



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1577 Vienna, 17 September 2026

EU Statement on the Annual Progress Report on the 2004 OSCE Gender Action Plan

The European Union thanks OSCE Secretary General Feridun Sinirlioğlu for his presentation of the Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the Sofia 2004 OSCE Action Plan on the Promotion of Gender Equality. Gender Equality is a cornerstone of the OSCE comprehensive approach to security and essential to achieving peace, security and stability.

The EU will continue to strongly oppose and step up action to combat all forms of discrimination, with specific attention to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including on grounds of sex, race, ethnic or social origin, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, disability, age, sexual orientation and gender identity. It remains unacceptable that, in 2026, women and girls still face discrimination, harmful gender stereotypes, negative social norms, and violence that hinder their full and equal enjoyment of human rights and their ability to reach their full potential.

Mr Chair,

Earlier this year, the UN Secretary-General's report on conflict-related sexual violence attributed responsibility to Russia for such acts and documented widespread and systematic sexual violence, based on survivor testimonies, in the context of its war of aggression against Ukraine. These findings are consistent with reports of Russia's systematic and widespread human rights violations found under the OSCE Moscow Mechanism, the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, the International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine and ODIHR reports. Conflict-related sexual violence constitutes a flagrant violation of international law and may amount to a war crime or crime against humanity.

We stress the importance of the full implementation of all international obligations in the field of gender equality, including the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions, as well as all OSCE commitments and recommendations on

equality of rights, equal opportunities, non-discrimination, including the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality.

We highly value the work of the autonomous institutions, the OSCE Secretariat and field missions in supporting participating States in implementing their commitments. Integrating gender mainstreaming into the monitoring and evaluation of all OSCE activities, programmes and projects, enhances their effectiveness in all three dimensions.

We welcome progress towards gender-balanced recruitment, but note that women remain underrepresented in senior leadership, particularly in field presences. We therefore encourage further efforts to ensure women are equally represented at all levels of decision-making and call on all participating States to nominate qualified female candidates for seconded positions. We also note that gender mainstreaming remains uneven across the Organization. We encourage stronger implementation, monitoring and accountability to ensure that gender considerations are consistently integrated across OSCE activities and projects.

We agree on the importance of engaging men for gender equality, and therefore especially welcome activities aimed at doing so. The EU recall its commitment to support women's and youth's equal, full, effective and meaningful participation, in all their diversity, including in all spheres of public and political life.

Albania, Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.