

PART 2

Civil society and the security sector are better able to advance democracy and human rights





The human dimension is anchored in the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security. It is underpinned by civil society, which plays a vital role in ensuring respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy across the 57 participating States of the OSCE.

Through its work and partnerships, ODIHR bridges the gap between national authorities and civil society organizations. By encouraging and assisting governments to genuinely engage civil society in decision-making processes, the Office helps to increase respect for human rights and thus strengthen the security of the entire region.

The impact stories below cover areas from promoting the role of young women as future leaders, to building coalitions of and between civil society organizations, and training human rights defenders and police to meet the challenges of protecting human rights in the digital age.

2.1 Raising awareness of the gender dynamics of trafficking in human beings

It is estimated that some 40 million people around the world become victims of modern slavery and trafficking in human beings each year. At the same time, less than one per cent of victims of trafficking are identified worldwide. These low figures indicate that trafficking in human beings remains largely hidden, even though it is happening in plain sight.

Nearly 72 per cent of trafficking victims are women and girls, which means that far greater attention needs to be paid to gender and gender-based violence. Despite a growing body of knowledge about victims, their vulnerabilities and types of exploitation, identifying and protecting victims remains a tremendous challenge. As the world becomes ever more interconnected through new technologies and globalization make, traffickers' ability to recruit and exploit their victims, especially girls and boys, has also intensified.

ODIHR has been active in preventing and combating trafficking in human beings in the OSCE region since 1999, focusing on the promotion of international human rights standards and gender-sensitive responses to trafficking. As a result of this work, ODIHR has developed expertise in victim protection and the promotion of the rights of trafficked people and groups who are at risk.

In 2019, ODIHR raised awareness of these issues by arranging screenings of the film "Love Sonia",

which tells the story of a girl fighting to find her sister who is entangled in global sex trafficking. Watching the film provided deeper insight into trafficking in human beings and, in particular, the overriding role that gender and globalization play in driving up the number of victims.

After an initial screening for OSCE delegations in Vienna in May 2019, ODIHR showed the film in Georgia, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, the United States and Uzbekistan. The Office also subtitled the film into Russian and Georgian.

The presence of experts, survivors, and the director and lead actor at the screening helped to increase the impact of the film and raise the awareness of government officials, civil society and the public about the importance of combating this crime across the OSCE region, and also the need for a victim- and survivor-centered, human rights-based and gender-sensitive approach. ODIHR is planning to launch a Survivor Advisory Council in 2020, with support from a number of participating States.

On the World Day against Trafficking in Persons (30 July), a film screening organized for a high-level audience composed of government representatives and civil society in Tashkent,



“Addressing the pervasive vulnerabilities of the girl child is essential to preventing trafficking and all other forms of exploitation of girls within the OSCE region. Governments need to take action to ensure that the next generation of girls does not become a new generation of victims of trafficking.”

— *Shandra Woworuntu, Survivor and Founder of Mentari speaking at an ODIHR screening*

Uzbekistan, led to a request from the Republic of Uzbekistan for further assistance from ODIHR to provide recommendations for draft anti-trafficking legislation.

ODIHR has assisted participating States in creating national referral mechanisms, which are co-operative frameworks for governments to use in order to identify, protect and help victims of trafficking to access justice and effective remedies, including compensation. ODIHR also presented its recommendations on strengthening national referral mechanisms in Uzbekistan, which were the

result of increased co-operation between ODIHR and the national authorities. This took the form of a series of awareness raising, capacity building and policy advice activities with the purpose of strengthening the country’s anti-trafficking efforts.

Several participating States, as well as other organizations and institutions including the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol), have inquired about the possibility of using the film as an educational tool. In Georgia, the specially adapted Georgian version of the film will continue to be used for training purposes.



OSCE/Maria Kökçe

2.2 Supporting young women as future changemakers

Ensuring the equal and meaningful participation of women and men in public and political life is essential for the establishment and maintenance of working democracies across the OSCE region. Younger women often lack the public, political party and familial support, as well as the financial and technical resources, necessary to engage in politics. ODIHR is therefore working with participating States to enhance gender equality, going beyond mere numbers to translate into the inclusive and equitable representation of young women in politics and decision-making.

ODIHR's work on increasing youth and women's public participation, largely based on the OSCE *Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality* and other commitments, is an ongoing endeavour. In 2019, the Office made this a focus of its work in Belarus. Forty per cent of Belarusian parliamentarians are women, exceeding the OSCE average, but less than 12 per cent of MPs are under the age of 45.¹ To help improve young women's chances of attaining positions of political power in the future, ODIHR trained 31 young women in Belarus, in collaboration with Belarusian State University and under the auspices of the broader EU-funded project on *Promoting Democratization and Human Rights in Belarus*.

