




The Dynamic **CHANGE** Update


15 July - 22 October 2024

EMBRACE
CHANGE
FOR GENDER EQUALITY





Good day to the **CHANGE project's** stakeholders! We have a lot of catching up to do to account for abundant good work done in the third quarter of 2024. We welcome you to the CHANGE Updates on:

- 1. Study Visit and Exchanges for Gender Equality and Human Rights between Georgia and Poland, 18 – 19 July 2024**
 - 2. CHANGE Transnational Network to Prevent, Monitor, Address and Reverse Gender Backsliding is created in Mavrovo, North Macedonia, 26 - 27 August 2024**
 - 3. Flying Academy Launch at the XVI Polish Women Congress in Gdansk, Poland 28 September 2024**
 - 4. On the margins of the Warsaw Human Dimension Conference, we are Engaging Men to Support Gender Equality: From Awareness to Action, 10 October 2024**
 - 5. 2+2=5: about the propulsion potential of transnational peer networks in reversing gender backsliding. Beijing+30 Regional Review Meeting Side Event, Geneva, Switzerland, 22 October 2024**
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Study Visit and Exchanges for Gender Equality and Human Rights between Georgia and Poland, 18 – 19 July 2024

The CHANGE project welcomed a group of 30 civil society representatives working on gender equality, and human rights defenders from Georgia and Poland for two days of discussions and exchanges. This event responded to an increasing demand for transnational collaboration to address shared challenges with regards to backsliding on gender equality. Key results of the study visit included:

- Stronger conceptual clarity on the deteriorating situation of fundamental rights and values, including democracy and the rule of law.
- Development of greater resilience through joint action to monitor and address gender backsliding trends with a particular focus on the context of Georgia and Poland,
- Stronger inter-linkages with relevant Georgian and Polish counterparts and ODIHR's work.

"Throughout the OSCE region, civil society actors and HRDs striving to support the achievement of gender equality, are facing increasing challenges withing the global trend commonly referred to as 'gender backsliding'. HRDs, women's movements and equality actors across the OSCE region are seeking transnational collaboration to address this shared and growing pressure. Thanks to its unique convening power and strong mandate to work with civil society, ODIHR can create opportunities to generate new synergies and ultimately bring about positive and sustainable change and advance gender equality."

Tea Jaliashvili, ODIHR's First Deputy Director

Another direct result of the study visit is the establishment of the Georgian Women Congress that seeks to amplify voices of women in Georgia based on the business model and experiences shared by the Polish Women Congress. The CHANGE project welcomes the establishment of the Georgian Women Congress and eagerly awaits their first event in March 2025.



Study visit participants with ODIHR hosts on the first and second day of their exchanges

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CHANGE Transnational Network to Prevent, Monitor, Address and Reverse Gender Backsliding is created, Mavrovo, North Macedonia, 26 - 27 August 2024

The CHANGE Transnational Network focusing on effective practice and gaps in preventing, addressing and reversing gender backsliding in Georgia, North Macedonia and Poland was created. This is a natural development stemming from previous CHANGE activities including two study visits, consultation and dialogue meetings. The network gathers civil society organization, human rights defenders, NHRIs, and political actors. During a dedicated meeting in network members agreed to develop a joint gender backsliding monitoring methodology and an early warning system to help exchange existing tools, practice and resources on preventing, addressing and reversing gender backsliding.



On a sunny day in August, the CHANGE Transnational Network to Prevent, Monitor, Address and Reverse Gender Backsliding was formed

'Sharing is caring' is a saying we often hear, and that is exactly what we've been doing. Together with dedicated activists, parliamentarians, and other stakeholders, we tackled the pressing issue of gender backsliding in North Macedonia. These conversations are more than just words – they form the foundation of our continued fight for gender equality and human rights. Rita Behadini, Founder, Center for Equal Opportunities Mollekuqja

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Flying Academy Launch at the XVI Polish Women Congress in Gdansk-Sopot, Poland, 28-29 September 2024

In Poland, both women and men now have open access to the Flying Academy co-created by ODIHR and the **Stowarzyszenie Kongres Kobiet**. It is the first e-Learning platform on gender equality and human rights in Polish language. The platform provides interactive learning modules to strengthen the understanding of fundamental rights, promote inclusive policies, and support OSCE commitments on gender equality. The official launch took place during the **XVI edition of the Polish Women Congress** that brought together 3000 participants in Gdansk-Sopot, including members of the CHANGE Transnational Network Prevent, Monitor, Address and Reverse Gender Backsliding.



