



## **Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the OSCE Region**

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# List of Abbreviations

APPG	All Party Parliamentary Group	MOS	Ministry of Security
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	MOSP	Ministry of Social Protection
		NAP	National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security
CRSV	Conflict-related sexual violence	NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
CSO	Civil society organisation	NWM	National Women's Machinery
DCAF	DCAF – the Geneva Center for Security Sector Governance	OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
EU	European Union	PSO	Peace Support Operation
FIGAP	Financial Mechanism for Implementation of Gender Action Plan in Bosnia and Herzegovina	PSVI	Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative
GAP	Gender Action Plan	PVE	Preventing Violent Extremism
GAPS UK	Gender Action for Peace and Security UK	RS	Republika Srpska
GBV	Gender-based violence	SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
GFPs	Gender Focal Points	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia	SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
IDP	Internally displaced person	SGBH	Sexual and gender-based harassment
INGO	International non-governmental organisation	SOGIE	Sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression
LAP	Local Action Plan	SSI	Security Sector Institutions
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans gender and/or intersex	SViC	Sexual Violence in Conflict
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
MoD	Ministry of Defence	UNODC	UN Office on Drugs and Crime
MOHLSP	Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection	UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
Mol	Ministry of the Interior	VAWG	Violence against women and girls
MoES	Ministry for Emergency Situations	WPS	Women, Peace and Security

# Foreword

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The anniversary provides a good momentum for examining how far have we progressed in implementing the UNSCR 1325 and the nine related resolutions.

Are we now better in protecting women and girls from conflict-related violence? Have we found more effective ways to enable women to fully participate in processes related to peace and security?

In 2014, the OSCE released a study on National Action Plans on the implementation of the UNSCR 1325. This new study builds on the key findings and recommendations of the 2014 publication. One key positive development can be seen in the increase of the number of NAPs from 27 to 36 during the last five years. Over 60 per cent of OSCE participating States now have a NAP on UNSCR 1325. Growing commitment at the national level is also reflected in frequent discussions on women, peace and security during the formal OSCE meetings in Vienna.

The study at hand shows that much work and effort has been put into designing better and more effective NAPs to implement the UNSCR 1325 across the OSCE region. Examination of the NAPs indicates that women's participation in peace and security governance processes and institutions remains to be a priority area for OSCE participating States. In recent years more attention has also been given to conflict prevention, as well as on preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism. The study also provides some insights on how various gender equality and security strategies and action plans can be synchronized and co-ordinated in order to avoid duplications, overlaps, and contradictions.

NAPs on Women, Peace and Security have turned out to be an effective tool to support reform processes in national security sector institutions. Numerous examples given in this study show that the security sector institutions feel ownership of these action plans, and recognize the benefits the implementation of NAPs have brought to their everyday work.

In the 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality the 57 participating States have committed the OSCE to support the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in the OSCE region. We have done so by building capacities for designing more results-oriented NAPs on UNSCR 1325. The OSCE's field operations, institutions and Secretariat departments have also built up capacities to better implement the NAPs. Targeted trainings for security sector personnel on women, peace and security, or helping develop measures to increase the inclusion of women in the security services are examples of OCE support in this field.

A striking finding of this study is the lack of funding for the implementation of Women, Peace and Security commitments. After 20 years of implementation, 86 per cent of participating States' NAPs have minimal or zero information on budget or financing mechanism. Unfortunately, this reflects a global reality. We clearly can do better than this. The recommendations provided in this publication also bring up a number of other remaining challenges in NAPs and their implementation, engaging us for developing ways address them.

I would like to thank the OSCE Secretariat's Gender Section for leading the OSCE's work to support the implementation of WPS in our region. The group of researchers have done an excellent job in painting for us this rich picture of WPS activities and dynamics in the OSCE region. We are also grateful that such a large number of government and civil society representatives provided their expert views and insights for this study. The OSCE field operations in the five participating States deserve a special thanks for their invaluable help for this research. I would also like to thank the LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security for partnering with the OSCE in preparing this publication.

Thomas Greminger  
OSCE Secretary General



# Executive Summary

As the largest regional security organization in the world, the OSCE has committed itself to support the implementation of the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda in its 57 participating States.

This commitment has been outlined in the OSCE 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, in which women's participation in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation is enlisted as a priority area of work. At the time of writing, over 60 per cent of the OSCE participating States (36) have adopted a National Action Plan (NAP).

This study provides research-based evidence on the implementation of the WPS agenda across the OSCE region. After providing an introduction to the WPS agenda and the OSCE's work on its implementation it offers a brief discussion of research on the implementation of the WPS agenda through the development and adoption of NAPs. Chapter Three presents a desk-based analysis of NAPs from the OSCE region. Chapter Four consists of an assessment of the WPS NAP implementation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine. It draws on field research conducted by the authors in the five countries, consisting of interviews and focus group discussions with relevant members of state agencies, civil society, academia as well as UN agencies and OSCE staff. The concluding chapter presents recommendations for future development of NAPs in the OSCE region.

The desk-based analysis of NAPs in the OSCE region shows that the range of issues they cover is growing, although attention is still paid to the traditional “pillars” of WPS activity, notably participation and prevention. There has been an increased focus on prevention since 2014 and NAPs have begun to feature emerging WPS issues such as disasters and violent extremism. In terms of the features that make for an effective NAP, much room for improvement remains in the sphere of budgeting and the specification of financial arrangements, as most NAPs in the OSCE region do not feature even a “broadly defined” budget, let alone specific allocations to defined agencies or initiatives. Specification of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) has remained somewhat steady since 2005, and much

greater levels of specificity are evident in the sphere of M&E than in budgeting. Since 2014 there has been a marked uptick in levels of inclusive practice specified in the NAPs, though they could offer better opportunities for civil society involvement.

The field research did not aim to compare the different NAPs, as this would not have been possible given how different they are and how they are at different stages. Rather, the research examined a range of issues, such as how the NAPs were developed, where in the state structure the NAP was anchored, how well reporting processes functioned, how the WPS NAPs related to other women's empowerment and gender equality strategies and action plans, and how localization processes of NAPs were working.

Various good practices emerged from both desk-based and field research, which inform the recommendations summarized below. The recommendations are grouped into three phases of NAP activity, with a further set of recommendations for the OSCE and other international organizations supporting NAP development and implementation. The recommendations are elaborated in the report; summary recommendations only are presented here.

### **Phase 1: Framing and developing NAPs**

- Undertake knowledge-sharing activities across contexts facing similar challenges
- Ensure the participation of individuals and civil society organization (CSO) representatives from diverse backgrounds
- Integrate specified budgets for all dimensions of NAP activity, and consider gender-responsive budgeting
- Ensure harmonization between WPS NAPs and other gender equality-related strategies

## **Phase 2: NAP implementation**

- Ensure ownership, buy-in and understanding of WPS at all levels of government, including local administrative structures
- Integrate WPS tasks and performance indicators into job descriptions and performance reviews
- Reform institutional regulations to open up security and defence institutions to women
- Ensure adequate institutional support to gender advisers and gender focal points

## **Phase 3: Monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and impact**

- Ensure entities responsible for M&E have the necessary skills and resources
- Harmonize reporting processes for gender- and security-related action plans
- Create opportunities for collective problem-solving among implementing ministries and institutions
- Set-up a dedicated parliamentary body responsible for scrutinizing NAP implementation

## **Recommendations for OSCE and other international organizations**

- Forge closer links between gender advisers and gender focal points in implementing agencies across participating States
- Facilitate regular and inclusive ways of sharing good practice among participating States
- Develop accessible resources to guide the development, implementation, and M&E of NAPs across participating States
- Support to find better ways to implement WPS principles and commitments in the peace processes

# 1. Introduction

The United Nations Security Council adopted the resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in October 2000.

Since 2000 the UN Security Council has adopted nine related resolutions, comprising a global policy framework under the title of the “Women, Peace and Security agenda” (see Table 1 for a summary). As the largest regional security organization in the world, the OSCE has committed itself to support the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in its 57 participating States. This commitment has been outlined in the OSCE 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, in which women’s participation in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation is enlisted as a priority area of work. Furthermore, the Action Plan tasks all OSCE structures, as appropriate within their mandate, to promote the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on the role of women in, inter alia, the prevention of conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction. Several other OSCE Ministerial Council decisions have since reiterated the OSCE’s commitment to support the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

The number of National Action Plans to implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda has steadily grown globally and in the OSCE region since 2010. Of 57 participating States in the OSCE region, 36 (63 per cent) have current NAPs for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions adopted by the Security Council under the title of “women and peace and security”. Several participating States have released more than one iteration of their NAPs (see Annex).

OSCE support to the participating States in this field has focused on enhancing capacities of government and civil society actors to design results-oriented action plans. OSCE Executive Structures are also in various other ways engaging in supporting the implementation of UNSCR 1325 by the participating States. These include for example gender training seminars for security sector actors and oversight bodies, promoting inclusion of women in the security sector, as well as in mediation and dialogue-facilitation efforts, and training and

awareness-raising on how to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence (see also section 4 on support by the OSCE and other international actors).

