 Henri Myrttinen, Laura J Shepherd and Hannah Wright, 'Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the OSCE Region', OSCE and LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security (2020). Ps. 27 and 75. Available at: Link.

55 Iryna Trokhym, 'Women-led organisations' response to the Ukraine crisis', Humanitarian Practice Network (2024). Webpage accessed August 2024. Available at: Link.

56 OSCE Secretariat, 'OSCE brings together Ukrainian women leaders to discuss effective strategies for increasing women's leadership', OSCE (2023). Webpage accessed August 2024. Available at: Link.

57 UN Security Council, 'Women and peace and security: Report of the Secretary General', S/2022/740 (2022). P. 6, para 25. Available at: Link.

58 Kvinna till Kvinna, 'Hope and resistance go together: The state of women human rights defenders 2023' (2023). P. 5. Available at: Link.

59 UN Security Council, 'Stronger Government Action, Financing Key to Better Protect Women during Armed Conflict, Involve Them in Peace Processes, Speakers Tell Security Council', UN Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, SC/15463 (2023). Available at: Link.

A second example of good practice considers efforts to protect women and girls from violence in Cross River State, Nigeria. The Cross River State government is seeking to enact laws such as the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Law No.10 2021 (VAPP) and the Girl Child Marriages and Female Circumcision (Prohibition) Law, but there remain widespread challenges to their implementation. The EU and the UN are supporting the Cross River State government to address these through a spotlight initiative which aims to enhance knowledge of the VAPP Law among law enforcement and security sector personnel and to develop and validate a costed VAWG Response Workplan.[60] The initiative has further supported 500 women's rights organisations (WROs) on advocacy and awareness raising efforts to help ensure accountability for implementation of the laws.

Prevention

Women and girls are disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis, facing distinct vulnerabilities to both the direct impacts of climate change and the indirect impacts such as increased insecurity. There are many examples of women's organisations and networks taking steps to further understand and address these risks and vulnerabilities. Local feminist groups in the Pacific, for instance, provide guidance to the Pacific Climate Security Network, which helps policymakers identify, assess and address regional climate security risks.[61]

Relief and recovery

The African Union (AU) has shown strong leadership by focusing on the gendered impact of COVID-19. In May 2020, in partnership with UN Women and the UN Economic Commission for Africa, the AU hosted the inaugural meeting of African Ministers for Gender and Women's Affairs, under the theme 'COVID-19 Response and Recovery – a Gendered Framework'. This meeting focussed on how to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on African women and girls, drawing lessons from gender-responsive crisis management and mitigation practices.[62] At the civil society level, organisations were active in producing analysis of the gendered impacts of the pandemic. In May 2020, with the support of the AU, the African Women's Leaders Network convened a virtual consultation on COVID-19 responses to provide a better understanding of the pandemic's effect on women in Africa.[63]

4.2.3 Financing, implementation and accountability

Examples from the OSCE

Inclusion of budgets for NAP implementation

Across the OSCE region the lack of funding for the implementation of Women, Peace and Security commitments is striking. After 20 years of implementation, 86% of pS' NAPs have minimal or no information on budgets or financing mechanisms, or on specific allocations to defined agencies or initiatives.[64] However, Albania (2019) and Ukraine (2016) both provide examples of good practice

---

[60] Cross River State government, EU and UN, 'Spotlight Initiative: To eliminate violence against women and girls', UN publications (2023). Ps. 4 and 16. Available at: Link.

[61] UN Security Council, 'Women and peace and security: Report of the Secretary General', S/2022/740 (2022). P. 18, para 67. Available at: Link.

[62] ACCORD, 'Resilience and determination: women, peace and security in the time of COVID-19'. (2020). Available at: Link.

[63] ACCORD, 'Resilience and determination: women, peace and security in the time of COVID-19'. (2020). Available at: Link.

