



Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe
Presence in Albania

NEWSLETTER

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Presence in Albania's annual report to OSCE Permanent Council

On 20 November, Ambassador Michel Tarran presented the Presence's annual report to the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna. The report, that was positively received by the participating States, showcased a wide range of the Presence's work, including justice reform, anti-corruption efforts, parliamentary support, electoral assistance and anti-trafficking initiatives, underscoring the Presence's tangible impact in Albania. On 25 November, Amb. Tarran hosted a briefing for the embassies of OSCE participating States accredited in Tirana to present the report in more detail and discuss plans for the coming year.

OSCE Chairperson-in-Office's Special Envoy visits Tirana

The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office's Special Envoy, Amb. Terhi Hakala, visited Tirana from 24 to 26 Nov. She met with Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Elisa Spiropali, international community and youth civil society organizations. She addressed the Conference on the 50th Anniversary of Helsinki Final Act, the screening of the "Helsinki Effect" film co-organized with the Finnish Embassy, and the Regional Conference on Online Gender-Based Violence. Amb. Hakala also met with the Presence's staff, commending their commitment and valuable work.



From Helsinki to today: Albania's OSCE transformation

Albania's engagement with the OSCE from the Helsinki Final Act to today were at the focus of a conference organized with the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs on 26 Nov to mark Helsinki Final Act's 50th anniversary. Key speakers included Minister Spiropali, Special Envoy Amb. Hakala and Head of Presence Amb. Tarran. High officials, historians and diplomats presented perspectives on Albania's role in the Helsinki process, its accession to the CSCE/OSCE, highlighting Albania's successful OSCE Chairpersonship in the challenging year 2020.



OSCE launches 16 Days of Activism campaign from Tirana

A regional OSCE event held on 25-26 Nov. in Tirana aimed to strengthen efforts to prevent online gender-based violence and address its links with radicalization to violence. Organized by the Presence and the OSCE Secretariat's Transnational Threats Department/Action against Terrorism Unit, the event also marked the launch of the OSCE's annual 16 Days of Activism campaign. Key speakers were Interior Minister Koçiu, Special Envoy Amb. Hakala, Head of Presence Amb. Tarran and OSCE Senior Adviser on Gender Issues Dr. Scarpitta.

Simulation, mock trial training against human trafficking



The third simulation-based training on combating human trafficking took place from 19 to 21 Nov. Law enforcement, prosecution, social services and child protection officials worked together to identify victims, secure evidence and co-ordinate assistance. Under the same antitrafficking project funded by the United Kingdom, Norway, Italy and Ireland, on 26-27 Nov., the Presence delivered a mock trial training for magistrate students together with the School of Magistrates, and on 10 Nov supported the Ministry of Interior launch an inclusive process for the National Strategy for Combating Human Trafficking.

Parliament staff visit European Parliament

Eight staff members from Albania's Assembly, including the Head of Protocol, members of the Protocol Service and three staff from the Bilateral Co-operation Directorate, visited the European Parliament in Brussels from 11-13 November, with the Presence's support. During the study visit, they explored the European Parliament's structure, agenda-setting and protocol procedures, and attended a mini-session of the plenary. Building on an online training in February co-organized by the Presence and the European Parliament's Unit for Democracy Support, this in-person visit turned virtual learning into hands-on experience.



SPAK, Special Courts staff strengthen professional skills



Thirty Special Anti-Corruption Structure (SPAK) and Special Courts legal advisors and judicial secretaries sharpened their professional skills in legal research, legal reasoning and legal writing during a training course organized by the OSCE Presence in co-operation with SPAK and Special Courts on 5 and 6 November. Participants explored fundamental aspects of legal research and reasoning, as well as contemporary practices in legal writing, including the use of precise terminology and professional writing style. The training was part of the Presence's ongoing support to Albania's justice reform and its efforts to promote integrity, efficiency and transparency within judicial institutions.

Enhancing cybercrime investigations

On 10 November, the Presence brought together 30 prosecutors and judicial police officers from Durrës and Elbasan for a training course on "Cybercrime, electronic evidence, human rights and data protection." The programme specifically focused on developing Standard Operating Procedures to guide prosecutors and judicial police officers in handling digital evidence. The event was part of the OSCE Presence's continued support for Albania's justice reform and its efforts to promote the rule of law, human rights and institutional integrity in addressing cybercrime and digital challenges.



High school senators to lead cyber safety cascade



On 5 November, 41 senators from all high schools in Tirana participated in an interactive and dynamic training on cyber hygiene, online ethics and best practices for digital safety. The training was organized by the Presence in partnership with the National Authority for Cyber Security. The sessions were engaging and rich with real-life examples from the participants' daily experiences, turning the training into an inspiring and hands-on learning experience. The activity marked the first step of a wider cascade process. The trained senators will become trainers for their peers in all high schools across Tirana, conducting awareness sessions on online safety and responsible use of technology.

Police analysts boost skills in financial crime detection



Analysts of the State Police's Financial Analysis Unit improved skills in detecting and investigating suspicious financial transactions in a four-day training organized by the Presence, from 17 to 20 Nov, with supported by the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program of the U.S. Department of Justice. The programme focused on advanced bank account analysis in *Excel*, methods for identifying irregular financial patterns and hands-on use of *i2 Analyst's Notebook* to visualize criminal networks and improve financial intelligence products. This is the second training in this field conducted by the Presence.

Forum on compensation of formerly persecuted

On 5 November, together with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Presence organized a forum to discuss compensation schemes for formerly persecuted persons. The event was built around a Presence-commissioned study. Key issues included the need to continue advocacy efforts, pursue necessary legislative changes and accelerate the implementation of compensation measures in practice. Representatives from transitional justice institutions, the Ministry of Justice, the People's Advocate, Parliament, associations of former persecuted persons, academia and other stakeholders actively engaged in the discussions.



Engaging youth in transitional justice



The Presence's "Youth and transitional justice in Albania" forum on 27 November brought together young people to deepen their understanding of Albania's communist past and the broader processes of transitional justice. Activities included discussions with representatives of transitional justice institutions and the formerly persecuted, a documentary screening and an interactive theatre performance. The Presence continues to support a constructive dialogue on transitional justice processes, focusing on the human rights violations under the former regime and giving young people a special role in reflecting on the past.

Promoting youth participation in peace and security

During November, the Presence organized several events on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS). On 15 November, together with RYCO, it held a consultative meeting to localize the Western Balkans Youth Forum 2025 recommendations. A follow-up meeting on 25 November brought MPs and local councillors to discuss these recommendations. Both events strengthened dialogue between youth, civil society and institutions. On 20 November, a Youth Talk with the Youth Advisory Group marked 10 years of the YPS Agenda. The discussion encouraged youth engagement and highlighted priorities for advancing YPS in Albania.



Gender equality in focus of working group meeting



Gender equality, gender-based violence and the findings of a gender report of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights were the focus of the Gender and Women-in-Decision-Making Working Group meeting, co-hosted by the OSCE Presence and UN Women Albania on 13 November. Partners reviewed ongoing initiatives and outlined plans for 2026. The event also served to enhancing co-ordination and collaboration among all organizations that are part of the Working Group. Together, we stay committed to promoting women's meaningful participation in decision-making at all levels.