The training gave these future leaders the capacity to act as advocates for women's rights and gender equality. Young women academics, gender equality advocates and civil society activists from Belarus improved their leadership, communication and negotiation skills, while also exploring the history of women's rights in Belarus and the OSCE region more broadly.

¹ Data taken from IPU at: <https://www.ipu.org/parliament/BY>

A number of these young women were able to participate in the Grodno Forum of Women Leaders, organized by ODIHR in November, where they learned from international experts and discussed ways of promoting women's leadership and political participation at the local level and were able to make their own appeal for the inclusion of a youth perspective in decision-making. Young women and student volunteers also helped organize the Forum, providing an opportunity both for practical experience and career networking.

ODIHR's work in this area is based on the premise that equipping young women with leadership skills and educating them about women's rights and gender equality can have a real impact on society. Participants said that many of the skills and information they learned would be useful for their future public engagement. Moreover, the training will allow these future leaders to act as changemakers by disseminating the knowledge they gained among their own peers.

Continued investment to increase young women's leadership and political participation is essential for the future of democracy in Belarus and the wider OSCE region, because without women at the table, governments cannot fully respond to the concerns of all citizens. Providing young women with mentoring, training and networking opportunities is just as important as formal learning. By creating innovative opportunities for interaction, exchange and capacity building, ODIHR is enabling young women to break through the barriers impeding their participation in politics, making government more representative and responsive.

“Thank you for this useful training! I acquired knowledge in many areas, and I now understand the roots of the gender inequality problem in Belarus and am inspired to resolve this problem to make our society better. A lot of interesting and new information.”

— *Young Women Leadership Training participant from anonymous feedback form*



2.3 Training human rights defenders on monitoring use of force in order to prevent torture

Torture and other extreme forms of ill-treatment remain a major challenge in the OSCE region, despite the commitment by all participating States to eradicate and prevent them. In 2019, ODIHR had specific projects on the humane treatment of people deprived of liberty and on the independent monitoring of all places of detention in the OSCE region. The Office organized a series of peer-exchange events for all 39 national torture prevention mechanisms, as well as civil society organizations active in the prevention of torture.

ODIHR also added a new focus to its activities fighting for a world without torture through its work on the human rights-compliant use of restraints and projectile electric shock weapons by law enforcement officials. States must equip law enforcement officials with a range of means to appropriately respond to situations, but the use and misuse of weapons, including TASER-style weapons, must be carefully monitored and controlled to prevent torture or excessive use of force by police and prison officials.

ODIHR received requests for capacity building on this topic from national torture prevention offices, national human rights institutions, and civil society organizations, which lack the knowledge and methodology to monitor and document the use of law enforcement equipment and the connected human rights violations. No other human rights institution in the OSCE region provides such training and ODIHR is therefore

closing an important gap. Its activities in this area put the Office at the forefront of broader political momentum, highlighted by a 28 June UN resolution, “Towards torture-free trade: examining the feasibility, scope and parameters for possible common international standards”. Likewise, other organizations such as the EU and OSCE PA have drawn attention to the importance of combatting the trade in torture technologies and controlling the use of legitimate law-enforcement tools.

The Office partnered with leading experts bridging the law enforcement and human rights sectors to develop cutting-edge strategies for monitoring and documenting the use and misuse of other weapons and restraints in accordance with international human rights standards. ODIHR carried out in-depth, region-wide needs assessments and collected input from participants prior to each training event in order to tailor the course content to specific national contexts and the needs of participants.

The Office has provided this training in both Poland and Slovenia, with interactive workshops including sessions on different types of law enforcement equipment, the related medical and human rights risks and international human rights standards on the use of force and the prevention of torture, as well as sessions on methods of documentation. As well as enabling participants to improve their skills in monitoring and documenting the use of weapons, the training resulted in detailed recommendations for

“Monitoring weapons and other equipment used by law-enforcement officials with a view to issuing recommendations on how to better prevent torture or other ill-treatment is a crucial part of our mandate. Until very recently there was little guidance for monitors, and this training provided an excellent opportunity for us to learn more about available tools, as well as enhancing our monitoring skills in this area.”

— *Przemysław Kazimirski, Head of the National Preventive Mechanism of Poland*

national governments to prevent torture and other ill-treatment.