[64] Henri Myrttinen, Laura J Shepherd and Hannah Wright, 'Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the OSCE Region', OSCE and LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security (2020). P. 37. Available at: Link.

here, setting out well-specified budgets: both NAPs estimate the overall cost of implementation and provide a detailed budget breakdown for activities.[65] This is vitally important to create transparency and accountability for NAP-WPS implementation.

Localisation as a means to support implementation of WPS objectives

Effective localisation of NAPs can support effective WPS implementation, ideally making NAPs more meaningful in terms of their impact and better able to respond to human security needs and different security risks faced in different parts of a country. The OSCE has supported localisation using Local Action Plans.[66] For example, it has organised public consultations on development of a second NAP in six towns across Serbia together with the Serbian government's Office for Co-operation with Civil Society, and the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities in 2016.[67]

An analysis of the OSCE's efforts into WPS localisation found the impact was varied and had been challenged by issues of competing competencies and authorities between national and local level actors. Analysis of OSCE WPS implementation found that "while NAPs are developed, adopted and implemented, they remain somewhat peripheral to the actual work on issues of peace and security, especially when there is a crisis situation".[68]

Good practices on monitoring and evaluation

There have been four independent evaluations providing accountability of the 2004 Action Plan. The most recent evaluation, published in 2024 for the period 2018-2022, indicates that the Action Plan demonstrated good practice at the time of its adoption in setting out a robust accountability mechanism, including annual internal reporting by the Secretary General to the Permanent Council as well as the requirement of regular independent evaluations.[69] These annual reports demonstrate a range of progress being made against the different elements of the 2004 Action Plan, across the OSCE, work of pS, work of dedicated projects such as CHANGE and WIN, and in the OSCE's support to pS. That said, the 2024 independent evaluation finds that this mechanism is widely held to be insufficient, with the view widely held by Gender Focal Points within the OSCE.

However, one good practice to help advance accountability is evidenced through individual performance appraisals of OSCE managers who have had obligatory gender-responsive objectives in their performance management agreements since 2019.[70] pS have also demonstrated good practice with regard to reporting on the implementation of WPS objectives. In 2023, Belgium and the UK championed the annual voluntary report on WPS under the Code of Conduct (on Politico-Military Aspects of Security), and continue to encourage other pS to contribute to this initiative and share

---

[65] Henri Myrttinen, Laura J Shepherd and Hannah Wright, 'Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the OSCE Region', OSCE and LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security (2020). P. 37. Available at: Link.

[66] Henri Myrttinen, Laura J Shepherd and Hannah Wright, 'Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the OSCE Region', OSCE and LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security (2020). P. 66. Available at: Link.

[67] OSCE Mission to Serbia, 'OSCE Mission to Serbia Supports Public Consultations on Implementation of UN SCR 1325 – Women, Peace and Security (2016–2020) National Action Plan', *OSCE* (2016). Available at: Link.

[68] Henri Myrttinen, Laura J Shepherd and Hannah Wright, 'Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the OSCE Region', OSCE and LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security (2020). P. 75. Available at: Link.

[69] Office of Internal Oversight, 'Independent Evaluation of the Implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (2018-2022)', *OSCE* (2024). P. 38. Available at: Link.

[70] Office of Internal Oversight, 'Independent Evaluation of the Implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (2018-2022)', *OSCE* (2024). P. 39. Available at: Link.

good practice.[71] Furthermore, the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, FSC Support Unit, continues to gather gender-disaggregated data on the participation in OSCE political/military events, which is helping to generate evidence on the extent to which women are represented among delegations.