In 2013, the OSCE undertook a study on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in the OSCE region through an analysis of the 27 NAPs on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the region. The aim of the study was to provide tangible tools for action for the revision or development of such plans. It highlighted common challenges and shared good practices from the OSCE region. The present report builds on and updates the findings of the 2014 study, with a view to examining the dynamics of implementation, but includes analysis of WPS activity in the OSCE region since 2005 in order to capture change over time. This report aims to: provide research-based evidence on the implementation of WPS agenda across the OSCE region; increase capacities of government and civil society actors in the OSCE participating States to enhance the implementation of WPS agenda; and provide guidance to the OSCE staff members on how to promote the WPS agenda in the OSCE region. OSCE support to the participating States could be more strategically designed and targeted as a result of this analysis and related recommendations.

The report is presented in five parts, including this introductory section. Part 2 provides a brief discussion of research on the implementation of the WPS agenda through the development and adoption of NAPs. Part 3 presents an analysis of the curated dataset of 75 NAPs from OSCE participating States. For analysis of shifts over time, the full dataset is used. For analysis of contemporary trends and dynamics, only the 36 current NAPs are used. Part 4 consists of an assessment of the WPS NAPs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Serbia, and Ukraine. It draws on field research conducted by the authors in the five countries, consisting of interviews and focus group discussions with relevant members of state agencies, civil society, academia as well as UN agencies and OSCE staff. We conclude the report in Part 5, summarizing the information provided and presenting recommendations for future development of NAPs in the OSCE region.



## 2. Review of Research on National Action Plans

This section of the report presents a discussion of NAPs as a mechanism for the implementation of the WPS agenda.

An extensive body of research on the formulation and implementation of National Action Plans has developed since the release of the first NAP by Denmark in 2005.<sup>2</sup> These studies provide an overview of NAPs as a means of embedding the WPS agenda in the national policies and priorities of the state. NAPs generally vary considerably from state to state, although most address to some degree each of the four “pillars” of WPS activity (participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery).<sup>3</sup> In recent years, many NAPs have incorporated other topics, such as climate change, human trafficking, and preventing violent extremism.<sup>4</sup> Increasing the range of topics with which the NAP is concerned, however, increases the complexity of co-ordination, as often responsibilities for such topics cut across many different portfolios or lines of responsibility in government. The location of the Plan within the machinery of government also varies, and seems to be significant in the overall efficacy of the Plan:

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, and in addition to numerous country-specific or region-specific studies: A. Swaine, “Assessing the Potential of National Action Plans to Advance the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325”, *Yearbook of International Humanitarian Law* (2009) 12, 403-433, 411; J.M. Fritz, S. Doering and F. Belgin Gumru. “Women, Peace, Security, and the National Action Plans”, *Journal of Applied Social Science* (2011), 5(1): 1-23; B. Miller, M. Pournik, and A. Swaine. *Women in Peace and Security through United Nations Security Resolution 1325: Literature Review, Content Analysis of National Action Plans, and Implementation* (2014); N. George and L. J. Shepherd. “Women, Peace and Security: Exploring the Implementation and Integration of UNSCR 1325”, *International Political Science Review*, (2016) 37(3): 297-306; S. Aroussi, ed. *Rethinking National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security* (Amsterdam: IOS Publishing, 2017); B.K. Trojanowska, K. Lee-Koo and L. Johnson, *National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security: Eight Countries in Focus* (2018); M. Jacevic, “WPS, States, and the National Action Plans”, 273-292 in S. E. Davies and J. True (Eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Women, Peace, and Security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

<sup>3</sup> The provisions and principles of the WPS agenda are usually grouped into four “pillars”: the participation of women in peace and security governance, which covers many dimensions of women’s involvement in conflict and post-conflict interventions, from the inclusion of women’s civil society organizations in peacebuilding related activities to the role that women play in national militaries and international deployment groups; the protection of women’s rights and bodies in conflict and post-conflict environment, which is again wide-ranging and includes not only the protection of women from conflict-related

*Its positioning within government will determine its focus (domestic or foreign-policy focused) and its level of influence (national women's machineries are typically lacking the resources and political status in many conflict-affected countries to strongly attract genuine political interest and funding).<sup>5</sup>*

The location of the Plan thus has implications for how the author states both interpret and implement the WPS agenda.<sup>6</sup>

Aside from the topics and the balance between the various WPS pillars represented in the NAP, there are other elements that are seen to be significant in determining a NAPs success. Research has identified four elements common to effective, “high impact” NAPs:

- 1. Inclusive design process and established coordination system for implementation;**
- 2. Results-based monitoring and evaluation plan;**
- 3. Identified and allocated implementation resources; and**
- 4. Strong and sustained political will.<sup>7</sup>**

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<sup>4</sup> Trojanowska, Lee-Koo and Johnson identify the following emerging issues: 1. Violent extremism; 2. SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals); 3. Disaster response and climate change; 4. Displacement; 5. Continuum of violence; 6. SEA and human trafficking; 7. Diversity; 8. Men and boys. B. K. Trojanowska, K. Lee-Koo and L. Johnson, *National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security: Eight Countries in Focus (2018)*, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> A. Swaine, 'Assessing the Potential of National Action Plans to Advance the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325', *Yearbook of International Humanitarian Law (2009)* 12, p. 417.

<sup>6</sup> L.J. Shepherd, "Making war safe for women? National Action Plans and the militarisation of the women, peace and security agenda", *International Political Science Review*, (2016), 37(3) 324–335.

<sup>7</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and Inclusive Security, *Designing Inclusive Strategies for Sustainable Security: Results-Oriented National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security*, (OSCE Secretariat, OSG/Gender Section, 2016), p. 12.



Each of these elements is important, and very few NAPs include all four.

“Inclusive design” references the importance of engaging with civil society organizations in the development of NAPs, both within author states and in countries towards which NAPs are oriented. GAPS UK (Gender Action for Peace and Security), for example, produced a report regarding the consultations undertaken to inform the development of the UK National Action Plan 2018-2021, which reiterates “the importance of having context-specific gender and conflict analyses to inform UK priorities and activities at country level.”<sup>8</sup> A follow up report reaffirms that “consultations in focus countries should be civil society-led, funded, meaningful, accessible and occur alongside ongoing dialogues with diverse local women’s rights organizations, human rights defenders and peacebuilders”. GAPS UK considers engagement with women and girls in both domestic civil society and conflict affected settings “key to qualitatively assessing whether the UK Government is delivering change for the primary beneficiaries of the NAP.”<sup>9</sup>

Further, there is a need to draw in and work with all relevant government stakeholders in the planning stages. There should be strong leadership across government and participation of civil society representatives, research organizations, and interested publics. A good example of this practice can be found in Switzerland, where civil society organizations are identified as an implementing partner, and research and analysis produced by civil society organizations informed the development of the fourth NAP.<sup>10</sup>

The second Dutch NAP is also held up in the literature as an excellent example of inclusive practice; civil society organizations are co-signatories to the NAP, which “ensured both their ownership of its implementation, and also more effective advocacy from ‘inside’ the structures” of government.<sup>11</sup> Previous research also suggests that involving civil society in the development phase of a NAP will make the NAP itself more specific, and therefore more effective as a guide to practice.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> GAPS UK, “Women’s voices in the UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security” (2016). Online, available at <https://gaps-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/GAPS-Summary-Consultations-report-NAP-April-2017.pdf>, 2.

<sup>9</sup> GAPS UK, Assessing UK Government Action on Women, Peace and Security in 2018, (2018), p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> Swiss NAP 2018, p. 7.

<sup>11</sup> M. Jacevic, ‘WPS, States, and the National Action Plans’, 273-292 in S.E. Davies and J. True (Eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Women, Peace, and Security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 279-80.

<sup>12</sup> B. Miller, M. Pournik, and A. Swaine. *Women in Peace and Security through United Nations Security Resolution 1325: Literature Review, Content Analysis of National Action Plans, and Implementation* (2014), p. 38.

Co-ordination is a separate challenge. While the lead agency for each NAP is usually specified, this does not necessarily translate to effective co-ordination. “The lead agency needs to have the capacity to effectively co-ordinate the breadth and diversity of implementing agencies. This includes not just the co-ordination of activities, but the capacity to set the ‘cultural tone’ for NAP implementation, have appropriate experience across the breadth of the WPS agenda, lead by example, and provide the necessary encouragement to agencies that may not be fulfilling obligations”.<sup>13</sup>

Ministerial leadership can also be significant; an interagency or interdepartmental working group or task force is more effective when there is high-level support for the agenda and the implementation of the NAP.<sup>14</sup>

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of NAP implementation, and the capacity to learn from suboptimal outcomes, is a critical success factor. The ability of NAPs to adapt and resolve issues that arise in implementation is wholly dependent on effective M&E arrangements. The M&E framework must be able to measure progress towards identified objectives. Effective M&E frameworks share a number of characteristics:

- **the inclusion of both qualitative and quantitative indicators that are specific and measurable;**
- **the inclusion of baseline data;**
- **the inclusion of timeframes and targets;**
- **the allocation of sufficient expert human resources to design or advise on the M&E framework; and**
- **the collection of in-country impact data for outward-facing NAPs.**<sup>15</sup>

The inclusion of a logical framework (or “logframe”) in the NAP is a clear and transparent way of communicating outputs and outcomes that can then be monitored and evaluated over the life of the NAP.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Trojanowska, Lee-Koo and Johnson, p. 50.

