

The Dynamic **CHANGE** Update

23 October - 31 December 2024



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CHANGE
FOR GENDER EQUALITY



Good day to all the supporters of gender equality and the **CHANGE** project!

We bring you important updates for the fourth quarter of 2024:

- 1. Training MPs and parliamentary staff on Addressing Violence Against Women in Politics, North Macedonia, 29 – 30 October 2024**
- 2. Designing the third parliamentary Gender Action Plan in North Macedonia, 13 – 15 November 2024**
- 3. Meeting of the CHANGE Transnational Network to Prevent, Address and Reverse Gender Backsliding, 26 – 28 November 2024**
- 4. Webinar on Safety and Resilience of Women Online, 2 December 2024**
- 5. Engaging male allies from Roma community in North Macedonia to support gender equality, 10 – 12 December 2024**



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Training MPs and parliamentary staff on Addressing Violence Against Women in Politics, Skopje, North Macedonia, 29 – 30 October 2024

“Addressing violence against women in politics is not just about women’s rights, but also about improving democratic processes and strengthening society as a whole. We have a responsibility to create conditions in which women can freely and safely participate in political life. We need strong political will to protect women and encourage them to be active participants in our society.”



Marina Dimovska, Secretary General,
Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia
Photo credit: Assembly of the Republic of
North Macedonia

The new training curriculum on addressing violence against women in politics (VAWIP) was delivered for the first time to Members of Parliament and parliamentary staffers (39 women and 10 men) in North Macedonia. Two consecutive events supported awareness raising on VAWIP and search for institutional solutions that can be implemented by the parliament and/or political parties in the context of North Macedonia. The participants were actively engaged and they have stronger skills and knowledge on strategies and measures to prevent violence against women in parliaments and political parties offline and online.



Photo credit: OSCE Mission to Skopje

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Designing the third parliamentary Gender Action Plan in North Macedonia, 13 – 15 November 2024, Ohrid, North Macedonia

Sobranie or Assembly in North Macedonia adopted the third parliamentary Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2025 – 2027 in February 2025. The GAP was designed through a collaborative effort by the **CHANGE** project, OSCE Mission to Skopje and the parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men, Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia. The participating MPs and parliamentary staffers (24 women and 5 men) assessed progress on the implementation of the second GAP before engaging in a new round of prioritization that resulted in the new GAP. In this way, commitment to gender equality was renewed and new challenges were identified, including violence against women in politics.



Working together for gender sensitive parliaments (L to R): Dushko Todorovski, National Programme Officer, OSCE Mission to Skopje, Zaklina Peševska, Chairperson Committee on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men, Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia, Saša Gavrić, Adviser on Gender Issues, ODIHR, and Eva Jovanova, Political Assistant, OSCE Mission to Skopje

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Meeting of the **CHANGE** Transnational Network to Prevent, Address and Reverse Gender Backsliding, Warsaw, Poland, 26 – 28 November 2024

The main outcome of the **CHANGE** Transnational Network meeting is a finalized methodology to monitor gender backsliding. This methodology will be used for collection of data for 2024 to inform the pilot Report on Gender Backsliding in Georgia, North Macedonia and Poland.

The **CHANGE** Transnational Network members also agreed on the priorities for 2025 they benefited from the presentation on strategies utilized to reverse gender backsliding in Poland, by Anna Mazurczak, Director of the Department for Equal Treatment, Chancellery of the Prime Minister, Republic of Poland and human rights lawyer. Bonds of solidarity and support among the **CHANGE** Network members have been strengthened, with new ideas on ways their collaboration can be sustained in times of crises. The exchanges included 30 women and 5 men.

"We refuse to register as foreign agents and we are looking for ways to continue our operation, despite all obstacles. This network means a lot to us in terms of monitoring gender backsliding, exchanging experiences on strategies and tools to reverse it, and also as an expression of solidarity," a network member from Georgia



