



## **OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality**

### **ODIHR contribution for the Annual Evaluation Report on Gender Issues in the OSCE**

**May 2006**

## **ODIHR contribution for the Annual Implementation Report on Gender Issues in the OSCE**

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### **Introduction**

In accordance with the task contained in the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, the ODIHR has developed an Implementation Plan outlining various organizational and programmatic actions designed to promote implementation of the goals and objectives of the OSCE Gender Action Plan.

Programmatic activities and strategic objectives identified by the ODIHR to meet the goals of the Action Plan and outlined in the Implementation Plan also build on achievements and progress made so far in the implementation of ODIHR's work in the promotion of gender equality. Furthermore, the Implementation Plan lays out the methodology, programmatic measures and functional responsibility for the implementation of these measures designed to promote the goals of the Action Plan.

Recognizing the long-term nature of processes within the Human Dimension, the ODIHR works to assist participating States to promote gender equality, based on the strategy of fostering a policy-dialogue with governments and civil society in order to strengthen their commitment to gender equality as a fundamental element of protecting human rights and fostering democratic development. This approach underscores the key principle of the OSCE's policy in the field of gender equality that "equal rights of women and men and the protection of their human rights are essential to peace, sustainable democracy, economic development and therefore to security and stability in the OSCE region" (Decision No. 14/04, 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality).

The guiding principles of the Action Plan that form part of the ODIHR's work in the field of promoting gender equality are mainstreaming a gender perspective into activities, policies, projects and programmes of the Organization, promoting gender equality in participating States and supporting participating States in implementing relevant commitments to promote equality between women and men. Priority areas in this work are focused around the following provisions:

- Ensuring equal opportunity for participation of women in political and public life (Chapter V, Para 44 (d))
- Ensuring non-discriminatory legal and policy frameworks (Chapter V, Para 44 (b))
- Preventing violence against women (Chapter V, Para 44 (c))
- Encouraging women's participation in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction (Chapter V, Para 44 (e))
- Promoting equal opportunities for women in the economic field (Chapter V, Para 44 (f))
- Building national mechanisms for the advancement of women (Chapter V, Para 44 (g))

In line with the underlying principle of the OSCE Gender Action Plan aspects of gender equality are mainstreamed in all of ODIHR programmatic activities. In addition the ODIHR has two specifically gender related programmes: “Increased Participation of Women in Democratic Processes” within the Democratization Department, and “Human Rights, Women and Security” within the Human Rights Department. The ODIHR also runs two specifically gender related projects. The first is dedicated to “Development of Practical Ways to Encourage Greater Participation by Women in Political Life in the OSCE Region and Beyond” (Elections Department), and the second to “Awareness Raising for Romani Women Activists” (Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues).

### **Promoting gender equality within the Organization: training, management, recruitment and public relations**

During the reporting period a conscious approach has been taken to promoting a professional and gender-sensitive management culture and working environment. Relevant OSCE regulatory documentation has been brought to the attention of staff and remained posted on the intranet for easy access; gender-related information (in particular, the information about the AI 21/2006 Professional Working Environment; Policy against Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination) has been included in the induction package and training for newly recruited staff. No incidents of gender-related conflict or mistreatment were notified by staff in the reporting period.

The ODIHR’s recruitment practices aim to promote equal opportunities for all, and to ensure that well-qualified women are amongst applicants and short-listed candidates for all positions. A particular goal is to increase the number of women working in the ODIHR at senior levels. In establishing short-lists and interview panels gender balance is maintained as far as possible. During the reporting period the ODIHR launched three recruitment procedures for Programme Heads. All three resulted in a female candidate being selected for the position.

Gender balance is one of the guiding principles when identifying experts for projects, inviting speakers for events and in recruiting new staff members to the Programmes.