Examples from other regions

Women, Peace and Security financing

The 2015 Global Study on UNSCR 1325 found that there is a "consistent, striking disparity between policy commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment, and the financial allocations to achieve them."[72] This evidences the critical importance of financing WPS objectives effectively, with responsibility for this shared by all actors with WPS commitments and mandates. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and PeaceWomen have demonstrated good practice in trying to respond to this challenge through the launch of the Interactive Toolkit on Women, Peace and Security Financing in September 2016 which includes tools and guidance for different actors on this matter.[73]

WPS framework and implementation guidance calls for the identification and involvement of WROs and civil society in implementing the WPS agenda. Strengthening WROs' capacity to not only meaningfully participate, but also govern and lead their own WPS work, is fundamental to advancing the WPS agenda across all pillars and to sustaining any progress made against WPS objectives within a given initiative or project.[74] Given the importance of the role of WROs and CSOs in the implementation of the WPS agenda, the establishment of several funds to ensure more WPS funding reaches them is good practice. These include the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, a global partnership launched in 2016 which mobilises and channels flexible funding to women peacebuilders, humanitarians and human rights defenders working to advance WPS objectives.[75] The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) publishes annual reporting on the scale and impact of its financing which is a key accountability mechanism.

Regional support to implementation of Women, Peace and Security Commitments

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has good practice on implementation within its current Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security (RPA WPS), launched in 2022. The plan delivers clear guidance for WPS implementation across the region through several means, including a detailed section on priority strategies and actions that can be taken forward under the four pillars of the WPS agenda set against a tangible, measurable results framework.[76] It also includes detailed guidance on implementation, coordination, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, and additional guidance on implementation including overarching principles to follow such as inclusive approaches to delivering WPS objectives, and ensuring they respond to regional, national

---

[71] Neil Holland, 'OSCE Security Dialogue on Women, Peace and Security: UK Statement, March 2024', speech, FCDO (2024). Available at: Link.

[72] Radhika Coomaraswamy, 'A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325', *UN Women* (2015). P. 372. Available at: Link.

[73] WILPF, 'Women, Peace and Security Financing', webpage accessed August 2024. Available at: Link.

[74] UN, 'Women, Peace and Security: Study submitted by the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)', E.03.IV.1 (2022). P. 72. Available at: Link.

[75] WPHF, 'Our mission', webpage accessed August 2024. Available at: Link.

[76] ASEAN, 'ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security' (2022). Sect. 1.6, ps. 20-36. Available at: Link.

and subnational WPS priorities.[77] In sum, ASEAN's RPA WPS evidences how plans for determining and implementing WPS objectives can be consultatively agreed and effectively defined within a comprehensive regional framework.

Benchmarking: other institutions' good practice on monitoring and accountability

Preceding analysis in this Chapter indicates that the OSCE has work to do to improve its monitoring and accountability practice. In support of this process, the 2024 independent evaluation of the OSCE's 2004 Gender Action Plan sets out important benchmarking on other institutions' good practice on monitoring and accountability from which the OSCE could learn.[78] First, it highlights the EU's deployment of Country-Level Implementation Plans under Gender Action Plan (GAP) III which are reviewed and monitored periodically, and which add a layer of accountability for GAP III implementation. Second, it sets out the Council of Europe's work to monitor the fulfilment of its Member States' commitments on gender equality through existing monitoring mechanisms for relevant conventions to which Member States are States Party (such as the Istanbul Convention), which shows how wider international normative frameworks on gender equality and WPS can be leveraged to support institutional monitoring. Third, it spotlights the UN's recent introduction of a system-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. This includes a scorecard to help harmonise and standardise the different monitoring and evaluation processes developed and maintained by UN organisations.

4.2.4 Adapting to emerging challenges

The WPS agenda is subject to the threat of its being sidelined in a changing geopolitical landscape where adherence with human rights frameworks is waning, and new security challenges are not systematically included within WPS frameworks. This subsection explores good practice in adapting to these challenges.

Examples from the OSCE

The OSCE has sought to integrate gender equality in two phases: the first, to 2004, focused on 'soft' security and the second, after 2005, on 'harder' security and military issues.[79] As a result, over time OSCE guidance and pS' NAPs have incorporated a diverse range of issues that extend beyond traditional security concerns. These include addressing intersecting forms of discrimination, climate change, cyber security and disinformation.

