Concept note

COVID-19 Crisis Management – persistent gender inequality?

Webinar on gender equality and security: opportunities and challenges for including the gender perspective in COVID-19 crisis responses

Time and date: Tuesday 7 April, 9:30 – 11:00 (Vienna time)

Moderator: Amarsanaa Darisuren, OSCE Senior Adviser on Gender Issues

Speakers:

- Valentina Falcone, Legal Consultant, Telefono Rosa, Italy
- Olena Suslova, Chair of the Board, Women's Information Consultative Center
- Sukhjargalmaa Dugersuren, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Gender Equality and Civil Society, Mongolia
- Graziella Pavone, Human Rights Officer, ODIHR
- Sanna Kaskeala, Human Rights & Gender Adviser, European Union Integrated Border Assistance Mission in Libya (in personal capacity)

Introduction:

As the COVID-19 crisis deepens and diverts resources and attention in all OSCE participating States, the severe implications on global security can already be seen. These implications touch on all OSCE dimensions of comprehensive security, from political-military, to economic, environmental, human rights and cross-dimensional issues. Women and men are impacted by the closure of borders, check-points and general movement restrictions. Reports of intimate partner violence are increasing in times of isolation at home, while availability of support services for victims of violence has reduced. From a security sector point of view, the impact and role of armed forces and police in responding to the crisis is still to be further explored, as are the implications and potential for conflict prevention.

With schools and childcare services closed, and an increase in people getting sick, the burden of unpaid care work, still largely seen as women's responsibility, has increased tremendously. At the same time, livelihoods and incomes are lost and the economic downfall is affecting a large part of the population, with women most affected due to the high number of women working in the informal economy, without any form of social security or possibility to access compensation benefits provided by the government. This is particularly serious for single working mothers or one-income families. Professions working on the front line to combat the effects of COVID-19, such as health care workers, but also other employees that are exposed to the risk of infection, such as supermarket cashiers, tend to be female dominated. At the same time, women are vastly underrepresented in national crisis teams deciding on the national strategies. A lack of sex-disaggregated data furthermore impedes targeted responses to the crisis.

The OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (MC.DEC 14/04) and other commitments on gender equality all recognize the importance of including the gender perspective in every policy, programme and activity, and the full and equal participation of women in comprehensive security. How can we make sure the highly gendered implications of the COVID-19 crisis are addressed in the responses from the start?

Aim of the webinar

The OSCE Gender Section is organizing this webinar as an informal platform to exchange knowledge and views between experts, OSCE delegations and OSCE staff. The overall objectives are:

- To raise awareness of implications of COVID-19 on gender equality among OSCE delegations and staff
- To identify possible areas of action for participating States and the OSCE to ensure COVID-19 responses are gender responsive

Audience: The webinar is open to members of delegations of OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation, as well as gender focal points and other interested staff from OSCE executive structures. Participation is also possible for other international organizations.

Registration and participation:

To participate in this webinar, please register by sending an email **by 6th of April COB** to equality@osce.org. You will then receive the meeting details via email, including instructions on how to log in.

We kindly request all participants to make sure they log in at least five minutes before the meeting starts, so we can start on time.