The statistics indicate that the ODIHR received in total slightly more applications from men than from woman. However, the number of short-listed and interviewed women is noticeably higher than the number of men. A similar trend can be noted for applicants selected. The statistics also indicate that there is gender balance amongst the professional staff at each level below P5.<sup>1</sup> However, currently there is rather an imbalance in the GS staff category: the ODIHR employs three times more women than men at this level.

The planned specific training programmes for ODIHR staff on gender awareness and mainstreaming within substantive programmes (including evaluation with gender indicators) could not take place in the reporting period due to complications on the provider's side. This training is now planned for the last quarter of 2006.

During 2004-2006 the ODIHR conducted ten Human Dimension Courses for staff from field operations. The interactive training addressed the issues of gender mainstreaming from two perspectives: in the everyday work of the field operation and in programme activities. The

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<sup>1</sup> Because of the very low number of the positions at the level P5 and above the statistics are not representative.

ODIHR Human Dimension Course also includes the lesson that gender should be mainstreamed in all criminal justice and fair trials work, and should form part of hypothetical and interactive exercises in order to increase awareness and expertise among relevant actors. Statistics for 2004-2005 show that 54 % women and 46% men participated in these Human Dimension Courses.

ODIHR's press reporting reflects gender mainstreaming as far as possible, particularly in relation to election observation, where participation of women is one of the issues observed. ODIHR highlights gender equality as one of its main activities on its homepage and has made the OSCE Gender Action Plan, as well as other relevant documentation available on its webpage. Activities relating to gender equality are highlighted in press releases and in press features, such as "*ODIHR helps ensure women's voices are heard in South Caucasus and Central Asia*" published in December 2005.

Most of ODIHR's reporting, and all its publications are edited to ensure that they follow OSCE standards. Those include ensuring gender-sensitive language and that when attention is drawn to individuals, specialists or officials, women are represented as often as possible. The ODIHR also strives to ensure that women and men are equally represented visually on all its material, be it printed or web-based.

### **Supporting participating States in implementing relevant commitments and promoting gender equality in participating States**

This section outlines how the gender perspective has been mainstreamed into the various ODIHR programmatic activities.

In its election observation activities and through its Election Observation Missions (EOMs), the ODIHR regularly provides gender specific analysis of election processes and women's participation in elections, both as election administrators and as political contestants. EOMs either include a Gender Analyst or a member of the Core Team, often the Political Analyst, is specifically tasked to undertake and co-ordinate all gender related analysis. All members of the Core Team, specifically the Legal Analyst, the Political Analyst, the Election Analyst, the Media Analyst and the LTO Co-ordinator, are requested to analyze how gender issues relate to their area of responsibility and how legal, political and social structures affect women and men in electoral processes.

The EOM examines women's participation as voters, candidates and elected representatives; the participation of women in leadership roles within state institutions, electoral commissions, and political parties; and how women and men are affected by the respective legal framework and media structures. Long-term and short-term observers (LTOs/STOs) are also responsible for reporting on gender related issues. Specific questions pertaining to these issues are included in the observation forms that STOs fill out on election day as well as in the briefing materials and instructions that LTOs and STOs receive. The *Handbook for Monitoring Women's Participation in Elections*,<sup>2</sup> published in 2004, is systematically used on all EOMs as a working tool. It provides guidance to members of the EOM and sets out practical steps to integrate a gender perspective into the work of an EOM. It assists EOM members in identifying and assessing elements and issues that may impact on women's equal political

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<sup>2</sup> The Handbook can be found at [www.osce.org/odihr/item\\_11\\_13585.html](http://www.osce.org/odihr/item_11_13585.html).

participation. It helps ensure that each EOM takes into account how the election process affects both women and men when drawing conclusions on the extent to which an election process meets OSCE commitments.