The Polish authorities working to prevent torture is using the information and techniques learned during the training in their day-to-day preventive work, as well as in their own monitoring of police custody and the use of force in Poland. The Slovenian monitors are now analysing the training

provided to police officers and will elaborate new internal police rules, regulations and policy recommendations for the use of TASER and other equipment.

This training has proved a key tool to reduce and eventually eliminate torture, and ODIHR has since received requests from other participating States to hold similar training sessions.



2.4 Equipping human rights defenders to face today's challenges

In recent years, the work of human rights defenders (HRDs) has been increasingly impeded by a number of trends, in particular the rise of extremist movements around the OSCE region and the growing use of the Internet and social media as tools of misinformation and political control. While recognizing that technologies are instrumental in advancing democratic governance, limits and obstructions to enjoying these fundamental rights and freedoms in the digital space have accelerated this year. Internet shutdowns, increased surveillance, intrusion and hacking target HRDs and limit the space for their important work, while digital security literacy among HRDs remains low.

HRDs defending the environment are currently suffering particularly grave rights violations, including unlawful arrests and detention, threats and intimidation, and stigma and criminalization both from the state and non-state actors. Acknowledging this fact, the UN Human Rights Council adopted a landmark resolution calling for the protection of environmental HRDs. In 2019, therefore, ODIHR increased its efforts to conduct capacity-building activities related to digital security for human rights defenders, and at the same time strengthened its focus on the situation of environmentalists.

To help HRDs become more effective, ODIHR launched a dedicated project that included training based on the Office's human rights monitoring methodology. Here HRDs learned how to use innovative tools to collect, share and store information as well as to communicate with their colleagues.

Also in 2019, a group of HRDs from across the OSCE region attended specialized training in Budva, Montenegro on the key steps of the human rights monitoring cycle, including the initial assessment, information gathering, verification and analysis, report writing and advocacy. In addition, the training covered safety and security aspects such as protection of data, mitigation of various digital risks, as well as those to personal safety, and a component on psychological security and wellbeing. ODIHR subsequently offered some participants the opportunity to implement a human rights monitoring project under the guidance of ODIHR staff.

As a direct result of ODIHR's support in 2019, an NGO in Central Asia took steps to address digital security challenges, and successfully incorporated new security measures such as password management. They also obtained a grant dedicated to digital security, and actively trained their team and students about the risks of using the online space.

ODIHR also worked to adapt its tools to the new challenges faced by HRDs, who often find it difficult to talk about their mental and emotional wellbeing. The Office modified its curriculum to provide more space for discussions about how to develop networks and how to build collective strategies for protection, and will continue to develop its collaboration with psychologists to provide better support to HRDs, whose work can frequently lead to a sense of isolation and vulnerability.

Buket Atli participated in ODIHR's Human Rights Monitoring, Safety and Security training in 2019, and is the co-ordinator of the Right to Clean Air Platform in Turkey. His organization brings together advocates for the right to live in an environment with clean air and to protect the public from air pollution, especially from coal-fired power plants. After ODIHR's training and a year-long process that involved co-ordinating various NGOs and intense engagement with the media, their campaign reached 100,000 signatures and social media outreach of 1 million. This led the government to stop the operation of 6 coal plants until they comply with environmental laws.

“The tools and methodology we learned at ODIHR about how to collect information, work with authorities and create reports and info sheets were extremely helpful. During the campaign we had to go beyond our internal and external limits, and that is only possible if we take care of ourselves. We used a lot of self-care tools and methods presented during the training, and we became better at caring for each other! Before this training I did not realize how important it was to ensure psychological support and wellbeing.”

— Buket Atli



2.5 Building a civil society coalition against hate crime

Across the OSCE, CSOs play a crucial role in monitoring and reporting hate crimes. This is especially important in states that have not introduced a nationwide system for recording hate crimes, as is the case in Bulgaria, where law enforcement lacks the administrative tools to document such offences.

However, effective hate crime monitoring requires co-operation. By coming together, synchronizing their efforts, and pooling their resources, CSOs can amplify their impact and outreach to achieve lasting results. To this end, in 2019 ODIHR assisted Bulgarian CSOs in building a coalition of various organizations working to address different forms of intolerance and discrimination, from xenophobia to anti-Semitism.

