

CONCEPT NOTE

INSTITUTIONALISING GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN PARLIAMENT: Participatory Gender Audits and Gender Action Plans

Joint Web Dialogue event by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)

Online // Tuesday, 24 January 2023, 10.00-12.00 CET

BACKGROUND

Modern societies have recognized that gender inequality — demonstrated across a range of social, economic, cultural and political indicators — remains a fundamental impediment to progress and prosperity. This long-standing recognition is evidenced in the 1991 OSCE Moscow Document, which states: *“full and true equality between men and women is a fundamental aspect of a just and democratic society based on the rule of law. [Participating States] recognize that the full development of society and the welfare of all its members require equal opportunity for full and equal participation of men and women.”*¹

National parliaments of the OSCE region have a unique role to play in the gradual transformation towards gender equality of our societies. National parliaments are well placed to champion the objective of gender equality and promote gender mainstreaming, by responding to the needs and interests of both men and women in their composition, structures, operations, working methods, and day-to-day work. Parliaments are also responsible for producing gender-responsive policy outcomes, through decision-making and the adoption of documents within the competence of the parliaments, or indirectly through gender-sensitive oversight of the performance of the executive.

In the ensuing decade, the concept of ‘gender-sensitive parliaments’ (GSP) has become the clearest expression of parliaments’ responsibility to promote and achieve gender equality. International parliamentary organizations such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) have been at the forefront of these efforts, having produced an evidence base as well as political texts that encourage further action in support of gender sensitivity around the world.² The

¹ “Document of the Moscow Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE”, 3 October 1991. Available at <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/14310>.

² IPU, *Gender-Sensitive Parliaments: A Global Review of Good Practice* (Geneva: IPU, 2011); CPA, *Gender Sensitising Parliaments Guidelines: Standards and a Checklist for Parliamentary Change* (London: CPA, 2020).

OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) have joined this global community.

At the end of 2021, ODIHR published “[Realizing Gender Equality in Parliament: A Guide for Parliaments in the OSCE Region](#)”, a practical guide, intended to support the full range of parliamentary actors—from parliamentary leadership teams, members of parliament, and political and parliamentary staff, to parliamentary practitioners and civil society organizations dealing with gender equality issues—in transforming these institutions into gender-sensitive parliaments. The guide is based on an OSCE-wide research project, undertaken in cooperation with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and 46 national parliaments of OSCE participating States.

Recognizing that transformation will not come on its own and neither without a comprehensive and structured reform process, ODIHR and the OSCE PA have decided to complement this publication with a **practical guidance document** on “[Participatory Gender Audits](#)”, published in 2022, in English and Russian language. This guidance document sets out how to implement participatory gender audits through a clear framework and step-by-step process. It recognises that each parliament is unique and will undertake the audit in unique circumstances. Therefore, the framework allows parliaments to choose the scope of the audit, the format and the timescale within which it will be conducted. The new guidance document comes also at the time, when national parliaments are called upon to implement gender audits, as agreed in the 2022 IPU Kigali Declaration³.

To **launch the step-by-step guidance document**, discuss the application of gender audits and gender action plans in parliaments, and facilitate discussion on possible steps to be taken to work towards gender-sensitive parliaments, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will organize a Joint Web Dialogue on 24 January 2023.

³ IPU, Kigali Declaration, available at <https://www.ipu.org/news/press-releases/2022-10/ipu-member-parliaments-commit-accelerating-gender-equality>

OBJECTIVES OF THE EVENT

The event will provide an opportunity to discuss innovative approaches on “gender sensitive parliaments” and the transformation of national legislatures to better deliver for all women and men. More specifically, the event will aim to:

1. Provide a platform to exchange good practices, lessons learned and innovations on how national parliaments are conducting regular gender audits and other forms of gender analysis and how they are guiding their gradual reform by developing and implementing parliamentary gender action plans; and
2. Raise awareness among parliamentarians of OSCE participating States of OSCE tools and resources, including on ODIHR’s/OSCE PA’s new guidance document on “*Participatory Gender Audits*”.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and relevant staff
- Members of parliament and parliamentary service leadership of national parliaments of OSCE pSs
- Representatives of OSCE executive structures
- Delegations of pSs to the OSCE
- Experts in the field of gender sensitive parliaments and women’s political participation

REGISTRATION

All interested participants need to register their participation at the following [LINK](#). Once registered, participants will receive a zoom link to their e-mail address.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

The event will be held online, via Zoom conferencing platform. English/Russian/English and International Sign Language interpretation is provided.

CONTACT

Should you have any questions regarding the registration and participation, please do not hesitate to contact Natali Ashigova, Research Assistant, at natali.ashigova@oscepa.dk.

If you would like to hear more about gender audits and gender action plans for parliaments, please contact Saša Gavrić, Gender Officer, at sasa.gavric@odihhr.pl.

AGENDA

INSTITUTIONALISING GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN PARLIAMENT: Participatory Gender Audits and Gender Action Plans

Online // Tuesday, 24 January 2023, 10.00-12.00 CET

10:00-10:15	<p>Opening remarks Margareta Cederfelt, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Matteo Mecacci, Director of OSCE/ODIHR</p> <p>Moderator: Hana Đogović, Programme Officer, OSCE PA</p>
10:15-10:30	<p>Presentation of ODIHR's/OSCE PA's new 'gender sensitive parliaments' tool Participatory Gender Audits of Parliaments: A Step-by-step Guidance Document Speaker: Saša Gavrić, Gender Officer, ODIHR</p>
10:30-11:00	<p>Parliamentary experiences with gender audits and gender action plans</p> <p>Speakers: Dr. Hedy Fry, Member of the House of Commons of Canada, OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues</p> <p>Prof. Sarah Childs, Personal Chair of Politics and Gender University of Edinburgh</p> <p>Božena Jelušić, Chair of the Gender Equality Committee Parliament of Montenegro</p> <p>Kenneth G. Forslund, First Deputy Speaker of the Swedish Rikstag, Chairperson of the Rikstag's Working Group on Gender Equality</p>
11:00-11:45	<p>Questions and answers</p>
11:45-12:00	<p>Closing remarks: Ways forward Dr. Yulia Netesova, Chief of Democratic Governance and Gender Unit, ODIHR</p>