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

NEWSLETTER

August-October 2026



OSCE Presence promotes dialogue, inclusive participation

The OSCE Presence participated in Thu'Je Platform for Democracy and Peace, co-organized by Elbasan Municipality on 28–30 October 2026. Speaking at the event alongside Elbasan Mayor Gledian Llatja and later to reporters, Amb. Michel Tarran stressed the need for dialogue and consultation, noting that people must feel their voices are heard and their views taken into account. He underlined that democracy is a daily practice and encouraged citizens, particularly young people, to engage in public debate. The Presence held two sessions, together with civil society organizations and the Central Election Commission, focusing on the participation of vulnerable groups and youth engagement in democratic processes.

Ambassador Tarran meets justice system actors

From 1 to 8 October, Ambassador Tarran met key justice system actors, including the Minister of Justice, Chair and members of the High Prosecutorial Council, Chair of the High Judicial Council, Chair of Advocacy Chamber, High Inspector of Justice and representatives of judges' and prosecutors' associations. The meetings reaffirmed the OSCE Presence's commitment to supporting the rule of law, an effective and accountable justice system and public trust in justice in Albania. Ambassador Tarran also underlined the value of inclusive and meaningful consultation among justice institutions and legal professionals on reforms and other matters affecting the delivery of justice.





At an event addressed by Ambassador Tarran and Mayor Vangjel Tavo on 23 October, the Presence and Himara Municipality launched the Environmental Partnership Forum, a pilot initiative tackling environmental challenges and promoting sustainable development in Himara.

Environmental Partnership Forum launched in Himara

The Forum will help identify environmental priorities and guide future municipal investments, while providing a model for other municipalities. The inaugural meeting brought together over 25 representatives of academia, environmental organizations, Regional Administration of Protected Areas, the Municipality, local community and beekeepers' association. The Forum is part of the Presence's project "Strengthening local government capacities and improving environmental governance in Albania", implemented in co-ordination with the Ministry of State for Local Government and the Agency for the Support of Local Self-Government.

Trial Monitoring Project launches second report



Effective case handling, institutional co-operation and transparency are key to translating justice reforms into lasting practices across the Western Balkans. These issues were at the centre of a regional judicial conference held in Budva from 26 to 28 October, attended by representatives of key Albanian justice institutions and civil society. The event also saw the launch of the second public report of the OSCE's Regional Trial Monitoring Project. For Albania, the report notes stronger engagement by specialized justice institutions in reforms, while pointing to areas requiring continued attention, including transparency, case management, professional accountability and the quality of judicial and prosecutorial acts.

Albanian experts explore electronic voting



Representatives of Albania's Central Election Commission and experts from the Ad Hoc Parliamentary Committee on Electoral Reform explored international developments in electronic voting at the 11th International Joint Conference on Electronic Voting in Tallinn, Estonia, from 7 to 9 October. The OSCE Presence supported their participation through its project "Support to electoral reform and processes in Albania", funded by Sweden, Switzerland, Poland and the U.S. Mission to the OSCE. The exchange deepened participants' understanding of electoral integrity, voter privacy, risks of coercion, cryptography, blockchain-based voting and related security challenges.

Promoting alternatives to pre-trial detention



Promoting alternative measures to pre-trial detention was the focus of a roundtable organized by the OSCE Presence in Albania in co-operation with the Council of Europe Office in Tirana and the Ministry of Justice on 16 September. Participants stressed that deprivation of liberty before trial should be used only when necessary and proportionate. Particular attention was given to the link between pre-trial detention and prison overcrowding. "Reducing the number of court decisions on pre-trial detention is not about being softer on crime. It is about ensuring that measures are necessary, proportionate and effective," Ambassador Michel Tarran said.

Across borders against domestic violence



Domestic violence does not stop at administrative boundaries. Neither should support for victims. On 24 September, the municipalities of Tetovo, Dragash/Dragaš and Kukës came together in Tetovo, North Macedonia, to discuss how institutions can work better across jurisdictions to prevent domestic violence, protect victims and ensure an effective response. Police, prosecutors, the judiciary, social services, shelters, civil society and municipal representatives exchanged experiences, challenges and practical solutions. The dialogue was jointly supported by the OSCE Mission to Skopje, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and the OSCE Presence in Albania.

Continued support to Local Safety Councils



On 9 September, Ambassador Tarran participated in a meeting of the Local Safety Council in Pogradec, together with Deputy Minister of Interior Anisa Ruseti, Mayor Ilir Xhakolli and representatives of central and local institutions, law enforcement, education and the community. Discussions focused on community safety, particularly challenges affecting children and young people. Ambassador Tarran highlighted the importance of institutional co-operation and engaging young people as partners in creating safer schools and communities. The OSCE Presence will continue supporting the strengthening of Local Safety Councils and promoting practical approaches to community and school safety.