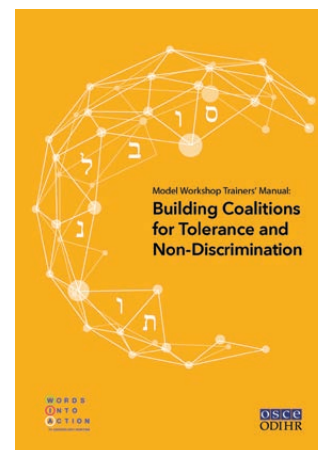
Activities included workshops on ODIHR's hate crime methodology and civil society reporting platform, the exchange of international good practices, and meetings to map the role of each coalition member. These efforts culminated in the creation of the Bulgarian Hate Crime Recording Coalition, trained to properly record and report hate crimes and equipped with a hate crime recording form to systematize their approach. The training made extensive use of ODIHR's tool *Coalition Building for Tolerance and Non-Discrimination: A Practical Guide* and the new *Workshop Model* for trainers, based on it.

The coalition is comprised of organizations representing diverse groups, including Bulgaria's Jewish, Roma and LGBTI communities. These

CSOs not only provide vital resources and assistance to hate crime victims, but also bridge the gap between the authorities and society's marginalized groups.

The coalition will submit the data it gathers for publication in ODIHR's hate crime database, which is updated annually and can be found at hatecrime.osce.org. In 2020, the coalition will draft a report for use as an advocacy tool to raise awareness about the phenomenon of hate crime in Bulgaria.

Successful coalition building relies on CSOs' ownership of the process and the buy-in of state institutions. Therefore, ODIHR continues to assist participating States in strengthening their dialogue and engagement with civil society, while simultaneously building CSOs' capacity to monitor and report hate crimes.



“Within only a few weeks, we gathered more information on hate crime cases and incidents than was ever recorded by the official statistics. Together, we will use this data to advocate for evidence-based and meaningful hate crimes policies, as well as customized prevention measures and services for victims.”

— *Stana Iliev, a representative of the Bulgarian Hate Crime Recording Coalition*



2.6 Advancing political integrity through strategic co-operation

A perception of widespread corruption in political processes and a lack of public integrity among political officials is often at the core of growing dissatisfaction and frustration in democratic institutions. Recurrent integrity scandals and a perceived lack of transparency and accountability erode the trust of citizens in democracy. A lack of public integrity and corrupt practices also remain a great barrier to building inclusive societies, posing a serious challenge to democratic policymaking, the legitimacy and quality of democratic institutions, and broader civic engagement in the OSCE region.

To address these issues, and to advance OSCE commitments to support democratic institutions, accountability and transparency in our democracies, ODIHR developed a strategic partnership in 2019 with Transparency International, a leading civil society organizations in promoting integrity and fighting corruption with national chapters active in more than 25 OSCE participating States.

This strategic partnership with Transparency International allowed ODIHR to build capacity and promote dialogue and co-operation on corruption across the OSCE region. A common understanding on the challenges of public integrity issues, ranging from lobbying, through political finance reform, to conflict of interest, was established. This offered both organizations the opportunity to design and put in place joint activities, exchange information, and establish an early-warning mechanism for critical developments in the area of public integrity.

Early results of this co-operation came in 2019 through assistance on a number of national legislative reforms in the area of public integrity, which allowed for more effective and sustainable support from ODIHR. These included legal opinions and expert advice to the parliaments of Bulgaria, Italy, Latvia and Switzerland on their political finance reforms, as well as training by ODIHR specialists on these topics.

The process also strengthened co-operation with specific national chapters of Transparency International in connection with ODIHR's election observation work.

ODIHR will continue to support OSCE participating States on public integrity matters by expanding its co-operation with Transparency International in the future, as an effective path to more comprehensive and sustainable promotion of democratic reforms across the OSCE region. Numerous joint activities are planned for 2020, including a continuation of last year's dedicated expert training on money in politics.

“The rule of law constitutes a key building block of our work, and enables us to hold power to account. Our partnership with ODIHR has become instrumental in advancing our shared understanding of political integrity in the region, and in producing tools to shed light on the sources of money in politics. Only when decision making is free from undue influence, can we be sure that power will work in the interest of all citizens – a vision we share with ODIHR.”

— Delia Ferreira Rubio, Chair of Transparency International



2.7 Training police in effective, human rights-compliant policing in Roma and Sinti communities

ODIHR continues to receive worrying reports indicating a wide range of manifestations of intolerance against Roma and Sinti, including racially motivated attacks and violence, as well as anti-Roma hate in public discourse.

