



Celebrating women on International Women’s Day

To mark International Women’s Day, the OSCE Presence held a series of events focused on women’s rights and empowerment. Two open lectures aimed at enhancing youth awareness and engagement on gender equality and gender-based violence took place at the Durrës University (4 March) and the European University of Tirana (9 March). On 6 March, the Presence joined a statement of the Gender and Women in Decision-Making Working Group and posted a video message by Ambassador Tarran on 8 March. Activities concluded with a gender-related quiz for the Presence’s staff.

Ambassador Tarran meets Minister Hoxha

Ambassador Michel Tarran met the new Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Ferit Hoxha, on 25 March, two days before the 29th anniversary of the establishment of the OSCE Presence in Albania. “Over the past three decades, the Presence has worked closely with national institutions and a wide range of partners, contributing to democratic governance, the rule of law, electoral reform, support to law enforcement and the fight against crime, as well as the promotion of human rights, media freedom, youth engagement and civil society,” Minister Hoxha wrote.



Consultation on political parties’ financing legislation

Albania stands at a decisive moment in strengthening further the integrity and credibility of the electoral framework. Welcoming the resumption of work of the parliamentary Ad Hoc Committee on Electoral Reform, on 3 March, the Presence supported a consultation roundtable on the revision of legislation related to the financing of political parties. On 25 March, the Presence organized an informal breakfast with civil society organizations to discuss recent developments in the electoral reform process.



Strengthening response to labour exploitation trafficking

As Albania becomes increasingly attractive for people seeking work, the OSCE is helping the country strengthen efforts to prevent trafficking for labour exploitation. On 27 March, institutions, the private sector and civil society came together to discuss stronger inspections, responsible practices and better protection for workers, including migrants. The OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings spoke at the event, part of a Presence’s project funded by UK, Norway, Ireland and Italy.



Promoting national minority self-identification



The OSCE Presence supported three roundtables raising awareness among local communities about the procedure for self-identification as a national minority. They took place in Kukës (10 March), Dropull (27 March) and Korça (31 March) organized by the Ministry of Internal Affairs in co-operation with the Committee on National Minorities and the support of the joint European Union and Council of Europe action “Advancing the protection from discrimination in Albania”. Participants were introduced to two new resources supporting the process: a toolkit for civil society organizations and an informative leaflet available in all explaining how to complete and submit the self-identification form.

Municipal peer exchange call launched

On 19 March, the Presence issued a call for all municipalities to apply for a new peer-to-peer exchange under the project “Strengthening local government capacities and improving environmental governance in Albania”. Following the completion of applications, two Albanian municipalities will be selected to engage in structured exchange with a European partner municipality, promoting learning and innovation. This initiative supports local governments in strengthening environmental governance, improving planning and boosting co-operation through practical tools and shared experiences.



OSCE Presence, EBU discuss media development



The overall media environment in Albania, the role of the public broadcaster RTSH and recent developments and reforms in the media sector were at the centre of the meeting between the Head of the OSCE Presence, Ambassador Michel Tarran and the General Director of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), Noel Curran, on 5 March. Recognizing the alignment between EBU’s work and the OSCE Presence’s mandate to strengthen public service media and promote media freedom and pluralism, both sides agreed to explore opportunities for closer co-operation in these areas.

Students in region trained in mobile journalism

From 2 to 6 March, a visual storytelling and mobile journalism workshop for students was held at the Media and Reform Center in Niš, Serbia. Eight future media professionals from universities in Tirana, Skopje and Niš strengthened their skills in filming, photo editing and producing professional TV packages — using only their mobile devices. With guidance from their professors, the students will now work together to produce a joint video feature on a topic of shared interest to young people across all three countries. The event was organized by the OSCE field operations in Serbia, Albania and Skopje.



Police dog handlers get advanced certification



Two officials of the Albanian State Police Canine Training Institute and their four-paws partner completed the final one-week training and certification and are now equipped to further train their colleagues at the Albanian State Police Canine Training Institute. The certification was organized in co-operation with the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and the French Gendarmerie and took place at the Kosovo Academy on Public Safety in Vushtrri/Vučitrn from 9 to 13 March. It targeted two K9 units – one from Tirana and one from Pristina. Part of the Presence’s project funded by the EU, Germany and France.