The presence of Gender Analysts on EOMs contributed to the capacity of EOMs, including core team analysts, long-term and short-term observers, to monitor effectively issues affecting women in electoral processes, such as opportunities or barriers to becoming candidates or promoting their candidacy, participating in political discourse in election campaigns, observing election processes, working as election administrators and voting. Secondly, the inclusion of Gender Analysts on EOMs resulted in analysis and assessment, for each election observed, of the situation of women in political life (as candidates, elected officials, voters and election administrators), the impact of the electoral system on women's opportunities to be elected, provisions of the legal framework for the equality of women and men in the election process, and the impact of election practices on the full participation of women as voters. Such analysis provided greater information to the host country and to other participating States on the participation of women in election processes.

These activities have led to recommendations to host countries regarding improvements to their electoral legislation and practices. These recommendations focused mainly on legislative changes to promote equality of women, the impact of electoral systems on women's opportunities to be elected, improving the representation of women in election administration, and on eliminating specific electoral violations impacting women, such as family or proxy voting. In addition, these analyses and recommendations also identified best practices to contribute to ensuring equal opportunities and to overcome barriers for women's participation in electoral processes. All project activities, as well as the reports and recommendations issued as a result of including Gender Analysts in EOMs, should increase awareness of participating States, electoral stakeholders, civil society and election observers to the barriers that can limit women from fully realizing equal rights within election processes.

Review of election legislation of participating States is a regular activity which contributes to ensuring non-discriminatory legal and policy frameworks. These legal reviews assess *inter alia* whether participation of women in election processes is enabled through legal provisions and whether specific steps are foreseen to increase the participation of women as voters, candidates and elected representatives as well as within the election administration.

In an effort to promote women's participation in political processes, the ODIHR facilitated the joint initiative of civil society experts and political parties in Georgia and the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) to assess the current state of development of political parties, the degree of democratic practices inside parties and their impact on opportunities available to women members to achieve leading positions. The Georgian Interactive Political Party Assessment coached the six main political parties through a critical qualitative self-analysis. The parties were confronted with questions and issues on their party functioning and were provided with the academic and analytical support to discuss them. Substantial time and research has been carried out in the field of women's participation. Both party leaderships and the parties' women's groups have been actively involved throughout. In addition, half of the Multi-party Conference in May 2005 was devoted to the role of women in political parties. The report that was published at the end of the interactive assessment contains an extensive chapter on "Women and Political Parties" and presents a number of concrete recommendations from the parties themselves on improving the position of women in political parties. The results of this initiative clearly underscored the need for political

parties to become more inclusive, transparent and representative by expanding political opportunities and leadership roles for women.

Further, more specific activities for increasing the role of women in democratic governance are carried out by means of the long-term programme on Increased Participation of Women in Democratic Processes. This is designed to foster women's leadership, civil society coalition building and networking, government–civil society co-operation to promote gender equality and assistance in the development of national expertise of gender equality. In the framework of the programme, ODIHR provides direct expertise on gender equality issues to women's NGOs and grassroots leaders and assistance in the development of joint government and civil society initiatives in the field of advancing women's status in public life. This programme is described in more detail below (see section *Programmatic activities with specific focus on gender*).

Through its activities in the field of legislative support and promotion of the rule of law, the ODIHR assists participating States in ensuring gender equality by supporting necessary legal reforms. The assistance is provided in the form of review of draft legislation on gender equality issues and assessment of its compliance with international standards. So far, ODIHR has assessed equality related legislation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and will be working with the expert panel on the Equal Opportunities Law in Albania, as well as assisting in the assessment of the Equal Opportunities Law in Azerbaijan. To date two ODIHR legal opinions were issued on the first draft of the Equal Opportunities Law in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The first opinion issued was submitted to the authorities and some of the recommendations were taken on board and introduced in the draft. The revised version of the Draft Law was reviewed again by the ODIHR and will be discussed at a roundtable on the law itself. In addition, ODIHR maintains the [www.legislationline.org](http://www.legislationline.org) database, which features a large compilation of laws and regulations from various OSCE participating States on gender equality, amongst others, as well as international standards on the same.

As a standard practice, upon provision of an assessment of a criminal code, ODIHR recommends that gender neutral language be used so that, for example, the crime of rape is not limited to female victims, but that the criminal code recognizes that men can also be victims of rape.