<sup>14</sup> R. Coomarasway, et al. Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 | UN Women (New York, NY: UN Women, 2015), p. 241.

<sup>15</sup> Coffey International Development, Final Independent Review of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018 . (2018), p. 23.

<sup>16</sup> Jacevic, “WPS, States, and the National Action Plans”, p. 281.

The lack of adequate funding is a common problem in NAP development and implementation. Civil society organizations (CSOs) working on the WPS agenda issues reported significant frustration at the lack of sustainable funding for NAP initiatives in the 2015 Global Study.<sup>17</sup> Effective financing has two dimensions: a cost analysis at the outset of the development process; and funding earmarked for implementation activities over the life of the NAP.<sup>18</sup> “A realistic financial framework should be provided in relation to the priority of activities and implementation of the plan, even if funding will come from the existing budget.”<sup>19</sup> With specific regard to donor funding, it is imperative that such funding is responsive to need, reliable, and accessible; further, donor funding must be aligned with the priorities of the NAP and/or the implementation agencies or organizations. Donor funding priorities should not take precedence over local or national priorities, determined through inclusive and deliberative planning.<sup>20</sup>

Political will is perhaps the most difficult dimension of a high-impact NAP to capture and quantify. While there are some clear indicators of political will, such as the public commitments of high-level government officials to the full implementation of the NAP, and the allocation of adequate funding for all implementation activities, there are many factors that can lead to the ebbing away of such political will over time, including changes in government, global or national crises, and shifts in financing from external donors. A NAP that enjoys consistent political support is often “mainstreamed” through other political and policy platforms across government. “A key demonstration of political will is that the government includes the NAP in peace and security dialogues, strategies, and processes, not only those related to gender equality and women’s rights.”<sup>21</sup> The NAP might be, for example, referenced in foreign policy White Papers and similar documents, where there is evident political will driving successful implementation.

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<sup>17</sup> R. Coomaraswamy, et al. *Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 | UN Women* (New York, NY: UN Women, 2015), p. 246.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Fritz, Doering and Gumru, “Women, Peace, Security, and the National Action Plans”, p. 11.

<sup>20</sup> Cordaid and Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, *Financing for the Implementation of National Action Plans on UN Security Council Resolution 1325* . (2014), p. 24.

<sup>21</sup> Jacevic, “WPS, States, and the National Action Plans”, p. 284.

High-impact and effective National Action Plans are able to communicate a clear vision, or theory of change, and measurable, realistic, and adequately funded steps towards realizing that vision. Effective NAPs are also holistic in their approach to the implementation of the WPS agenda:

*High-impact NAPs are also those that seek to breakdown traditional divides between government and civil society; foreign and domestic government agencies and policies; and between “hard” security issues and those of development and human rights. NAPs that have done this with success have modelled more inclusive design processes. While this may seem burdensome, it is better reflective of the spirit of the WPS agenda and the sites in which it operates. After all, the root causes of conflict will not be addressed if it is seen simply as a government-only responsibility, or a foreign policy issue. It requires recognizing the cleavages and overlaps between geographies, agendas, and politics.<sup>22</sup>*

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<sup>22</sup> Trojanowska, Lee-Koo and Johnson, p. 68.

# 3. Desk-Based Analysis of NAPs in the OSCE Region

This section of the report presents an analysis of a dataset of National Action Plans (NAPs) produced by OSCE participating States, from 2005 to mid-2019.<sup>23</sup>

The analysis is guided by seven research questions that are each addressed in a sub-section below. The full dataset includes all NAPs produced by participating States since 2005 (75 NAPs in total). Several of the research questions relate to elements of the current National Action Plans, and to answer these questions a sub-set of documents was created containing only the current iterations of NAPs (36 NAPs). All NAPs were analysed in English.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> The NAPs included for analysis have been produced by: Albania; Armenia; Austria; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Canada; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Iceland; Ireland; Italy; Kyrgyzstan; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Moldova; Montenegro; North Macedonia; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Serbia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Tajikistan; The Netherlands; Ukraine; United Kingdom; and United States of America. Unless specified otherwise, “NAPs” in the present report refers to NAPs from the OSCE region. For years of publication, see Annex 1.

<sup>24</sup> The research team accessed English-language translations of the following NAPs for the purpose of analysis: Armenia; Belgium (2017); Bosnia and Herzegovina (2017); Luxembourg (2018); Romania (2014); and Slovenia (2018). The latter five translations were accessed at <http://www.lse.ac.uk/women-peace-security/research/Rethinking-Policy-Advocacy-Implementation> as unofficial translations, funded by ARC DP160100212 (CI Shepherd). Both quantitative and qualitative analysis was used to answer the research questions that guided the study. Quantitative content analysis was used to identify the frequency with which key terms are represented in the NAPs. An interpretive coding technique was used to answer questions about budget, monitoring and evaluation, and the inclusion of civil society organizations, where levels of specification were quantified on a six-point scale 0-5 (with 0 representing no mention of the relevant term and 5 representing full specification and detail provided in the NAP). This coding allows for the averaging over time of the levels of specification, such that trends are visible. To enrich and add specificity to the quantitative analysis, interpretive qualitative analysis was also undertaken, and provided information relevant to all of the research questions.

### 3.1: LEARNING FROM THE PREVIOUS STUDY

The desk-based research presented in this section proceeds from an analysis of whether the challenges and recommendations outlined in the OSCE Study on National Action Plans on the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2014) have been addressed in newer NAPs. This Study raised two primary concerns relating to sustainable, adequate funding for NAP implementation, and the capacity and commitment of stakeholders to deliver on implementation activities.<sup>25</sup> Questions of funding and political will are addressed below. The Study also provided insightful comments and recommendations related to the primary pillars of WPS activity.<sup>26</sup> Each of the insights related to the primary pillars of WPS activity is addressed here in turn.

***j) Participation – “All the National Action Plans contain some language on promoting women’s participation, in other words increasing their descriptive representation. Some states have created concrete targets for women’s participation in the police or armed forces, which is also significant. However, when it comes to specific actions on how women’s participation should be enhanced, the language is often less clear.”***<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, *OSCE Study on National Action Plans on the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325* | OSCE (2014), p. 9.

<sup>27</sup> OSCE, *OSCE Study on National Action Plans*, p. 51.

The 2014 report concludes that, while many NAPs prioritize women's participation in peace and security institutions and processes, the specific mechanisms that will enhance participation, and avenues to achieve and leverage the kind of change necessary to foster women's participation, are not necessarily spelled out. Enhancing participation means taking a holistic approach to gender and security issues, and also recognizing that, as explained in the 2014 OSCE report, descriptive and substantive representation are not the same thing: women from different geographical locations, with different ethnic backgrounds, and who have accessed different educational and economic opportunities may have different views on peace and security issues and priorities. This is why an intersectional lens is important, a dimension that is reaffirmed in the 2017 Serbian NAP, which notes the importance of "Creating equal opportunities in practice for education, employment, career guidance and advancement of women (especially women from multiply discriminated and minority groups) and men in the security system."<sup>28</sup> The most recent Belgian NAP (2017-2021) also includes some good examples of supporting meaningful participation as action items within the Plan.

***ii) Prevention – “Activities to prevent conflict need to begin at an early stage with awareness-raising of the population as a whole and continue with identifying practical prevention steps, involving as many in the population as possible”;<sup>29</sup> and “National Action Plans should ... spell out more clearly how sexual violence is to be prevented, also through the inclusions of this topic in the broader agenda of conflict prevention measures.”<sup>30</sup>***

Several of the most recent NAPs specifically mention both the importance of educating for peace and raising awareness among the general population of the kinds of gendered harms and inequality that emerge during and after conflict. The Estonian NAP, for example, notes that “changing attitudes and principles constitutes a long-term process.”<sup>31</sup> The Irish NAP includes conflict prevention as its first priority, noting that: “Inequality, including gender inequality, is a key driver of conflict. Women’s empowerment, economically, socially and politically must be addressed as part of conflict prevention and peacebuilding.”<sup>32</sup> Similarly, the Spanish NAP comments that “Prevention means identifying and addressing the deep

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<sup>28</sup> Serbian NAP 2017, p.29.

<sup>29</sup> OSCE, OSCE Study on National Action Plans, p. 55.

<sup>30</sup> OSCE, OSCE Study on National Action Plans, p. 60.

<sup>31</sup> Estonian NAP 2015, p.5.

