



Strategic Planning Workshop  
**INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO  
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN POLITICS IN POLAND**

Warsaw, ODIHR Office, ul. Miodowa 10  
Monday, 16 June 2025, 9:30-17:00

Violence against women in politics is a growing problem for women across the OSCE region and around the globe. As much as it is part of the broader issue of endemic violence against women, it is also fuelled strongly by today's global politics. Exacerbated by democratic backsliding and backlashes against rule of law, human rights and gender equality have suffered in some OSCE participating States, while at the same time there has been an increase in political polarization, intolerance, misogyny and violence, online and offline.

As a human rights violation and a barrier to women's political participation, violence against women in politics presents a serious challenge to democracy and the peace and security of OSCE participating States. When women assume their rightful place in politics, their presence, voices and legitimacy are often challenged violently as a means to preserve male privilege and positions of power. Women are not targeted for their political views but specifically for being women, to deter them from political engagement. This is not only harmful to these women themselves, but also to those close to them and to those considering similar political engagement.

OSCE participating States "have an obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish the perpetrators of violence against women and girls and to provide protection to the victims, and (...) failure to do so violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms."<sup>1</sup> The 2025 Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) global campaign: [Achieving gender equality, action by action](#), launched on 7 April 2025 at the 150<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly, calls upon national parliaments to address violence against women in politics effectively, with targeted action and collaborative interventions.

Like other organizations, in recent years the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) has strengthened its efforts to address violence against women in politics, within the framework of its broader mandate to promote women's participation in political and public life. Among others, we have released the [Addressing Violence against Women in Politics in the OSCE Region](#)-Toolkit. This toolkit aims to raise awareness and strengthen the capacities of OSCE participating States in developing effective measures to address violence against women in politics. The toolkit consists of five separate tools:

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<sup>1</sup> OSCE 2005 [Ministerial Council Decision 15/05 on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women](#), Preamble.



- **Tool 1 – the Introduction**, which defines violence against women in politics and describes solutions for effective prevention, protection of victims, the prosecution of perpetrators and coordination of policies.
- **Tool 2 - for Parliaments** provides data and examples of promising practices to guide parliaments towards measures which address violence against women in parliaments and beyond.
- **Tool 3 - for Political Parties** assists political parties in taking internal steps to tackle violence against women within their structures.
- **Tool 4 - for Civil Society** explores the role that civil society and women's movements can play in combating violence against women in politics.
- **Tool 5 - for Women in Politics** is a guide for women affected directly or indirectly by such violence about how to seek protection, remedy and support.

A **tool 6**, focusing on experiences and coping strategies of women in politics is in development and shall be released in 2025.

In order to inspire change-oriented actions by parliaments, political parties and governmental bodies for gender equality, ODIHR is implementing national awareness raising and capacity building events. The **goals of this national strategic planning workshop in Poland** are to:

1. Increase understanding of the phenomenon of violence against women in politics and relevant international and national standards;
2. Raise awareness on promising strategies, measures and institutional mechanisms to address violence against women in politics, offline and online.
3. Identify institutional entry points to prevent and address violence against women in politics within the Polish policy framework.

The **workshop** is targeting:

- Representatives of parliamentary political parties in Poland (party leadership, party secretariat & staff);
- Representatives of parliament (MPs from all fractions, members of the Parliamentary Women's Rights Group, parliamentary staff);
- Representatives of Polish government and civil society;

The workshop will be implemented in English and Polish language, with consecutive translation provided.

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**WORKING AGENDA**

|             |                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 09:15-9:30  | Welcome coffee and registration of participants                                                                                                                                                      |
| 09:30-09:45 | <b>Opening remarks</b><br>Tea Jalishvili, First Deputy Director, ODIHR<br>Katarzyna Kotula, Minister for Equality, Government of Poland                                                              |
| 9:45-11:00  | <b>What is violence against women in politics (VAWiP)?</b><br><br>Saša Gavrić, Adviser on Gender Issues &<br>Ajla van Heel Merdanović, ODIHR International Consultant                                |
| 11:00-11:30 | Coffee break & networking                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 11:30-13:00 | <b>What can institutions and political parties do to address VAWiP?</b><br><br>Ajla van Heel Merdanović, ODIHR International Consultant                                                              |
| 13:00-14:00 | Lunch & networking                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 14:00-15:00 | <b>Mapping potential actions to be taken by Polish parties and institutions</b><br><br>Ajla van Heel Merdanović, ODIHR International Consultant &<br>Małgorzata Druciarek, ODIHR National Consultant |
| 15:00-15:30 | <b>Wrap up, next steps and evaluation</b><br><br>Saša Gavrić, Adviser on Gender Issues &<br>Sanja Nikolin, CHANGE Project Officer                                                                    |
| 15:30-16:00 | Reception & informal networking                                                                                                                                                                      |