Highlighting the relevance of WPS to military operations

World military expenditure increased for the ninth consecutive year in 2023, reaching a total of $2443 billion.[80] Against this backdrop, ensuring military personnel and leadership have the guidance and training to integrate human rights-compliant and gender-sensitive approaches in their work is critical. Demonstrating good practice in this area, the OSCE has developed guidance for military

---

[77] ASEAN, 'ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security' (2022). Sect. 1.6-2, ps. 37-46. Available at: Link.

[78] Office of Internal Oversight, 'Independent Evaluation of the Implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (2018-2022)', *OSCE* (2024). P. 39. Available at: Link.

[79] Anne Jenichen, Jutta Joachim and Andrea Schneiker, ' "Gendering" European Security: Policy changes, Reform Coalitions and Opposition in the OSCE', *European Security* 27(1) (2018). Ps. 1-19. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2018.1433660

[80] SIPRI, 'Trends in World Military Expenditure', *SIPRI Fact Sheet* (2024). Available at: Link.

personnel working at tactical level in Peace Support Operations which emphasise that this approach benefits military missions and operations as it strengthens the overall operational picture and situational awareness.[81] ODIHR has developed a facilitators guide on how to conduct human rights and gender self-assessment in the armed forces to contribute to proper respect for, protection and promotion of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of armed forces personnel,[82] and a compendium of standards, good practices and recommendations on this subject.[83] To support the implementation of this guidance, ODIHR and the Permanent Delegation of Sweden to the OSCE, together with the Permanent Delegation of Canada to the OSCE, organised a 2018 event on the role of military commanders in the prevention of SGBV, in peacetime and in crisis response operations.[84] Further good practice on the relevance of WPS to military operations includes the Code of Conduct (on Politico-Military Aspects of Security), under which some pS have championed annual voluntary reporting on WPS.

Adapting to cyber security threats

The OSCE has recognised that gendered disinformation, which plays on misogynistic and exclusionary stereotypes, tropes and insults, is the latest evolution in online harassment. The OSCE RFoM commissioned a report to explore the influence and impact of state-sponsored disinformation campaigns, including the gendered dimensions thereof. It found that the combination of ingrained sexism, manipulated media, and social media platforms enable state-aligned campaigns to mobilise resources and supporters in efforts to destroy women's reputations and push them out of the public sphere.[85] This report is an example of good practice in building the evidence base on this issue. A further example is the 2021 OSCE report on violence against women journalists and politicians,[86] which highlighted the effects of gendered disinformation in the OSCE region and which has led to guidance on addressing violence against women in politics.[87]

WPS and climate security

There is an increasingly robust body of evidence on the links between climate change and security.[88] The NAPs-WPS of OSCE pS increasingly include references to climate change, indicating they are starting to acknowledge and respond to these links, and the gendered dimensions thereof. Finland's 4th NAP includes a focus on climate as a cross-cutting theme and includes a Result (1.3) on this, stipulating that a "Gender perspective is integrated into climate and environment actions, with special attention to women's roles and meaningful participation as well as intersecting factors". Ireland's 3rd NAP also includes reference to climate change as an emerging issue, and sets out a commitment to deepen understanding of the gendered impacts thereof to inform Ireland's efforts to address them.

---

[81] OSCE, 'Gender in military operations: Guidance for military personnel working at tactical level in Peace Support Operations', *OSCE* (2018). Available at: Link.

[82] ODIHR, 'Human Rights and Gender Assessment in the Armed Forces - Facilitators Guide' (2024). Available at: Link.

[83] ODIHR, 'Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel: Standards, Good Practices and Recommendations' (2021). Available at: Link.

[84] Forum for Security Co-operation, 'Special session of OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation marks 18th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security', ODIHR (2018). Available at: Link.

[85] Courtney Radsch, 'AI and Disinformation: State-Aligned Information Operations and the Distortion of the Public Sphere', *OSCE* (2022). P. 22. Available at: Link.

[86] OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Special Representative on Gender Issues, 'Violence against women journalists and politicians: a growing crisis', *OSCE* (2021). Available at: Link.