ODIHR activities in the field of migration, namely in the area of internal and cross-border migration, are designed to provide expertise and capacity to national migration agencies to institutionalise migration policies that respect human rights of all individuals, based on the principles of non-discrimination, rule of law, freedom of movement and free choice of place of residence. Objectives of developing migration policies that provide effective safeguards against gender-based discrimination form a critical part of these activities and are integrated in all aspects of programmatic work, including the reform of the *propiska* system, promotion of migrant integration policies, and fostering interstate co-operation on labour migration, migration-related information and human rights of migrants.

While specific gender issues underpinning different migration trends or rather emanating from discriminatory and deficient migration policies may vary in different geographic contexts, analysing gender aspects of labour migration and trafficking-related migration trends serve as important indicators for programming of ODIHR activities in this field. When assisting participating States to develop effective migration policies and foster inter-state co-operation

in the field, the ODIHR has also identified the need to conduct a joint assessment of migration and trafficking issues in order to develop a better understanding of migration trends at sub-regional levels and determine possible intervention mechanisms to assist in developing sound protection and prevention mechanisms against forced labour and trafficking.

Since 2001, the ODIHR's Contact Point on Roma and Sinti Issues (CPRSI) has been involved in a joint EC-ODIHR activity on "Roma and the Stability Pact in South-Eastern Europe", implemented in co-operation with the Council of Europe. In the period 2003-2006, the second phase of this programme called "Roma use your ballot wisely!" has focused on political participation of Roma in elections and elected bodies. The following highlights how Romani women have been assisted in particular:

- A network of Romani women associations across ethnic boundaries and South East Europe has been supported
- Romani women have been selected as Short Term Observers to elections in South Eastern Europe
- Half of the selected Local Contact Points (LCP) in countries involved throughout SEE are women and gender aspects are included in projects which these LCPs carry out
- A Gender Task Force was set-up with the responsible assistant based in Serbia and Montenegro, to guide and oversee the activities of the LCPs with regard to gender issues.
- The ODIHR co-operated in 2005 with a Roma NGO to articulate a public discourse on early marriages. This was done through a series of four meetings with Roma Calderas communities which addressed the questions: How can cultural practices as part of group identity be preserved while allowing the influence of modernity? What effects do early marriages have on the education level of Romani girls?

As a result of anti-trafficking activities, including research reports on countries with large Roma populations and their vulnerability to becoming victims of trafficking (particularly Romani women), a roundtable was held in Belgrade in 2004. In April 2006 a position paper entitled, "Awareness Raising for Roma Activists on the Issue of Trafficking in Human Beings in South Eastern Europe" was uploaded on the ODIHR website and is being published in both English and Serbo-Croatian.

In parallel to this, in spring 2005 the ODIHR Anti-Trafficking Programme reviewed its activities so as to raise the visibility of all purposes for which people are trafficked, affecting both men and women and promote gender specific approaches to identification, protection and assistance to trafficked persons. In practice this has meant taking into account gender issues when assessing different forms of exploitation, and responses to trafficking in OSCE participating States (such as the UK, Russia and Turkey); expanding contacts and networks from solely women focused organisations to include organisations able to provide protection and assistance to both male and female migrants including migrants rights organisations and trade unions; continuing to support gender specific assistance and rights protection for trafficked women where there is still need for such support (as in Albania, Armenia and Georgia) and promoting the inclusion of gender considerations when developing and

commenting on training manuals and programmes for improved identification of trafficked persons.

Domestic violence as one of the most acute manifestations of violence against women forms one of the key components of the ODIHR activities in the field of promotion of gender equality in all spheres. In the reporting period ODIHR has worked to sensitise law enforcement agencies towards this problem as a crime that needs to be vigorously combated, to build the capacity of law enforcement authorities to play an effective role in preventing and combating domestic violence, as well as to promote co-operation between law enforcement bodies and NGOs on strategies and measures to prevent and combat this crime. The ODIHR has also contributed to the drafting of the Law on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence in Moldova by supporting expert meetings between government officials and representatives of civil society to discuss provisions of the draft Law.