<sup>32</sup> Irish NAP 2019, p.15.

underlying causes of conflicts, often linked to structural inequalities that especially affect women and girls.”<sup>33</sup>

The explicit recognition that conflict prevention is central to the WPS agenda, and that structural – and profoundly gendered – forms of inequality and harm contribute to the causes of conflict is a necessary first step to achieving positive peace outcomes. While the NAPs quoted above demonstrate both understanding of, and commitment to eradicating, drivers of conflict, there are not too many specific examples of practical prevention initiatives in NAPs from the OSCE region. Many states list conflict prevention as the primary priority within the NAP, and/or link conflict prevention with women’s participation in productive ways, such as North Macedonia, for example: “conflict prevention strategies are an opportunity for active and all-comprehensive role of women in changing their status in society.”<sup>34</sup> This is commendable, and should be accompanied by clear explanation of actions towards the realization of this objective.

As noted in the 2014 OSCE Study, the inclusion of women is necessary but not sufficient to achieve positive peace outcomes. While many states make some version of a statement about the role of women in building sustainable peace, few specify how those women will be supported and enabled to participate meaningfully in peace processes and longer-term peacebuilding activities. One good example is the 2016 Swedish NAP, which offers the following commentary:

***To enable increased participation, a holistic approach to peace and security is required in which the activity must be based on and integrate gender perspectives and conflict analysis. Sweden must also take an intersectional perspective and take account of the fact that women, men, girls and boys are not homogeneous groups; instead, they have different identities, needs, influence and living conditions.***<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Spanish NAP 2017, p.16.

<sup>34</sup> E.g. Polish NAP 2018, p.22; Spanish NAP 2017, p.16; Swiss NAP 2018, p.9.

<sup>35</sup> Swedish NAP 2016, p.9.



The formation of networks of female mediators is an important capacity-sharing initiative in this regard.<sup>36</sup> The 2018 Georgian NAP also specifies initiatives and mechanisms to support women's participation in peace processes and conflict resolution, for example committing to “organize training on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda at the LEPL Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training Centre of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia” and “to enhance communication and cooperation with donor organizations and NGOs in order to increase participation of women and youth in peacebuilding and confidence-building initiatives.”<sup>37</sup> Both of these measures are aimed explicitly at facilitating meaningful participation of women in peace processes and conflict resolution.

The majority of NAPs from the OSCE region engage the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence only to a limited extent.<sup>38</sup> Relatively few include specific actions towards the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence. The most recent UK NAP (2018-2022) is a good example of a Plan that includes extensive discussion of “comprehensive measures [that] can help prevent gender-based violence (GBV) in conflict contexts and/or provide an essential enabling environment” for prevention efforts.<sup>39</sup> Further examples of good practice include the recognition by Germany that “Combatting sexual and gender-specific violence, however, is not solely a matter of improved protection of women and girls. It also encompasses the criminal prosecution of war crimes and violent crimes and comprehensive support for survivors through psychosocial, legal, medical and economic measures.”<sup>40</sup> Although the threat of criminal prosecution may have a deterrent effect, and the provision of support to survivors is an essential component of a response strategy, these are not strictly prevention actions. The German NAP also includes the explicit recognition that men and boys are also victims of sexual and gender-based violence.<sup>41</sup>

***iii) Prevention – “states might want to reflect more on other opportunities and more specific measures to assist women to access justice (e.g. special victim support and protection, legal assistance, development of capacities to obtain and use forensic evidence, etc.).”<sup>42</sup>***

<sup>36</sup> E.g. Finnish NAP 2018, p.6; Italian NAP 2016, p.12; Slovenian NAP 2018, p.6.

<sup>37</sup> Georgian NAP 2018, p.9.

<sup>38</sup> Broader understanding of the issue of gender-based violence within the region is recently enhanced by research published by the OSCE Gender Section: OSCE, OSCE-led Survey on Violence Against Women, (2019).

<sup>39</sup> UK NAP 2018, p.12.

<sup>40</sup> German NAP 2017, p.2

<sup>41</sup> German NAP 2017, p.4.

<sup>42</sup> OSCE, OSCE Study on National Action Plans, p. 66.

The Spanish NAP links the protection of women's rights to conflict prevention and the participation of women in peace and security governance. The overarching goal of the NAP is to achieve prevention through participation, as the Spanish government seeks to "Contribute to ensuring the protection of the human rights of women and girls, and their substantive participation in conflict prevention, as well as achieving and consolidating peace."<sup>43</sup> This is a good example of how protection actions can affirm the WPS agenda as a rights agenda and link protection to prevention and participation without positioning women as victims. The Spanish NAP explicitly recognises this shift:

***without setting aside the aspects of protection and without forgetting that "for women and girls, the impacts of war are compounded by pre-existing gender inequalities and discrimination" – women are no longer seen fundamentally as victims, and their status as agents of change is strengthened. Issues such as prevention and participation have moved up to the centre of the Agenda.*** <sup>44</sup>

Care must, of course, be taken to ensure that every individual's right to bodily integrity, and their sexual and reproductive health rights, are protected alongside their political, economic, and social rights, under the auspices of the WPS agenda.

A further protection issue relates to accountability for sexual abuse and exploitation (SEA), or sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), by peacekeepers. This is a matter of pressing concern to many OSCE participating States. The majority of NAPs from the OSCE region (25 of 36, or 69 per cent) mention the need for specific training and/or accountability mechanisms for troops deployed on peacekeeping missions. The Albanian NAP, for example, discusses the need for training to prevent, and for a full investigation under the relevant legal provisions of any incidents of, gender-based violence by staff of peacekeeping forces. <sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Spanish NAP 2017, p.16.

<sup>44</sup> Spanish NAP 2017, p.6.

<sup>45</sup> Albanian NAP 2019, pp.6-7.

*iv) Relief & recovery – “including women (descriptive representation) does not automatically ensure that women’s interests are taken into account (substantive representation) in relief, recovery and peace-building plans. These processes are often assumed to be automatically linked. In reality, women’s participation is a necessary but not a sufficient factor in order to integrate a gender perspective into activities. Policies must be not only developed but also implemented by those in power.”*

***iv) Normative – “many National Action Plans portray women as ‘natural peace builders’ when they argue for women’s inclusion in peace processes. This risks perpetuating an image of women as inherently different from men, and states should be careful in the language they choose.”***<sup>48</sup>

Many NAPs have embraced the language of “agents of change”, for example stating that:

***The norm of viewing women only as victims limits impacts and can be harmful for women. Ireland recognises women as agents of change. Barriers to women’s empowerment can be overcome by having a strategic focus on political participation, supporting women’s leadership, expanding women’s choices and capabilities and continued access to education and training.***<sup>49</sup>

The note of caution in the 2014 OSCE report, however, regarding the assumption of inherent difference between women and men, is well taken. This assumption is premised on the idea that women hold similar political views on the basis of their shared womanhood. Manifestly, this is not the case. The point about the diversity among women has been made above; it is important to remember that women as a group have diverse backgrounds and hold diverse views.

The idea that women are “natural” peacemakers while men are “naturally” conflict-prone not only reinforces the idea of a binary gender order but also attributes feminized characteristics – associated with peace, maternal care, and nurturing – to all women. Again, it is self-evident that not all women share these characteristics. In a peace and security setting, these assumptions, embedded in problematic representations, can lead to women being overburdened and having unreasonable expectations placed upon them,<sup>50</sup> while men’s agency is also diminished by the assumption that they are feckless, irresponsible with money, and inherently violent.

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<sup>48</sup> OSCE, OSCE Study on National Action Plans, p. 71.

<sup>49</sup> Irish NAP 2019, p.17.

<sup>50</sup> Maha Muna, in conversation with Carol Cohn, Helen Kinsella, and Sheri Gibbings, comments that women in conflict-affected settings are expected to be “superheroines”. C. Cohn, H. Kinsella and S. Gibbings, “Women, Peace and Security Resolution 1325”, *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, (2004) 6(1) 130-140, p. 136.

Many of the NAPs include a clear vision statement or overarching objective that relates to women's rights. For example, the Albanian NAP states that the vision of the Plan is "to have an Albanian society where women have a reinforced role and are actively involved in the maintenance of peace, conflict prevention and resolution, as well as a sustainable internationally contributing society in guaranteeing the rights of women involved in conflicting situations."<sup>51</sup> Similarly, the current Spanish NAP explains that: "The foundation of the Plan is that respect for human rights—specifically the human rights of women and girls—is an end in itself, a necessity arising from their dignity as human beings,"<sup>52</sup> while the current Irish NAP states simply that: "Women's human rights are the foundation of the WPS Agenda."<sup>53</sup> This focus, which is prevalent in many NAPs from the OSCE region, situates the WPS agenda as a rights agenda rather than a narrow security agenda.

### 3.2: THEMATIC PRIORITIES

The rights of women to participate in a wide array of peace and security governance processes and institutions is a priority area for OSCE participating States. As shown in Figure 1, since 2005, NAPs from the OSCE region have predominantly been focussed on participation, of the four WPS pillars. For this analysis, the content of the NAPs was analysed for frequency of representations of the four pillars (participation, prevention, protection, relief & recovery [coded as "humanitarian" in the searches]) and each NAP was coded into one of the four pillar categories depending on which of the four pillars was most frequently represented in the NAP. This is an imperfect but nonetheless useful measure of the priority afforded to the pillars across the NAPs as a set.

