



## #SkaShkurt - No shortcuts to success

#SkaShkurt / #NoShortcuts is the OSCE and Ministry of Justice's online campaign that responds to the increase in the recruitment of young people into criminal activities. The campaign features real live stories from young people who lived the realities of crime and chose a different life. It also leverages public figures showing that success comes through hard work. The campaign was launched on 24 February at an event attended by the Head of Presence and Minister Lamallari. Ambassador Tarran also spoke about the campaign in an [interview](#) with RTSH.

## Albania, North Macedonia strengthen border co-operation with OSCE support

Ministers of Interior of Albania and North Macedonia, as well as General Directors of Police, Heads of Border Police, Heads of International Co-operation Departments and Directors of Customs, [met](#) in Skopje on 28 Jan., with OSCE support, to revitalize the bilateral agreement on Police Co-operation and Co-ordination Centres. In a follow-up, on 11-12 Feb., the joint [working group](#) between the two countries successfully concluded negotiations on the Agreement on the Establishment of Shared Border Crossing Points and the Conduct of Joint Border Control Activities.



## OSCE Presence wraps up environmental governance project

On 11 Feb., the Presence brought together institutions and civil society to present the final evaluation of the [project](#) "Strengthening environmental governance and security in Albania". Discussions highlighted key findings and practical recommendations to strengthen the fight against environmental crime through improved inter-institutional co-ordination, capacity building and alignment with international standards. The project ran from 2022 to 2025 and was financed by Norway, France and Italy.



## OSCE Presence reaffirms support to Albanian institutions

Ambassador Michel Tarran reiterated the OSCE Presence continued commitment to supporting Albanian institutions during numerous high-level meetings in Jan. and Feb. He met with heads of [Parliament](#), [Constitutional Court](#), [SPAK](#), [National Bureau of Investigation](#), [Parliamentary Committee on Civic Initiatives](#) and [Legal Affairs](#), [National Minorities Committee](#), Audio-visual [Media Authority](#), Minister of Environment and [Commissioner](#) for the Supervision of the Civil Service. D/Head of Presence Paszatory met with [Deputy Speaker](#) of Parliament.



## OSCE supports regional judicial co-operation



The OSCE Presence is pleased to see that the regional conference jointly organized with the High Inspector of Justice last September is leading to concrete steps of bilateral exchanges between justice institutions in the Balkans. On 11-12 February, the Presence assisted the High Inspector of Justice and his delegation meetings with justice institutions of North Macedonia. A similar meeting took place in Pristina on 27 February between Albania's High Judicial Council and Kosovo Judicial Council. The Presence looks forward to continuing to foster meaningful regional collaboration and shared progress.

## Visit to Dublin on combating human trafficking

On 25-26 Feb., Albanian officials visited Dublin for a peer exchange on combating human trafficking, organized by the OSCE Presence. The delegation included senior representatives from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, SPAK, General Prosecution Office, State Labour Inspectorate and High Prosecutorial Council. They collected insights on effective multi-agency and victim-centred co-operation from Irish counterparts that will enable a better multi-agency collaboration, investigation and prosecution strategies to address all forms of human trafficking and strengthen the labour inspection and co-operation with other agencies.



## Advancing National Anti-Trafficking Strategy



The OSCE Presence continues to support national institutions in reinforcing both the strategic and operational dimensions of Albania's response to trafficking in human beings. On 10 Feb., the Presence supported the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the third working group meeting for the drafting of National Anti-Trafficking Strategy through broad consultations with state institutions and civil society. These discussions aim to ensure that the Strategy reflects the situational context, addresses emerging risks and provides strong policy direction with clear priorities and measurable outcomes across prevention, protection and prosecution. This initiative is supported by the United Kingdom, Norway, Ireland and Italy.

## New methodology against worker exploitation

With OSCE Presence support, technical consultations have officially started to develop a risk analysis methodology for economic sectors, focusing on the exploitation of workers, particularly migrants and children. The first meeting, held at the Labour Inspectorate on 12 Feb., brought together OSCE representatives, international experts, officials from the Ministry of Economy and Innovation, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Labour Inspectorate. Developing a structured methodology and joint risk analysis will strengthen institutional action, improve inspection effectiveness and enhance co-ordination against labour exploitation.



## Welcoming amendments to important laws



Following the Assembly's plenary session on 27 January, the Presence welcomed the recent amendments to the Criminal Code related to defamation as an important first step in advancing freedom of expression. The Presence continued to encourage the full decriminalization of defamation and the use of proportionate civil remedies. The OSCE Presence also welcomed the adoption of the amendments to the Law on Audiovisual Media, in particular the introduction of article 33/1 on media ownership transparency, considering them a meaningful step toward improving media ownership transparency and strengthening accountability in the audiovisual sector.

## Manual on public procurement published



On 18 February, the Presence presented a Manual on Public Procurement for judges and prosecutors to the Albanian School of Magistrates, marking an important step in strengthening the capacity of the judiciary to effectively address complex public procurement-related offences. The Manual offers practical guidance for judges, prosecutors and legal practitioners on identifying, investigating, and adjudicating procurement-related offences. An English-language extract focusing on best international practices provides comparative insights for a broader audience across OSCE participating States.

## Engaging students in Victims' Rights Strategy

The Presence welcomed law students from Tirana University for a discussion on the National Strategy for the Protection of Victims of Crime 2024–2030 and the Charter of their Rights on 18 February. The event was organized within the framework of the Awareness Week on the Protection of Victims' Rights. Engaging the future generation of jurists, judges, prosecutors and lawyers in understanding ongoing justice reforms is essential. As tomorrow's justice professionals, they will play a key role in putting into practice the standards and guarantees established by Albania's first strategy dedicated to the victims of crime.



## Young influencers to boost election turnout



The “Young influencers of elections” initiative is the latest effort to boost youth participation in electoral processes. The OSCE Presence and the Central Election Commission launched it on 5 February, the Global Elections Day, at an event that brought together young people, civil society organizations and media experts. The discussions highlighted a clear message: elections are a shared responsibility, built on trust, integrity and ongoing engagement. A key topic was the growing role of artificial intelligence in elections. The initiative is part of the Presence's project supported by Sweden, Switzerland, the U.S. Mission to the OSCE and Poland.

## Cybersecurity skills cascade across schools

During February, 100 student senators from 22 high schools in Kuçova, Vlora and Gjirokastra participated in cyber security training of trainers sessions organized by the Presence in close partnership with the National Authority on Cyber Security. The programme focused on raising awareness of cybersecurity risks and strengthening participants' capacity to deliver peer-to-peer training through a cascade approach within their schools. Students learned about strong passwords, identifying suspicious content and everyday practices that increase personal online security.



## Strengthening women in decision-making



On 12 Feb, the OSCE Presence and UN Women Albania brought together partners and members of the Gender and Women in Decision-Making Working Group to exchange views on gender equality recent developments and key issues. Topics included the newly approved legal framework, challenges faced by women elected representatives and ongoing efforts aimed at strengthening women's participation in decision-making. The meeting also featured a presentation of the findings from a recent report on gender representation in municipal councils. This meeting marks the beginning of collaboration and co-ordination throughout the year to advance gender issues and promote gender equality in Albania.