The ODIHR's Human Rights Monitoring Programme has trained women oriented NGOs in Uzbekistan thereby increasing their capacity to report on human rights issues concerning women. The Human Rights Education and Training Programme includes training modules addressing women's empowerment and rights. For example, it has encouraged NGOs in Tajikistan to work more on women's issues including domestic violence and the rights of women to education.

The Human Rights and Anti-Terrorism Programme contributed a background paper entitled, "Female Suicide Terrorism – Consequences for Counter-Terrorism" to the Technical Expert Workshop on Suicide Terrorism organised by the OSCE ATU on 20 May 2005 in Vienna. It has also included gender perspectives in its project on the Promotion of the Protection of Victims of Terrorism and in both its Human Rights and Anti-Terrorism Training Module and Manual.

Work to promote tolerance and non-discrimination (TND) was added in 2004 to the mandate of the ODIHR. Based on the hate crime statistics received by the ODIHR from participating States (and published in the report Combating Hate Crimes in the OSCE Region: An Overview of Statistics, Legislation and National Initiatives), five participating States identified 'sex' as a discrimination ground, three include 'gender' as a discrimination ground in relevant hate crime legislation, and one includes both 'sex' and 'gender' as a discrimination ground in relevant hate crime legislation.

The TND Programme also considers gender aspects in its work related to the combat of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and discrimination against Muslims and members of other religions and belief communities.

In activities on education to promote respect and diversity, gender equality is mainstreamed by considering gender principles. In the selection process of the experts group of the Project on education promoting respect and diversity (group of 11 persons) one objective is to achieve a gender balance in the group as well as a geographical balance. So far 6 women and 5 men serve in this expert group. In a questionnaire on the implementation of intercultural education a reference to gender sensitive studies in public education is made. It should also be noted that the needs assessment report on educational initiatives to promote respect and diversity, which will be published in 2006, will also include an evaluation of educational initiatives to promote gender equality and combat gender discrimination.

Concerning the ODIHR activities to support civil society to monitor and combat hate crimes and violent manifestations of intolerance, organisations dealing with gender discrimination have been included in training seminars as well as roundtable meetings where gender dimensions of racism and discrimination against Muslims were discussed. Concretely this happened in the "Capacity building training on monitoring and reporting on hate crimes and violent manifestations of intolerance" (June 2005) as well as the "Meeting between NGOs and the three Personal Representatives of the OSCE Chairmanship in Office for the preparation of the Conference in Cordoba" (May 2005).

The Law Enforcement Officers Programme includes a section on gender-based hate crime within its training curriculum.

Muslim women face discrimination in society both for being Muslim and for being a woman. That makes them more vulnerable than male Muslims. There have been specific outreach efforts to include Muslim women in the 2005 "Roundtable Meeting with NGOs addressing intolerance and discrimination against Muslims" and 2006 "Roundtable Meeting on Representation of Muslims in Public Discourse". This led, for example, to participation of NGOs committed to the equality, equity and empowerment of Muslim women's identity.

### **Programmatic activities with specific focus on gender**

The programmes and projects described below have been developed to address those areas where a need for more concentrated efforts has been identified.

#### *Programme on Increased Participation of Women in Democratic Processes*

This long-term programme started in 1999. Through it the ODIHR assists national stakeholders in governments and civil society to increase awareness on the fundamental importance of equality of rights and opportunities among women and men and to develop and implement effective policies for the promotion of gender equality. While this multi-year programme began by assisting participating States of the South Caucasus and Central Asia, in 2005 the programme expanded to include Ukraine and will also provide expertise to the government and civil society in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to develop effective national mechanisms and awareness raising efforts on gender equality.