[87] OSCE ODIHR, 'Addressing violence against women in politics in the OSCE region: Toolkit', *OSCE* (2022). Available at: Link.

[88] UN Environment Programme, 'Climate change and security risks', webpage accessed August 2024. Available at: Link.

At the wider OSCE level, the WIN project shows good practice in its efforts to raise awareness around persisting gaps and barriers to gender-responsive and disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction, as well as identifying good practices and actions for policymakers.[89] This focus on establishing specific actions and recommendations is an important step, leading from narrative acknowledgement to specific actions and targets.[90]

Inclusion of intersecting needs and minoritized groups

The OSCE does not make explicit reference to the rights of those of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity and expression or non-discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity within its WPS policy frameworks. However, ODIHR has been active in monitoring hate crimes and violence against those of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, and it has worked with local NGOs to legislate against homophobia in pS in the Western Balkans.[91] The Gender Issues Programme under the WIN Project and HCNM conducted a joint pioneering study on the situation of minority women with recommendations on supporting women's leadership, participation and protection from violence.[92]

While it is reported that the OSCE Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area (2003) has resulted in limited progress,[93] some Missions have been conducting more work in this area. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Mission supported Roma women, mainly via the Roma Women Network 'Success'.[94] It further conducted a gender review of existing Local Roma Action Plans and supported the development of a gender mainstreaming methodology for the integration of gender perspectives in these action plans. It also helped Roma women in five communities to present themselves as potential leaders. Consequently, a young Roma woman from Mostar was elected to the Bosnia and Herzegovina Council of Ministers Roma Advisory Board.[95]

There is evidence of the ODIHR undertaking action to help increase knowledge around the rights of persons with disabilities. For example, in May 2022 it hosted a moot court competition on the rights of persons with disabilities. This competition helped participants learn about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.[96]

---

[89] WIN, 'Environmental and economic rights', webpage accessed August 2024. Available at: Link.

[90] WIN, 'Report from the High-Level Conference on Gender-Responsive and Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction policies and management in the OSCE region and the OSCE partners for co-operation', *OSCE* (2022). Available at: Link.

[91] Piotr Godzisz, 'The Europeanization of Anti-LGBT Hate Crime Laws in the Western Balkans', *Crime, Law and Social Change*, Vol. 71, pp. 291–306 (2019).

[92] OSCE, 'What does it take - achieving equality for minority women', *OSCE* (2023). Available at: Link.

[93] Bernard Rorke, '20 years of 'improving the situation of Roma': The OSCE Action Plan and the 'inexcusable failures' of participating States', European Roma Rights Centre (2023). Available at: Link.

[94] OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, 'OSCE Mission to BiH supports Month of Roma Women's Activism', *OSCE* (2021). Available at: Link.

[95] OSCE, 'Special Progress Report on the Implementation of the 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (2017-2019)', *OSCE* (2020). P. 25. Available at: Link.

[96] ODIHR, 'The CHANGE Update: Collectors' Edition, November 2021 to May 2023', *OSCE* (2023). P. 11. Available at: Link.

Examples from other regions

Responding to violence against women and girls online

Violence against women and girls online is a phenomenon which rapidly escalated during the COVID-19 pandemic.[97] Good practice in responding to this challenge is drawn from states which have adopted legislation on this matter, thus supporting their WPS commitments to Protect women and girls. The Philippines, which in 2019 passed The Safe Spaces Act, is one such example.[98] The Act updates the policy definition of the sites in which people are to be protected from gender-based sexual harassment, with Section 2 acknowledging the right to safety and security "not only in private, but also on the streets, public spaces, online, workplaces and educational and training institutions".[99]

Good practice is also evidenced by institutions in updating their gender strategies to respond to emerging threats around GBV. For example, the Council of Europe adopted a new and updated Gender Equality Strategy in 2018 which placed increased emphasis on tackling violence against women and girls.[100] This indicates the importance of ensuring action plans and strategies are regularly updated to ensure they remain relevant to emerging threats.