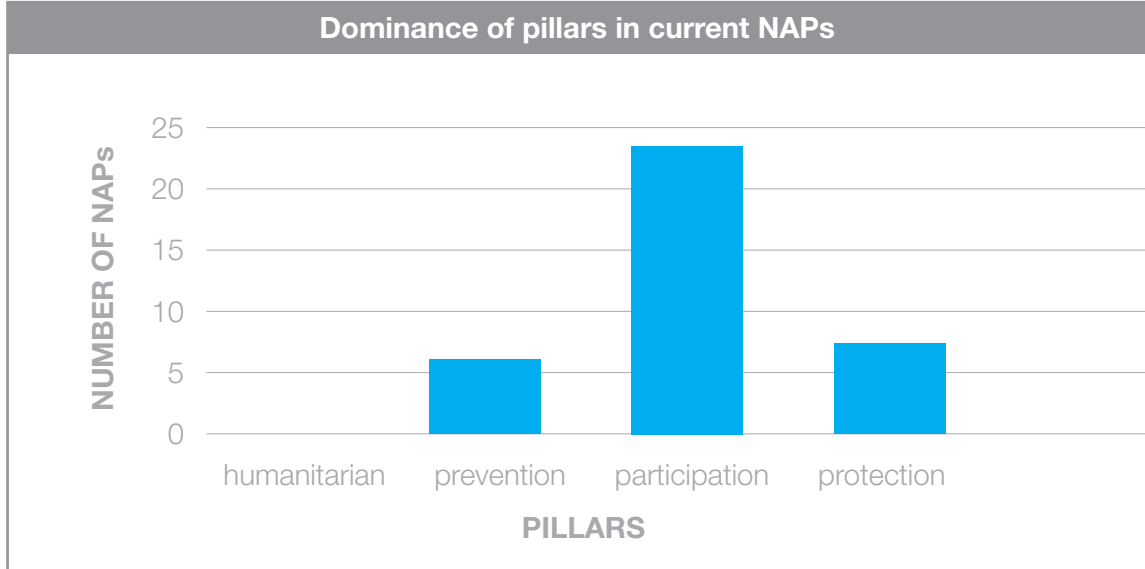
Participation features most prominently of four pillars over time, with an increasing emphasis on prevention from 2014 onwards. In the current NAPs from the OSCE region, the priority afforded to participation is even more visible, as shown in Figure 1:

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<sup>51</sup> Albanian NAP 2018, p.9.

<sup>52</sup> Spanish NAP 2017, p.9.

<sup>53</sup> Irish NAP 2019, p.18.



**Figure 1**

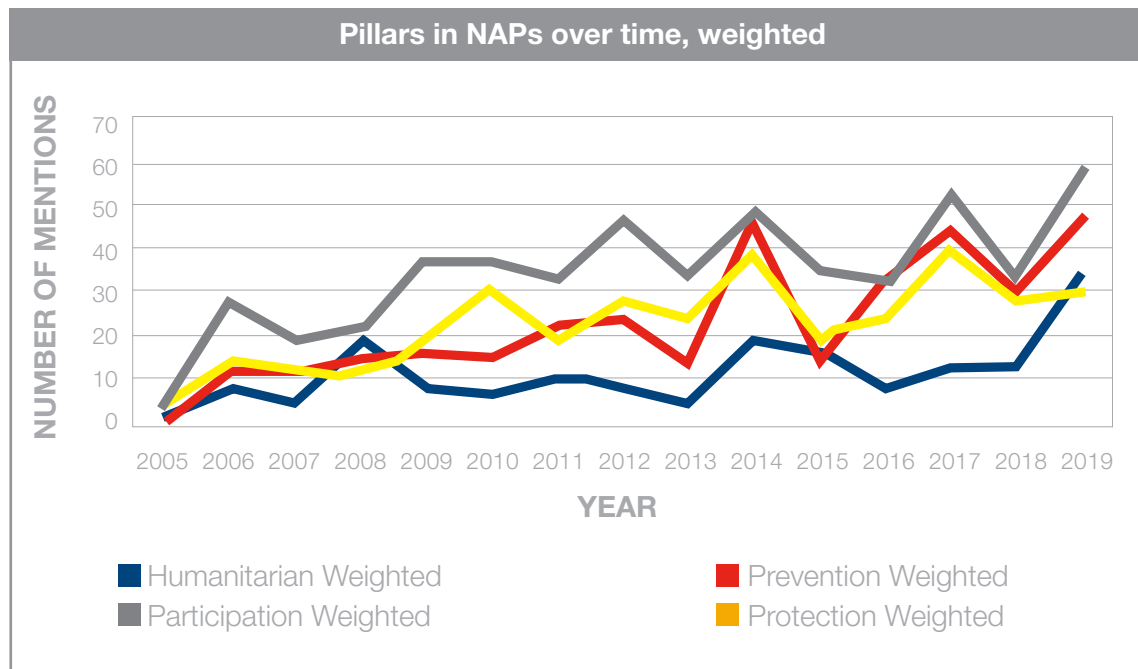
*Dominance of pillars in current NAPs from the OSCE region (n=36)*

Another way to examine the representation of each of the pillars in the NAPs is to quantify and chart the mentions of each of the pillars across the NAPs. Figure 2 shows the total number of times the four pillars are mentioned in the NAPs over the period 2005-2019, weighted according to the number of NAPs published each year.

As expected, Figure 2 shows that participation is mentioned most frequently across all the NAPs from the OSCE region over the time period in question. Interestingly, from 2015 onwards, the data suggests more frequent mentions of prevention than protection, which previously was the second most frequently mentioned pillar. This might reflect an increasing emphasis on conflict prevention, in line with (though not necessarily in response to) recommendations from previous research on NAPs in the OSCE region and other scholarly works.<sup>54</sup> Examination of the current NAPs from the OSCE region does support this finding, with several of the NAPs articulating a focus on women’s participation in peace and security governance, as mentioned above, in tandem with a focus on conflict prevention. The current

<sup>54</sup> OSCE, OSCE Study on National Action Plans on the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2014), p. 54; see also F. Ruby Security Council Resolution 1325: A Tool for Conflict Prevention?, in G. Heathcote and D. Otto, eds, *Rethinking Peacekeeping, Gender Equality and Collective Security* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 173-184.

Dutch NAP, for example, states the following as the overall objective for the NAP: “Together we contribute to an enabling environment for women’s participation and empowerment in conflict and post-conflict environments, so they can meaningfully participate in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, protection, relief and recovery.”<sup>55</sup>



**Figure 2**

*Frequency of mentions of each pillar over time in NAPs from the OSCE region, weighted (n=75)*

Other elements of the NAPs that are worthy of note include: first, the tendency of the NAPs to relate national WPS work to regional WPS work; and, second, the frequency with which NAPs connect the WPS agenda to other normative and political agendas. In relation to the first, many of the NAPs from the OSCE region, including those produced by Austria, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Poland, Serbia, and Spain, explicitly link their national efforts

<sup>55</sup> Dutch NAP 2016, p.26. This page of the Dutch NAP is devoted to the presentation of a one-page infographic, which states the vision, overarching objective, specific objectives, indicators, and interventions. Such a format is admirably clear and could be considered good practice to be followed more widely.

to their contribution and the ongoing work being undertaken by regional organizations such as OSCE, EU, and NATO. This is important because it situates the responsibility for implementation of the WPS agenda in broader perspective, and recognizes the valuable role for regional organizations in both co-ordinating on, and agenda-setting in, WPS initiatives.

Second, 78 per cent of the 36 current NAPs from the OSCE region make reference to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action, and 25 per cent mention the SDGs as a related policy platform. This both reflects and relates to the relevance of the WPS agenda to a broad range of human rights and human security issues. At its inception and consistently throughout, the WPS agenda has been discussed in connection to other normative and policy frameworks. The Preamble of UNSCR 1325 makes reference to the Beijing Platform for Action, and the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations, as well as the UN Charter.<sup>56</sup> Paragraph 9 of resolution 1325, moreover, reminds “parties to armed conflict” of their obligations under numerous other conventions and treaties.<sup>57</sup> The inclusion of the CEDAW and the Convention on the Rights of the Child in this paragraph affirms the influence of the human rights architecture over the WPS agenda, and its broad relevance to all organizations and endeavours aimed at upholding the rights of women in activities related to peace and security.

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<sup>56</sup> S/RES/1325, Preamble.

<sup>57</sup> These include “the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court”; S/RES/1325, para. 9.