In the reporting period, the focus was on four key areas where the ODIHR's expertise and support were identified as vital for consolidating the political will of governments to take necessary measures for the promotion of gender equality and to strengthen civil society actors to play an effective role in these policies. The following were priority areas:

- Women's leadership development and coalition/network building among civil society actors to promote equal opportunities for participation of women in political and public life;
- Fostering cooperation among civil society and government to promote necessary reforms in policy and practice;

- Prevention and combating of domestic violence through supporting joint efforts of policy makers and practitioners in government and civil society;
- Development of national gender expertise among local stakeholders at national and cross-regional levels in Central Asia and South Caucasus.

Programme activities in support of these goals range from awareness raising workshops for national and grassroots civil society organizations, capacity building seminars for representatives of state structures, provision of expertise for development and implementation of national action plans and assistance in the development of joint initiatives among local governments and civil society actors. Activities are currently underway in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Macedonia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan with planned outreach to other Central Asian countries.

Moreover, the Programme promotes a strong link between reforms in the field of democratic governance and increased participation of civil society in this process. This objective is approached through the strategy of developing mechanisms of interaction between the public and governments and strengthening capacity of grassroots actors to oversee and monitor the democratic performance of their governments.

Programme activities have been selected and tailor-made, based on the analysis of the situation in each country and an evaluation of the potential impact and value added by ODIHR's involvement. In order to support participating States in their efforts to build effective national mechanisms for the advancement of women, the ODIHR's programme on Increased Participation of Women in Democratic Processes integrates a major component on the development of state mechanisms to direct and oversee implementation of gender equality policies. Activities in this field include provision of direct expertise to existing state structures which are mandated to develop and implement gender equality policies, on improving their organizational and policy frameworks, as well as promoting co-operation among national civil society organizations and respective State structures to jointly implement needed reforms in the field of gender equality.<sup>3</sup>

ODIHR views the development of competent national experts capable of influencing developments at local, national and international levels, with first-hand expertise in gender issues and existing needs as fundamental to achieving a real and long-lasting impact in the field of promoting gender equality. In order to support also development of effective international networks working to advocate and lobby for gender-sensitive policies in the

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<sup>3</sup> In Georgia, the Women's NGO Coalition of Georgia has worked on enhancing the role and impact of women's organizations in conflict prevention and conflict resolution processes. The Coalition works to strengthen knowledge and capacity of women's groups to take active role in peace building initiatives. With this objective, a special manual for trainers on dissemination of information on the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 has been developed and disseminated. Furthermore, a series of workshops and information sessions on the role of women in conflict resolution and the provisions of the UN Resolution 1325 have been conducted throughout the country by the Coalition members for women leaders in communities where there is a large population of IDPs from Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and in communities/regions bordering conflict zones. In Kyrgyzstan, as part of the ODIHR strategy to promote awareness on equality of rights and opportunities among women and men and to combat violence against women, ODIHR supports efforts of the Regional Women's Network of Kyrgyzstan to conduct awareness raising campaigns on the role of women in conflict prevention and crisis management issues, particularly targeted at women from rural communities. These awareness raising campaigns have been particularly designed to inform women protesters taking part in recent mass demonstrations in the country of their civil rights and freedoms and of the importance of women's equal access and participation in decision making processes in all phases of conflict prevention, and resolution.

OSCE area, ODIHR has established and continues to use the expertise of the NGO Expert Panel on Gender Equality comprising fifteen civil society experts working to promote women's leadership, gender equality and increased role of women in decision making in the South Caucasus and Central Asia. The Panel is a unique cross-regional initiative, designed for exchange of local expertise and know-how in the field of gender equality and women's participation in democratic processes. It promotes exchange of best practices in women's economic empowerment and provides support to women's entrepreneurship as a tool to combat gender-based discrimination in the field of economic development.<sup>4</sup> In late 2004 and throughout 2005, the ODIHR provided expertise and specific skills-building workshops to the Panel members by organizing several strategy development seminars and workshops on national mechanisms for the promotion of gender equality, exchange of expertise and know-how for the advancement of women, where members have elaborated joint activities for utilizing their respective experiences and lessons learnt. Moreover, the ODIHR organized training workshops on women's participation in political parties in Ukraine, using the expertise of the Panel members from Kyrgyzstan.