A Common African Position on climate change

In March 2022, African countries adopted a Common African Position to integrate gender equality into the climate change action agenda.[101] The Position recognises the gendered impacts and vulnerabilities of the climate crisis, as well as the importance of ensuring women's experience and knowledge is included in climate adaptation plans. It further includes a call to action to national, regional and global stakeholders on a range of matters, including: strengthening capacities to better collect, analyse, disseminate and use disaggregated data to conduct gender analysis on climate change; providing capacity and technical support to ensure that action plans on climate change and disaster risk reduction plans are gender-responsive and transformative; and improved coordination between gender equality and environmental mechanisms.[102]

---

97 UN Women, 'Accelerating efforts to tackle online and technology facilitated violence against women and girls (VAWG)', *UN Women Policy Brief* (2022). Available at: Link.

98 Republic of the Philippines, 'Safe Spaces Act', Republic Act No. 11313. Available at: Link.

99 Araba Sey, 'Gender Security and Safety in the ASEAN Digital Economy;, ERIA Discussion Paper Series No. 465 (2022). P. 6. Available at: Link.

100 Office of Internal Oversight, 'Independent Evaluation of the Implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (2018-2022)', *OSCE* (2024). P. 21. Available at: Link.

101 AU, 'African Countries adopt Common African Position to Integrate Gender Equality in Climate Action Agenda', AU Press Release (2022). Available at: Link.

102 AU, 'African Countries adopt Common African Position to Integrate Gender Equality in Climate Action Agenda', AU Press Release (2022). Available at: Link.

4.3 Mapping of WPS actors relevant to the OSCE

Organisation	Sphere of influence	WPS mandate
United Nations (UN)	193 member states (Global)	The UN's work on WPS is guided by the UNSC Resolutions on WPS and other internationally agreed norms and standards. Agencies such as UN Women lead on implementing the WPS agenda through research initiatives, data collection, learning exchanges, and documentation of good practices to inform policy and programming across all UN Member States.
Council of Europe (CoE)	46 member states (Europe)	The CoE work on WPS is integrated into their Gender Equality Strategy (2024-2029) and is aligned with various conventions and recommendations which set clear standards on human rights and gender equality, as well as gender mainstreaming, supported by the Gender Equality Commission.
European Union (EU)	27 member states (Europe)	EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security and the EU Action Plan on WPS (2019-2024) is linked to the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP III) (2021-2025) and the EU Global Strategy. The EU is a global leader on WPS policy and implementation, with legal commitments on WPS implementation for member states.
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)	32 member countries (Europe and North America)	NATO's Policy on WPS (2024) provides a political framework to mainstream WPS and gender equality across its core tasks of deterrence and defence, crisis prevention and management, and co-operative security as set out in the Strategic Concept (2022).
Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)	57 member states (Global)	The OIC's 57 member states include OSCE pS including Azerbaijan, Albania and Türkiye. The OIC is committed to advancing the WPS agenda, and has set out plans for advancing these objectives through documents including the 2016 OIC Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women.
UN Security Council (UNSC)	5 permanent members and 10 non-permanent members (Global)	The UNSC has approved a total of 10 resolutions that constitute the core of the WPS agenda. They guide global efforts to promote gender equality and strengthen women's participation, protection and rights in conflict prevention through post-conflict reconstruction.

Also of relevance are the relations the OSCE maintains with 11 Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation to better address shared security challenges,[103] and a number of Memorandums of Understanding the OSCE shares with partners including UN Women, the United Nations Population Fund, and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (with which the OSCE shares a Gender Action Plan). The OSCE also works with Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, on cross-border crime, human trafficking and migration, and INTERPOL and the OSCE have conducted joint operations to tackle human trafficking and cybercrime. While much of this work does not pertain strictly to or focus explicitly on WPS, WPS is highly relevant. Finally, the OSCE has various engagements with civil society at sub-national, national, regional and international level to advance WPS goals.

---

[103] OSCE, 'Partners for Co-operation', webpage accessed February 2025. Available at: Link.