Strengthening justice professionals' skills



A two-day training for justice professionals on legal research, reasoning and writing, organized by the OSCE Presence and the School of Magistrates, took place on 6–7 October. It brought together around 25 legal advisors, legal assistants and judicial secretaries from the Special Prosecution Office against Corruption and Organized Crime (SPAK), the Special Court of Appeals, the High Court, the Court of Appeals of General Jurisdiction, the Administrative Court and the Administrative Court of Appeals. The training aimed to strengthen participants' research, analytical and legal drafting skills, contributing to the quality, transparency and effectiveness of judicial work.

School of Magistrates opens academic year



On 5 October, Ambassador Tarran attended the opening ceremony of the 2026–2027 academic year at the School of Magistrates, alongside the President of the Republic, Minister of Justice, heads of justice institutions and EU and Council of Europe ambassadors. Addressing the future legal professionals, he emphasised that judicial and prosecutorial independence is a fundamental principle they must uphold throughout their careers. "Independence does not mean freedom from accountability and the law. Independence means having the professional courage and institutional conditions to apply the law impartially, without improper interference," he said.

Dialogue on civil service disputes



On 19 October, the OSCE Presence and SIGMA/OECD brought together around 30 representatives of administrative courts, the Minister for Public Administration and Anticorruption, the Department of Public Administration, the Commissioner for Oversight of the Civil Service and other relevant public institutions to discuss complaints and disputes related to civil service and human resource management. Building on discussions in March, participants explored ways to prevent civil service disputes, improve administrative decisions and ensure court rulings are properly enforced, reducing costs for public institutions.

Mock trials to address human trafficking



On 29 October, the Presence introduced its mock trial methodology at Barleti University, focusing on the adjudication of human trafficking cases and victim protection. The initiative aims to help future legal professionals connect academic knowledge with criminal justice practice. An initial Training of Trainers session familiarized university staff with the methodology. Students will take on courtroom roles in a follow-up mock trial, applying the methodology in practice. The activity is part of the Presence's project on stregthening Albania's capacities in combatting trafficking in human beings", funded by the UK, Norway, Ireland and Italy.

Campaign raises awareness of labour exploitation



From August to October, the OSCE Presence and the State Labour Inspectorate continued their awareness campaign to help prevent labour exploitation and protect workers' rights, with particular attention to foreign workers in Albania. Through public information messages, the campaign highlighted warning signs of exploitation, including unfair wages, excessive working hours, the retention of identity documents, threats and unsafe working conditions. It also directed workers to the relevant institutions and support services where they can seek help or report abuse. The campaign runs under a Presence's project funded by the United Kingdom, Norway, Ireland and Italy.

Albanian Alpine Police train in Austrian Alps



Nine members of the Albanian State Police's Alpine Units from Tirana, Fier and Shkodra completed a trainer-of-trainers course in the Austrian Alps from 28 September to 2 October, organized by the OSCE Presence in co-operation with the Austrian Federal Police. Building on previous OSCE-supported training initiatives, the course equipped participants to pass on specialized mountain policing, survival and rescue skills to colleagues across Albania. Funded by Austria, the initiative also provided personal training gear and specialized search-and-rescue equipment, helping the Alpine Units strengthen their operational readiness and sustain this expertise nationwide.

RTSH staff trained on AI, digital journalism



Artificial intelligence, digital journalism and copyright were the focus of a three-day training organized by the OSCE Presence in co-operation with Albanian Radio and Television (RTSH) for public broadcaster staff from 6 to 8 October. The training covered AI tools for fact-checking and information verification, digital tools for news production and social media content, as well as the responsible use of copyrighted photos, videos, music and other materials. It aimed to strengthen digital skills, support reliable reporting and raise awareness of copyright while upholding journalistic standards.

Strengthening AMA's regulatory expertise



On 2 October, the OSCE Presence's ongoing support to the Audiovisual Media Authority (AMA) brought international legal expert Martin Dorociak together with AMA staff to discuss transparency in influencer advertising, split-screen advertising and media ownership. The discussions focused on current regulatory practices and emerging challenges in the media landscape. AMA Director Armela Krasniqi described the OSCE Presence as a "valued and consistent partner" in strengthening the institution and bringing Albanian legislation and regulatory practice closer to European standards.

Peer learning on waste management



On 7 October, the OSCE Presence brought together representatives of Berat, Dibra, Lushnja and Memaliaj municipalities for an online exchange on waste management, with input from an Austrian expert. Part of a peer-to-peer initiative, the meeting covered waste collection, recycling, composting, service financing and inter-municipal co-operation. Building on study visits in June, participants explored European practices and practical solutions adapted to local needs. The activity is part of the Presence's project to strengthen local government capacities and improve environmental governance in Albania.

Youth voices matter



On 2–3 October, more than 80 Albanian-speaking women from Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Montenegro came together in Vlora to discuss strengthening women's participation in local decision-making and public life. Deputy Head of Presence Clarisse Pasztory addressed the event participants in a video message. Organized by the National Alliance of Women Municipal Councillors, with support from the OSCE Presence, UN Women, the Embassy of Sweden and the "Equality in decision-making" initiative supported by Helvetas, the conference provided a platform to exchange experiences and explore ways to advance women's leadership across politics, business, academia and civil society.