The ODIHR has built a strong co-operation and development of joint initiatives with the UN Economic Commission for Europe in order to promote increased awareness on the importance of integrating gender aspects in the economic policy making at national levels.

With the aim to counter negative stereotypes engendered in various public spheres, and in particular often manifested through the media, the ODIHR continues to support the Association of Journalists "GenderMediaCaucasus" in conducting a series of international conferences in Tbilisi, Georgia "Role of Mass Media in Empowerment of Women" (July 2005). The last conference brought together over 50 women journalists, researchers and activists from the South Caucasus, Central Asia, and Europe to discuss participation of women in the national media, contributions of journalist networks to promoting gender equality and the role of mass media in empowering women at national and international levels.

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<sup>4</sup> The ODIHR assisted in the development of a joint initiative of the Azerbaijani and Georgian experts to conduct research on current situation in women's economic empowerment and their access to entrepreneurial resources such as business loans and small grants. Subsequently, based on the findings of the research, experts conducted series of trainings for the Regional Women's Network in Azerbaijan on ways to identify necessary resources for private entrepreneurship and conduct gender-sensitive analysis of local state budgets. During the Preparatory Meeting in Geneva in December 2004 for the 10 year Review and Appraisal of the Beijing Platform for Action the ODIHR Expert Panel organized a side meeting on co-operation between civil society and government structures on increasing the role of women in decision making. The ODIHR NGO Expert Panel on Gender Equality has substantively contributed to the high-level meetings conducted by the UNECE in Astana in May 2005 and Geneva in December 2005 as well as to the upcoming meeting in Baku in June 2006. At the margins of the 2005 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, the Expert Panel hosted the side event on "Participation of Women in Democratic Processes in South Caucasus and Central Asia". The experts discussed ongoing developments in their respective regions and analyzed their implications on women's status and equal opportunities, highlighting the significance of building strong local expertise among national stakeholders for achieving greater progress in the field of gender equality. Currently, the Georgian and Azeri members of the Panel work together on the promotion of women's economic empowerment in Azerbaijan, while the Kyrgyz Panel members served as facilitators in the process of strengthening the regional women's network in Georgia and in Azerbaijan.

### *Human Rights, Women and Security Programme*

Recognising that the ODIHR could play a valuable role in promotion of the human rights of women, the ODIHR established a new programme in the second half of 2005. Through the programme, the thematic area of women's human rights is placed in the context of OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. In this regard, programme objectives relate to women's rights and consideration of a gender perspective in relation to conflict prevention, post-conflict reconstruction and maintenance of security.

The programme has three components as follows:

- Promotion of security through advancement of the correlation between women's human rights and security; implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security; development of women's rights provisions, and providing of expertise for inclusion of the same, in activities regarding counter-terrorism, conflict prevention and early warning, post-conflict reconstruction and maintenance and promotion of peace and security; monitoring of developments with regard to the human rights of women and security related issues;
- Prevention of trafficking in human beings through addressing violations of women's human rights; identification and addressing of a lack of state protection of women's human rights; civil society awareness raising and capacity building for addressing the interconnection between trafficking in human beings and violations of the human rights of women, including violence against women as a root cause of trafficking in women;
- Promotion of the human rights of women and girls; promotion of and assistance in integration of a women's rights perspective in activities for human rights education, as well as in capacity-building activities regarding monitoring and reporting on the human rights of women.

In the reporting period an assessment in Moldova identified areas of common concern among those involved in counter-trafficking activities and in combating violence against women respectively. The ODIHR then contributed to the drafting of the Law on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence in Moldova by supporting expert meetings and a roundtable (December 2005) between government officials and representatives of civil society to discuss provisions of the draft Law.