### 3.3: NEW AND EMERGENT THEMES

The WPS agenda captures a diverse range of issues and concerns, some of which are derived from the Security Council resolutions that form the agenda's core policy architecture and others which reflect the interests and priorities of States and other implementing actors. The multiple and often intersecting issues faced by refugees, internally displaced persons, and persons seeking asylum, for example, have been integral concerns of the WPS agenda since the adoption of UNSCR 1325, mentioned in six of the nine resolutions. Trafficking in persons, however, has only recently been integrated formally into the policy architecture of the agenda, with the adoption of UNSCR 2467, which encourages the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate to consider “information regarding Member States efforts to address the issue of trafficking in persons and its link with sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations committed by terrorist groups as part of their strategic objectives and ideology.”<sup>58</sup>

A number of new and emerging security issues, and matters of concern to the WPS agenda are noted in more recent resolutions. In 2015, for example, UNSCR 2242 noted in its Preamble

*the changing global context of peace and security, in particular relating to rising violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, the increased numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons, the impacts of climate change and the global nature of health pandemics.*<sup>59</sup>

Further, this resolution reiterates “the important engagement by men and boys as partners in promoting women’s participation in the prevention and resolution of armed conflict, peacebuilding and post-conflict situations.”<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> S/RES/2467, para. 29.

<sup>59</sup> S/RES/2242, Preamble.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

Quantitative content analysis can show how these new and emergent areas of concern are represented in NAPs over time. Figure 3 tracks the frequency of mentions of new and emergent issues over time in the full dataset of NAPs from the OSCE region (weighted according to the number of NAPs published each year, as above). This analysis sought mentions of the following new and emergent issues: asylum seekers, refugees and internally displaced persons; climate change or environmental degradation; disasters; violent extremism or terrorism; the inclusion of men and boys in the WPS agenda; reproductive rights or healthcare; and trafficking in persons.

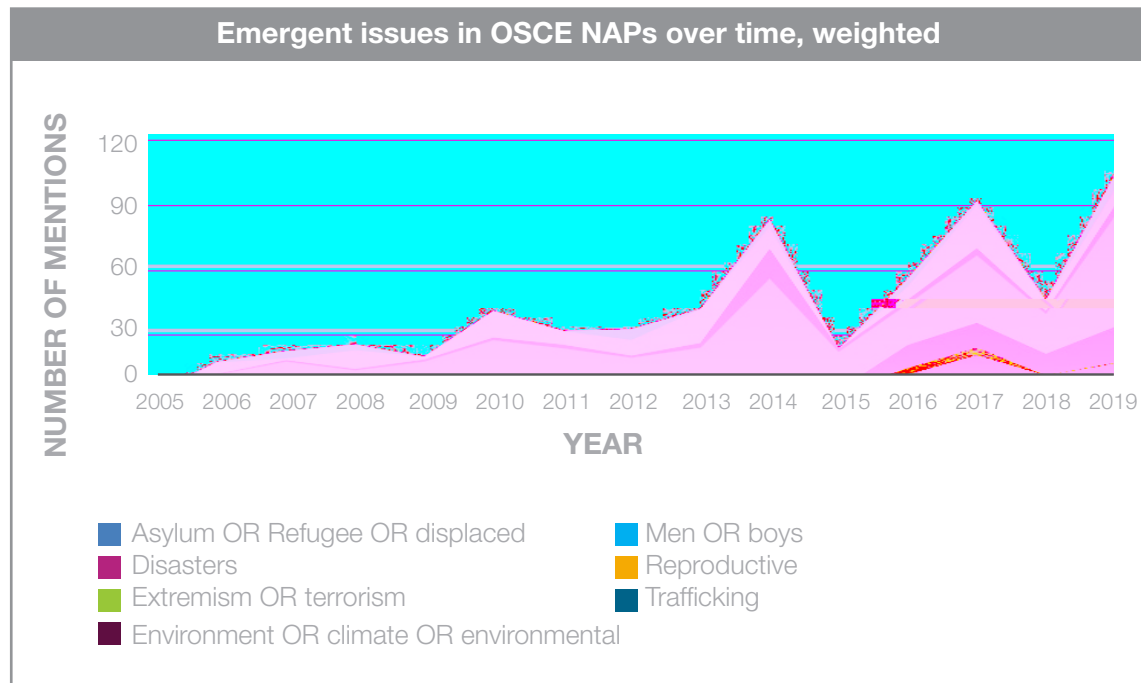
OSCE participating States were concerned with trafficking in persons as a WPS issue long before it was articulated as a global WPS issue. Similarly, though it was not until the adoption of resolution 2106 in 2013 that the policy architecture of the agenda mentioned the enlistment of men and boys in efforts to prevent SGBV, men and boys have been consistently and frequently mentioned in the NAPs since 2005. The other two prominent issues that are evident in the data from the content analysis are asylum seekers, refugees, and internally displaced persons, and – most recently – violent extremism or terrorism. Subsequent to the adoption of resolution 2242, which includes three operative paragraphs related to countering terrorism and violent extremism, several NAPs include mention of this issue, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Luxembourg, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

Terrorism and violent extremism are specified areas of activity within a number of NAPs from the OSCE region. The UK NAP (2018), for example, includes “preventing and countering violent extremism” as a “strategic outcome,” and the current Norwegian NAP provides a lengthy discussion of violent extremism and other new security issues: “Since the previous Norwegian action plan on women, peace and security was finalized four years ago, there has been a greater focus on preventing and combating violent extremism in the security policy context. Security-related aspects of climate change are more to the fore. The number of refugees and internally displaced persons has substantially increased.”<sup>61</sup>

The inclusion of these new and emergent areas of concern suggests that NAPs in the OSCE region are responsive to changes in the agenda and the broader peace and security environment. This is affirmed in the current Finnish NAP (2018): “Because of the changing nature of security, new perspectives are needed for the protection of women and girls,

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<sup>61</sup> Norwegian NAP 2019, p.8; see also Norwegian NAP 2019, pp.50-54.



**Figure 3**

*New and emergent security issues in NAPs from the OSCE region, weighted (n=75)*

and the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the field of human security so that challenges related to, for example, migration (including human trafficking), violent extremism and arms trade can be tackled.”<sup>62</sup>

In addition to the new and emergent areas represented in Figure 4, a number of other concerns are expressed in current and past NAPs from the OSCE region. The most recent NAP from Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example, includes mention of landmines as a particular issue,<sup>63</sup> as does the Luxembourgian NAP (2018). The Bosnia and Herzegovina NAP (2017) and the Finnish NAP (2018)<sup>64</sup> discuss a concern for the flow of small arms and light weapons, and the arms trade more broadly. The different priorities and interests of participating States can be visualized as shown in Figure 4, which shows the frequency with which the new and emergent issues are mentioned in current NAPs.

<sup>62</sup> Finnish NAP 2018, p.13.

<sup>63</sup> Bosnia and Herzegovina NAP 2017, p.20.

<sup>64</sup> Luxembourgian NAP 2018, p.29.

As shown in Figure 4, the various new and emergent issues are represented to greater or lesser extent in the different NAPs. Every NAP mentions at least one new and emergent issue; only the current Irish NAP (2019) and the current USA NAP (2016) mention all seven new and emergent issues included in the analysis. As a set, the current NAPs in the OSCE region represent a concern with asylum seekers, refugees and displaced persons, trafficking, and the inclusion of men and boys. These are the most frequently mentioned new and emergent issues across the set. It is to be expected that engagement with new and emergent issues will be driven by the political priorities of participating States and also the needs of those States vis-à-vis their geopolitical positioning. Thus, some NAPs encompass a wide range of new and emergent issues, while others are more focussed.