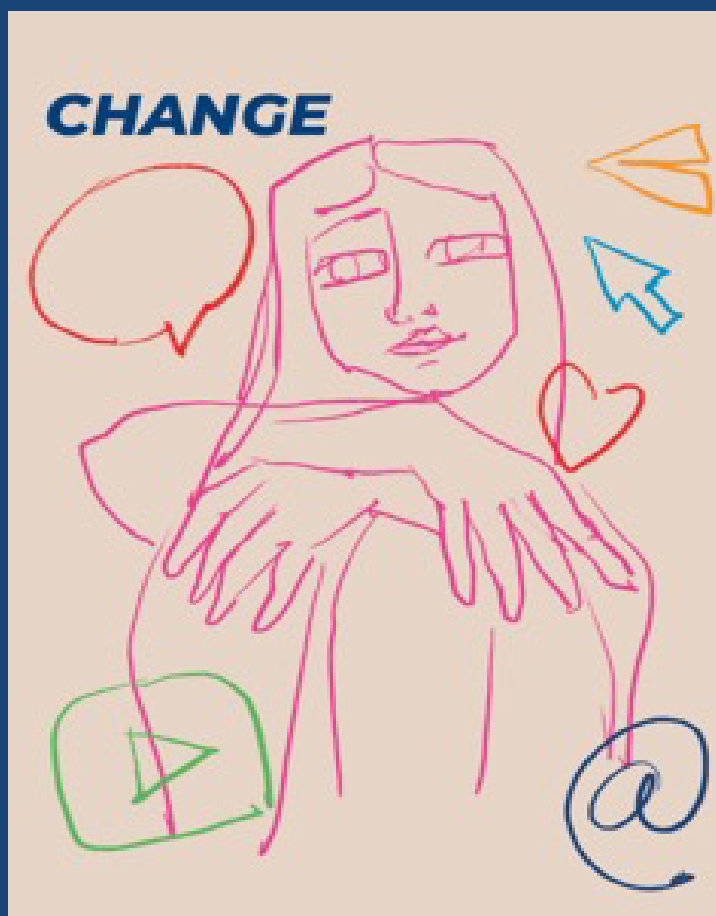
Members of the **CHANGE** Transnational Network to Prevent, Address and Reverse Gender Backsliding who took part in the meeting in Warsaw

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Webinar on Safety and Resilience of Women Online, 2 December 2024

In highly gendered online spaces, the language and details are not user friendly. Many women and men give up trying to improve their experience or use the security settings to the fullest. Volume and visibility of harassment and violence online enhance the pain for victims. Violence against Women Human Rights Defenders is real and it decreases women's equal and effective participation in public spaces.

This webinar looked into what individuals and organizations can do to support the resilience and safety of women online. It provided practical tools and tips on ways to increase our safety and resilience and it responded to the questions raised at registration and during the webinar. Participants (47 women and 7 men) are better informed (75%) and more empowered (17%) about addressing online VAW. They have mini plans of action including to: check the security and privacy settings of all their online platforms; add



two-step verification to all accounts; make their own digital safety plans; check how their organizations' policies regarding safety include the digital dimension and make suggestions on additions. The webinar was part of ODIHR event series for 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.

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Engaging male allies from Roma community in North Macedonia to support gender equality, 10 – 12 December 2024

The **CHANGE** project continues to engage men to support gender equality. The workshop in North Macedonia sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. To empower Roma men as supporters of gender advocacy with necessary skills, knowledge, and awareness to actively champion gender equality and support the empowerment of women in their communities.
To foster community dialogue between current and potential male allies and Roma women's movements in North Macedonia.
2. To exchange ideas on ways in which role models can be promoted and barriers to greater engagement of Roma men to support gender equality can be overcome in the context of North Macedonia.

The participants, 16 women and 14 men reached a consensus regarding the importance of engaging men in the specific context of North Macedonia, especially with regards to addressing violence against women and engaging Roma women in the public sphere. Participants identified discrepancies between religious teachings and practical interpretation of religion through "customs". Participants looked into the statistical evidence base on what it means to be (Roma) woman or man in North Macedonia. Lived experiences supplemented and aligned with the numerical data. Numerous individual and collective

level actions were identified for follow up engagement of participating Roma men.

Remzi Medik supported advocacy efforts to change the Criminal Code and ban early marriages in North Macedonia: "At the time, very little was said or done on the topic of early marriages. I have three daughters and I think that female children should be given more attention. Our daughters are not given all the rights. I am very often an advocate for their rights – not just for my daughters. We should give everybody access to rights. I am bothered by some of our traditional values. We have to change ourselves."



Buzzing with ideas on how to engage Roma men to support gender equality in North Macedonia

GET IN TOUCH

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