The Flying Academy is launched (from left to right): Tea Jaliashvili, ODIHR's First Deputy Director, Olga Leonowicz, Feminist Activist, Ewa Pawlowska, President of the Union of Polish Clubs, Prof. Malgorzata Fuszara, Polish Women Congress, Elizabeta Bozinovska, Programme Director, HERA, North Macedonia, Samira Bayramova, Human Rights Defender, Georgia

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On the margins of the Warsaw Human Dimension Conference, we are Engaging Men to Support Gender Equality: From Awareness to Action, 10 October 2024

Building on the collaboration started in 2023, the CHANGE project and the WIN Project organized the side event “Engaging men to support gender equality: from awareness to action” during the Warsaw Human Dimension Conference. The event presented to OSCE participating States the key recommendations from the OSCE conference “Women and Men: Working Together for Equal Rights”. The forthcoming ODIHR’s Sarajevo Recommendations on Engaging Male Politicians as Critical Actors for Gender Equality in Politics were announced and emerging good practices from Norway and Ireland were presented before an audience of 43 women and 26 men. The Polish Ombudsman shared experiences on including men’s perspectives into gender equality policies and practices, and panelists shared direct experiences of being male allies and/or engaging them.

The event contributed to move away from the perception that gender equality is a ‘women’s issue’ and promoted the engagement of men in a multi-stakeholder dialogue to further progress in this area.



We engage men to support gender equality work (from left to right): Yulia Netesova, Chief Democratic Governance and Gender Unit (DGGU)/ODIHR, Saša Gavrić, Adviser on Gender Issues DGGU/ODIHR, Aleksandra Garshyna, Assistant Project Officer, OSCE/WIN Project, Knut-Are Okstad, Minister Counsellor, Deputy Permanent Representative to the OSCE, Permanent Delegation of Norway to the OSCE, Amb.

Anne-Marie Callan, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the OSCE, Lara Scarpitta, OSCE Senior Adviser on Gender Issues and Head of the Gender Issues Programme, Tea Jaliashvili, First Deputy Director, ODIHR, Tom Churchyard, Consultant, Sanja Nikolin, CHANGE Project Officer, Wojciech Brzozowski, Deputy Ombudsman, Poland, and Justyna Zalewska, CHANGE Project Assistant

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2+2=5: about the propulsion potential of transnational peer networks in reversing gender backsliding. Beijing+30 Regional Review Meeting Side Event,

Geneva, Switzerland 10 22 October 2024

The Beijing+30 Regional Review Meeting assessed progress on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in the Europe and Central Asia region over the past five years. It identified challenges, including gender backsliding, and explored policy options at the regional level. As a key step in consolidation of regional inputs for the 69th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the outcomes also drew from the side events. The CHANGE project's side event highlighted the transnational nature of gender backsliding, examining the roles of different stakeholders in preventing, addressing and reversing gender backsliding. To this end the event launched the CHANGE Transnational Network as a key body for sharing information and devise solutions.. All of the 46 participants (40 women and 6 men) praised a fresh interactive format of the side event. The panelists called for an urgent and coordinated response and identified transnational multi-stakeholder collaboration as a key element of effective strategies.



CHANGE is taking on the challenge of gender backsliding (from left to right): Francesco Marella, Policy and Fundraising Adviser, ODIHR, Katarzyna Kotula, Minister for Equality, Republic of Poland, Tea Jaliashvili, First Deputy Director, ODIHR, Sanja Nikolin, CHANGE Project Officer, Mila Carovksa, Executive Director, HERA, North Macedonia, and Magdalena Pohec, FemFund, Poland

GET IN TOUCH

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