



a cross-dimensional approach needs a feminist expertise

CSP WG on women and gender issues in the OSCE

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Heidi Meinzolt – Introduction

Women have a specific approach to all 3 interlinked dimensions of OSCE on the basis of their long-term gendered and feminist conflict analysis and understanding of all forms of violence in the triangle of militarism, patriarchy and capitalism. We see the spill-over effects from WPS agenda to all 3 OSCE dimensions based on broad experiences on the ground on how societies can and should function more peacefully and leaving no-one behind.

The **Politico-Military Dimension** should not just be an expert forum due to intersecting dimensions of life under the umbrella of human security to foster dialogue, confidence and peace building, linked to concrete disarmament initiatives and prevention.

The **Economy and environmental Dimension** needs to pay more attention and move the money to just and equal access to (natural) resources, health and social services – including reproductive rights – education and care, based on real needs.

The **Human dimension** needs to keep an eye on underlying social inequalities making women and girls multi-vulnerable, resistance against patriarchal structures, voyeurism of media and hero stories. Specific attention and awareness raising is needed in cases of forced migration and human/women trafficking, as a chance for “peacing” societies as a whole.

Nora Ahmetaj - My Journey: From Kosovo to Ukraine – A Feminist Witness to Conflict and Hope

...Women are not merely survivors of war—we are its fiercest truth-tellers, its quiet rebuilders, its architects of peace... In Kosovo, I learned that silence is not neutral—it is violent. The refusal to acknowledge war crimes, the systematic erasure of women’s suffering, and the glorification of militarized masculinity were not just societal blind spots—they were deliberate acts of forgetting. I stood with civilian victims whose pain was dismissed, whose sacrifices were never honoured. I sat with survivors of sexual violence, women who were shamed into silence, their trauma buried beneath layers of stigma and fear.

When I arrived in Ukraine, I felt a haunting sense of déjà vu. The same patterns unfolded: women displaced, violated, and yet somehow still holding the fabric of their families and communities together. Their resilience was breathtaking. But the hardest part? Watching history repeat itself while the world turned its gaze elsewhere. Still, I stayed. Because bearing witness is not optional. Supporting the voiceless is not charity—it’s justice...

Security: ...women negotiate ceasefires, create underground shelters, and rebuild trust in places where men had only left ruins. We know that peace is not a treaty—it’s a way of living....

Economy/Environment: ... women revive entire villages with their bare hands and boundless will as survivors...

Women’s rights: ... legal reforms that recognize gender-based crimes, survivor-centered support systems, the right to speak without fear...

Annemarie Sancar – OSCE needs to promote a caring environment

...**Women's needs** are too often downplayed, ignored, brushed aside, with the excuse that it will all happen later ...time and energy invested in care provision is neglected in the programs of reconstruction. The daily living conditions are deteriorating in terms of economic possibilities, but also in terms of secure access to health services, schools etc. There is not enough investment in programs and infrastructure for rehabilitation and treatment of psychological and physical trauma / experiences. Due to the strong presence of weapons, militarisation and uniformed armed ideals of masculinity, the daily safety is in an absolute precarious state. Still, there is no money for recollecting small arms etc.

...The OSCE participating states with high level of living standards, must **invest in social infrastructure, in programs for demilitarization, in local communities beyond the profit-oriented economy.** Care is costly, we know, but with

out good care being provided under good conditions we will certainly miss the positive ways to a sustainable and integrative peace.

Give space and time for local women's groups to identify their own security priorities, to formulate common strategies, even to develop an inclusive and gender responsive budget for their community.

Listen to women's voices and respect their wisdom as very valuable in order to build a safe community! It costs and it takes time to see changes for good. But this is exactly what we mean with peace! A Participatory, financially supported roadmap from bottom to the upper levels of decision makers (often only men, only in masculinity roles thinking actors).

Give enough financial and political support for documenting women's experiences and support the promoting of constructive narratives, together with younger generations as they may contribute to dialogue, counter disinformation, and reinforce social resilience. This is, though, not possible if there is no support!!

Good care, safe access to care services and good conditions for all those, mainly women, providing care is crucial, is key for life! We all need it now or later, but we also know, that it is costly, but any euro is worthwhile being invested in care and social infrastructure. The money should be taken from the arms industry, legally obliged to invest at least 30-40 % of its profit to social infrastructure and services for a good and safe life for all!

Gulnara Shahinian/Armenia - Spaces and opportunities for advancing peace at the local level

Community level: first and most immediate space for "peacing" societies: ... remarkable resilience and an extraordinary capacity for self-organization, local dialogues, community consultations, inclusive problem-solving meetings as effective platforms for identifying risks, preventing tensions, and strengthening trust.

Women's groups: ...the first to detect early signs of tension. Women's solidarity networks, psychosocial support circles, and community-based initiatives contribute meaningfully to prevention, mediation, and social cohesion

Refugees and displaced populations: important space for peace-building, intersecting directly with human security, seeking ways to rebuild lives and contribute to the social fabric of hostcommunities

Bottom-up approaches in practice: ...local WPS Action Plans, youth-led story telling and civic engagement in border communities, trauma healing, psychological and social recovery in a broader peace and security strategy, overcoming gender bias in early warning, social cohesion, community stabilisation, shared responsibility, building resilience and preventing future instability...

Tolekan Ismailova / Kirgizstan – Gender Inequality in Central Asia as a risk factor for Economy, Environment and Security

Gender Inequality Narratives in Central Asia: ...Gender pay gap, women underrepresented in green jobs, heavy burden of unpaid care work, gender-based violence

Performance Paradox: ...Strong Social Indicators, weak implementation

Political empowerment and gaps: Women's local political participation does **not necessarily correlate** with leadership in the economy—barriers differ by sector.

Social norms, discrimination and unpaid care work – lack of gender-responsive family policies, limited support services, structural barriers and discrimination restrict women's full participation

Gender-based violence as a security and development risk, gender inequality increases fragility by weakening social cohesion and resilience

Environmental and climate risks affecting the most vulnerable

Dunia Khalil: There is a need to consider in a different more human centred way OSCE neighbouring regions and the destiny of especially Palestinian population, their safety and rights destroyed by genozid and war fuelled/supported by also OSCE countries.