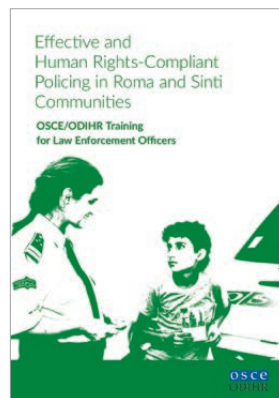
These crimes are often poorly investigated and prosecuted by law enforcement agencies and national justice systems. On the contrary, ethnic profiling and cases of unjustified or disproportionate use of force, including of firearms, used by law enforcement is indicative of a pattern of bias and prejudice towards Roma and Sinti communities.

Anti-Roma rhetoric, hate crimes, racism and discrimination are all factors that contribute to the long-lasting lack of trust among Roma in state institutions and, consequently, prolong the low level of public and political participation of Roma and Sinti. *The Action Plan for Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area* includes a number of commitments regarding Roma and Sinti and the police. It recommends the development of programmes and confidence-building measures aimed at improving the relationship between Roma and Sinti and the police.

With this mandate in mind, ODIHR developed a training programme to support effective policing of Roma and Sinti communities that is at the same time fully in line with international human rights standards. Since its inception in 2016, the training has been provided to some 250 police officers in Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine.

Training has also taken place in Pristina. ODIHR continues to co-operate with participating States to offer not only the training course itself, but also follow-up assistance on implementation at national level. Police officers or commanders who complete the programme are subsequently in a position to replicate the training, multiplying its impact throughout national police institutions.

Evaluation of the course has shown that it provides participants with an increased understanding of the detrimental effect of stereotypes and prejudice about Roma both to the community itself and to wider society. Police officers who have completed the programme are making greater efforts to work in accordance with human rights standards, and are more able to build trust and understanding between themselves and the Roma communities with which they work.



“This course has been extremely useful for my professional activities, considering its focus on the relationship between Roma and the police. At the same time, I appreciate the varied, interactive and effective methodology, which includes teamwork, storytelling, quizzes and video illustrations. This is a valuable resource that I return to again and again.”

– Tatiana Stanciu, participant of the training-of-trainers course organized by ODIHR in Bucharest.



2.8 Training law enforcement to integrate human rights protection into counter-terrorism activities

Counterterrorism policy and practice in OSCE participating States increasingly reflect a trend in the OSCE area of deprioritizing the protection of human rights in the name of combating security threats. This can lead to restrictions to human rights related to the normalization of emergency measures, increasingly broad police powers with little judicial supervision, and administrative measures that circumvent legal safeguards.

ODIHR's training for law enforcement officers in the OSCE region on protecting human rights while countering terrorism and violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism (VERLT) are based on the fundamental principles set out in OSCE terrorism-related commitments, and work to counter the view by some police officers that human rights pose a practical obstacle to the performance of their work. ODIHR has been tasked by participating States to offer technical assistance and advice on the human rights aspects of countering the threats posed by terrorism and VERLT.

In 2019, ODIHR focused on training law enforcement officers in the OSCE region on protecting human rights while countering terrorism, with specialized courses offered in Uzbekistan, Albania and Spain. All courses focused on the intrinsic link between the protection of human rights and the operational effectiveness of measures to prevent and counter terrorism and VERLT. Participants gained a better understanding of fundamental human rights norms and principles related to their work, and

how employing these principles make their work more effective.

ODIHR's courses are interactive, dynamic and practical, combining individual and group exercises closely linked to the operational duties of participants, and are facilitated by a multidisciplinary training team made up of an ODIHR human rights trainer together with a former law enforcement officer with a counter-terrorism background. The training builds in space for dialogue, and engages participants in an open and frank discussion about the importance of human rights in preventing and countering terrorism and how to mitigate the associated risks.


One training programme supported three participating States to improve implementation of their human rights commitments. All ODIHR's current courses in this area include the possibility of developing tailored follow-up activities, including training-of-trainers and other workshops. Ideally, these involve previous participants as multipliers to increase the training's reach within their institutions and, ultimately, solidify the impact of the training on human rights-compliant policing. This is an integral part of ODIHR's work to promote a comprehensive response to terrorism and VERLT, which needs to have a human rights compliant security sector at its very centre in order to translate the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security into practice on the ground.

“Local police are at the frontline of engaging with communities and must be trained to work with communities and partner agencies to reduce the possibility of radicalization leading to violence. Prevention is the permanent aim of the local police.”

- Pascual Martínez Cuesta, head of the local police in Albacete, Spain, and participant in an ODIHR training course



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 **OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)** ⋮

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