The programme represents an important international initiative to advance and raise awareness of women's rights in the context of security. Other achievements so far include the production of the report "Women's Rights and Early Warning – Development of Indicators", and support for regional consultation between the states and territories of the former Yugoslavia leading to a regional agreement furthering the 'Declaration on Cooperation between Gender Mainstreaming Institutional Mechanisms in the West Balkan Region'.

### *Development of Practical Ways to Encourage Greater Participation by Women in Political Life in the OSCE Region and Beyond*

This project contributes to promoting equal opportunity for participation of women in political and public life. Its aim is to develop the methodology for participation of women in

election processes<sup>5</sup>. In particular it contributed to monitoring of women's participation in elections, thereby providing increased attention to gender issues in elections. In 2005, the project supported the identification and deployment of Gender Analysts to join the Core Team of the respective EOMs for the parliamentary elections in Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Albania and Azerbaijan. The Gender Analysts met political party leaders, candidates, election administrations and civil society representatives to gather information on women's participation in the election process, to assess the extent to which law and practice meet OSCE and other international commitments for gender equality, and to make relevant recommendations for the host country. For each election, the Gender Analyst contributed text for inclusion in the EOM post-election preliminary statement regarding participation of women in the election. In addition, the Gender Analysts prepared reports for inclusion in the ODIHR Final Report, including recommendations for further improvement in the area of women's participation in the electoral process.

#### *Awareness Raising for Romani Women Activists*

The objectives of this project are to raise awareness among Roma activists on trafficking in human beings, especially children and women; and to build capacity on this issue, putting activists in contact with mainstream anti-trafficking networks. Likewise it is important to provide a forum for Roma activists to express their concerns and views on the phenomenon.

Prevention activities have centred on strengthening State mechanisms and non-governmental actors to identify victims of trafficking, and on raising awareness amongst trafficked persons of their right to protection and access to justice. In the reporting period a structure was set up for mentoring of younger Romani women activists by senior Romani women, alongside a network of Romani women associations across the countries in South East Europe, as well as across the ethnic boundaries which exist within the mosaic of groups confronted with racial prejudice (Roma groups but also Rudarea, Askhalie, Egyptians, etc.)

#### Annex:

- Gender recruitment statistics

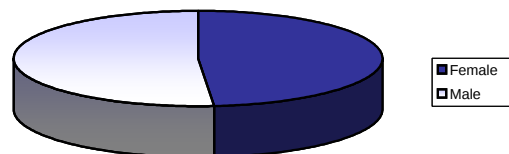
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<sup>5</sup> This project supported the publication of the "*Handbook for Monitoring Women's Participation in Elections*" and the subsequent implementation of the guidelines contained therein, particularly through the deployment of Gender Analysts on EOMs.

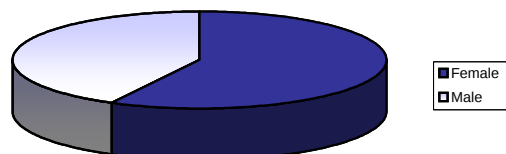
## Gender recruitment statistics for the year 2005

|        | No. of applications received | No. of interviewed candidates | No. of appointees |
|--------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Female | 898                          | 52                            | 16                |
| Male   | 949                          | 38                            | 10                |
| Total  | 1847                         | 90                            | 26                |

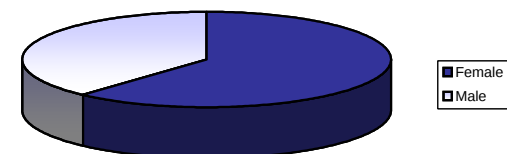
No. of applications received



No. of interviewed candidates



No. of appointees



## Gender recruitment statistics for the period from January till April 2006

|        | No. of applications received | No. of interviewed candidates | No. of appointees |
|--------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Female | 212                          | 16                            | 4                 |
| Male   | 117                          | 11                            | 2                 |
| Total  | 329                          | 27                            | 6                 |