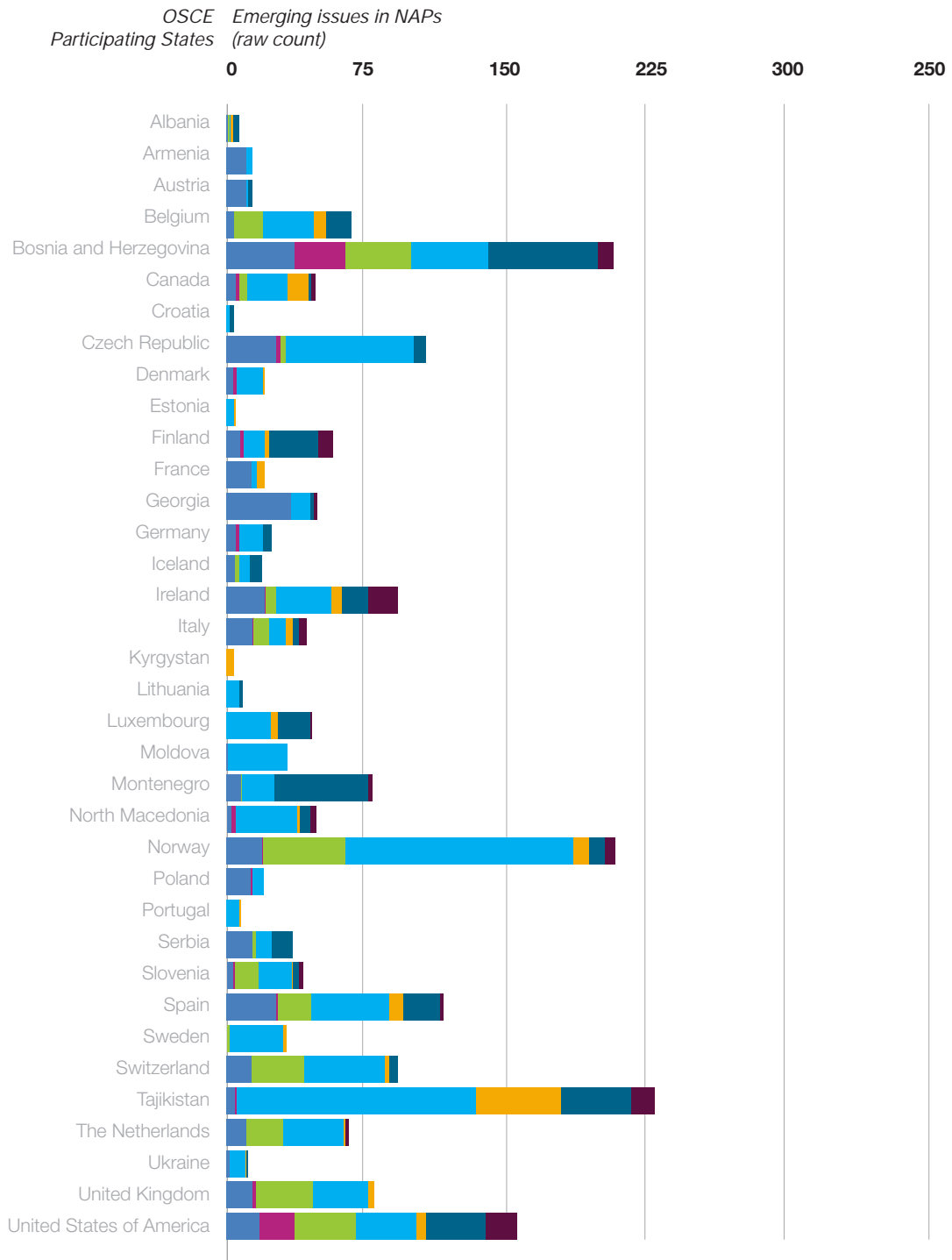
As shown, the NAPs from the OSCE region cover a range of new and emergent areas of concern to a broad peace and security agenda founded in human rights and human security ideals. Some of these are particularly creative and demonstrate real commitment to rethinking societal gender norms in order to reduce gendered inequalities and gendered forms of discrimination. The Czech Republic's NAP (2017), for example, supports the need to reconcile a positive work/life balance across society more broadly, as part of a broader drive towards gender equality, and articulates a commitment to "Promote the concept of active fatherhood and shared parenting" as an element of WPS activity.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, the Moldovan NAP (2018) comments that: "The most important barrier which determines women's underrepresentation in the security and defense sector is the burden of domestic responsibilities."<sup>66</sup> These are commendable efforts to link societal norms, or expectations about women's roles in society, with the broader gender equality project of the WPS agenda.

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<sup>65</sup> Czech Republic NAP 2017, p.14.

<sup>66</sup> Moldovan NAP 2018, p.3.

## Emergent issues in current OSCE NAPs



**Figure 4**  
Representation of new and emergent issues in current NAPs from the OSCE region, raw numbers (n=36)

■ Asylum OR Refugee OR displaced      ■ Men OR boys  
■ Disasters      ■ Reproductive  
■ Extremism OR terrorism      ■ Trafficking  
■ Environment OR climate OR environmental

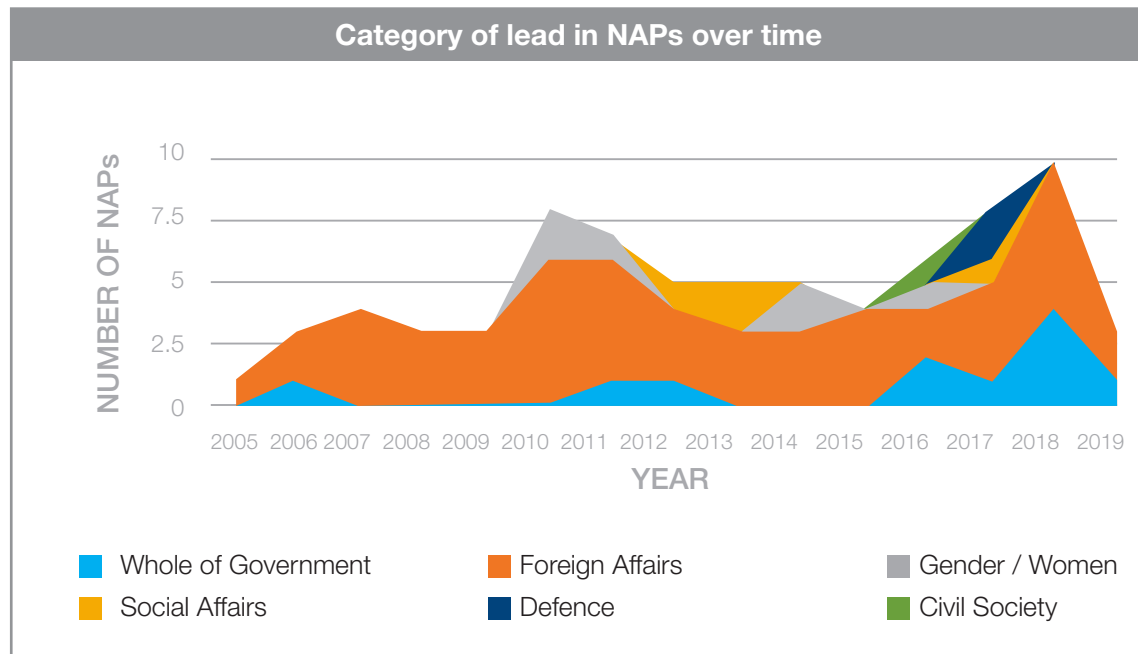
### 3.4: CO-ORDINATION MECHANISMS

Effective implementation of NAPs is much enhanced through active leadership and effective governance within States. The location of a NAP in one department or ministry rather than another has political significance; “Its positioning within government will determine its focus (domestic or foreign-policy focused) and its level of influence (national women’s machineries are typically lacking the resources and political status in many conflict-affected countries to strongly attract genuine political interest and funding).”<sup>67</sup> The risk associated with locating NAPs, or the responsibility for co-ordinating NAPs, in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs within the machinery of government is that it positions the NAP as an “outward-looking” document, rather than connecting WPS effectively with policies and practices within the state. 17 of 36 current NAPs in the OSCE region (47 per cent) are oriented outward, while 9 of 36 (25 per cent) are inward-facing (the remainder – 28 per cent - have a dual focus; of those, two NAPs are oriented domestically and regionally, rather than domestically and globally).

All 75 NAPs were reviewed and the lead co-ordinating entity or government agencies were coded into six categories: civil society; Defence; Foreign Affairs; Gender/Women; Social Affairs; and whole of government, i.e. where co-ordination is shared across multiple government agencies or where co-ordination sits with the Prime Minister’s office or similar. Coding by the category of lead agency in NAPs over time shows that the preponderance of NAPs sit in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (or similar), as shown in Figure 5.

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<sup>67</sup> A. Swaine, “Assessing the Potential of National Action Plans to Advance Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325”, *Yearbook of International Humanitarian Law* (2009), pp. 12, 403-433, 417.



**Figure 5**

*Category of lead co-ordinating agency for NAPs from the OSCE region over time (n=75)*

Six of the current NAPs (17 per cent) mention the formation of a Working Group or Interdepartmental Task Force dedicated to co-ordinating WPS work across the various departments and agencies. The 2018 Swiss NAP offers a good example of this kind of co-ordination, with specification provided in the text of the NAP regarding regularity of meeting and the various delegations of reporting, budgeting, etc.:

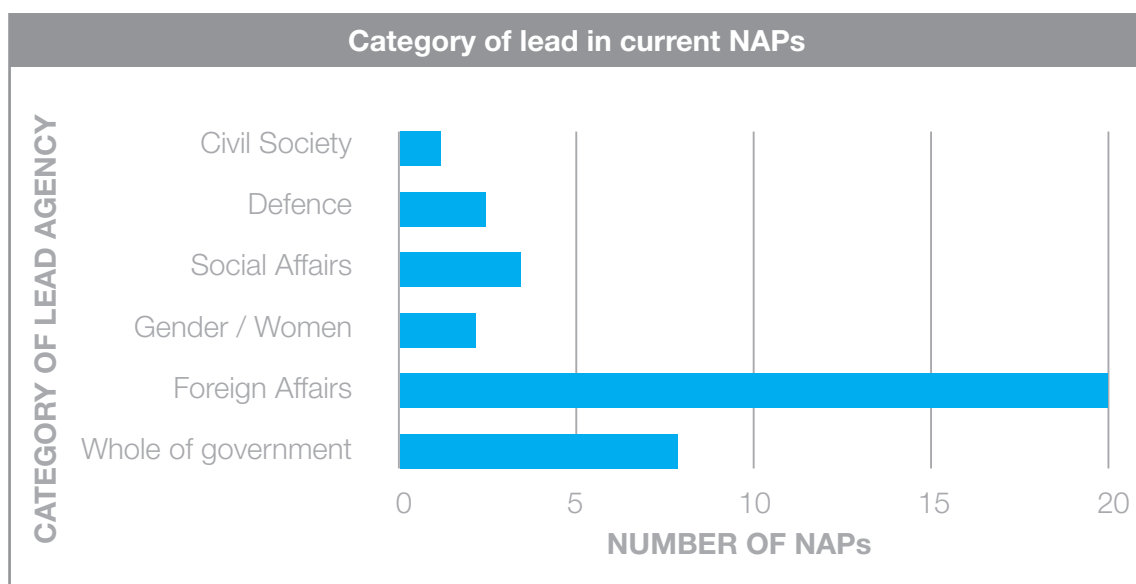
*Each organisational unit is responsible for implementing the activities assigned to it, allocating a budget for the activities and submitting year-end reports. The IDWG meets at least twice a year to review implementation, exchange knowledge and if necessary adapt the NAP. Under the joint leadership of the United Nations and International Organisations Division (UNIOD) and the Human Security Division (HSD), a brief annual report is drawn up setting out the most important successes and difficulties in implementing the NAP.* <sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Swiss NAP 2018, p.12.

Co-ordination can be supported by Parliamentary Committees, as is the case in the 2013 Kyrgyz NAP, which commits to the “Creation of a Parliamentary group (committee) on Women Peace and Security” (see also section 4),<sup>69</sup> and the current UK NAP, which emphasizes the role of the “All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) on WPS and PSVI [Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative].”<sup>70</sup>

The most recent Dutch NAP (2016) is unique in the OSCE region and noteworthy globally as the involvement of civil society in co-ordinating the NAP is mandated in the NAP itself: “WO=MEN, representing the civil society organizations and knowledge institutions, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will continue to jointly coordinate all the activities in this third National Action Plan.”<sup>71</sup> Given the critical importance of full and meaningful participation of civil society in WPS governance (discussed below), this is a significant statement.

Very few NAPs from the OSCE region fail to specify in direct terms where the responsibility lies for co-ordinating WPS efforts. The current NAPs are, again, mostly co-ordinated by the Ministries for Foreign Affairs in the relevant country context, as shown in Figure 6.



**Figure 6**  
Category of lead agency in current NAPs from the OSCE region (n=36)

<sup>69</sup> Kyrgyz NAP 2013, p.1.

<sup>70</sup> UK NAP 2018, p.23.

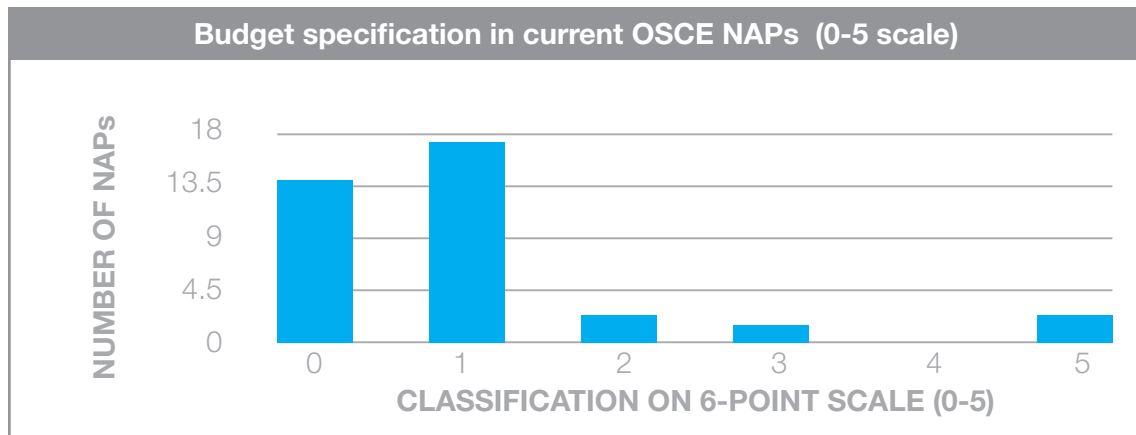
<sup>71</sup> Dutch NAP 2016, p.6.



### 3.5: FINANCING

As discussed in Part 2 of this report, research on NAPs frequently shows correlation between well-specified budgets and/or financing mechanisms, and effective implementation. As noted in the 2014 OSCE study, “Developing, maintaining and implementing National Action Plans requires a number of activities: meetings need to be co-ordinated; reports have to be written; training of staff undertaken; surveys of women’s special needs in vulnerable situations conducted, and so on. Resources are needed for the completion of these tasks. It is therefore vital that a budget is allocated to the actions laid down in the National Action Plan.”<sup>72</sup> The 2014 study found that almost none of the NAPs analysed included a specified and allocated budget. There has been insufficient improvement in this realm over the last five years.

A simple quantitative analysis was undertaken to code the level of budget specification in the current NAPs on a six-point scale (0-5), where 0 represents no mention of budget whatsoever and 5 represents full specification and detail provided in the relevant NAP. Figure 7 shows the level of budget specification in current NAPs from the OSCE region. As shown, a disappointing number of NAPs (86 per cent) currently contain minimal or zero information about budget or financing mechanisms, as shown in Figure 7 categorized as “0” and “1.” Albania (2019) and Ukraine (2016), however, provide well-specified budgets; all three NAPs estimates the overall cost of implementation and provide a detailed budget breakdown for



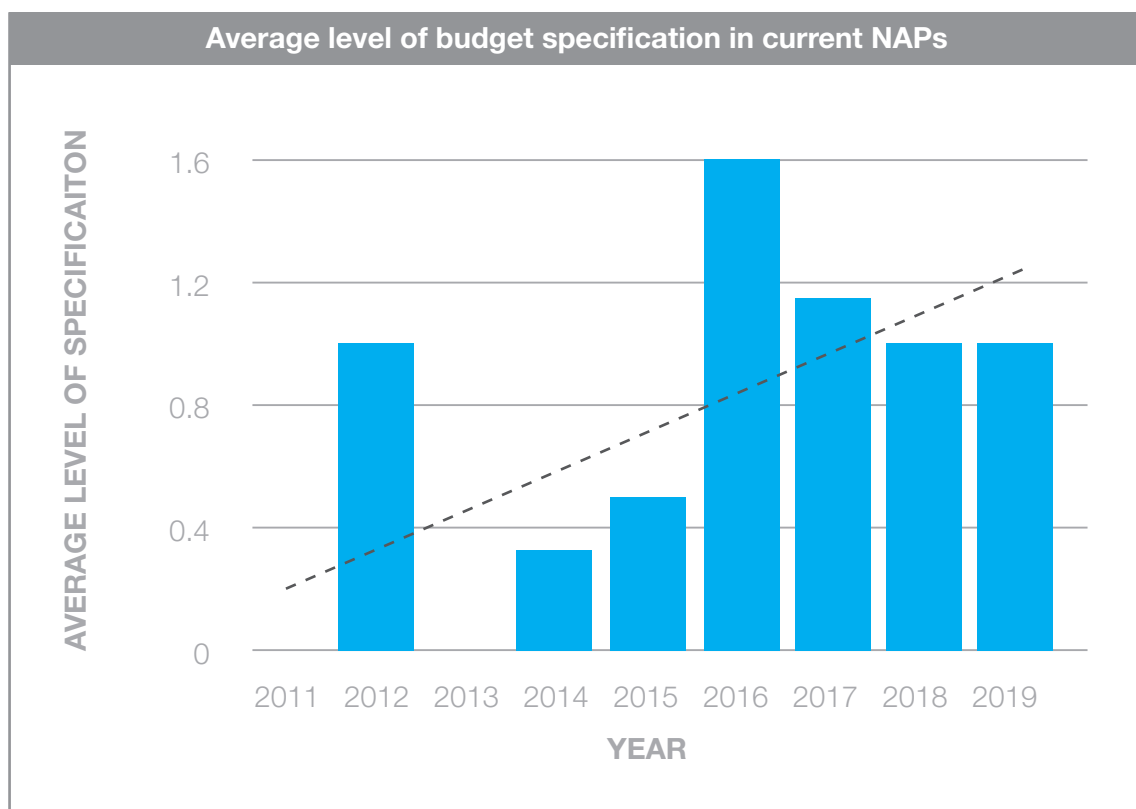
**Figure 7**

*Level of budget specification in current NAPs from the OSCE region (n=36)*

<sup>72</sup> OSCE, OSCE Study on National Action Plans, pp. 44-45.

activities. This helps create transparency and accountability about expenditure on WPS implementation and related activities.

Another useful measure of budget specification is the average level of specification in current NAPs. As shown in Figure 8, the calculation of average level of specification and the inclusion of a trend line helps to show that increased attention is being paid to specifying budget in NAPs from the OSCE region. Although the underlying histogram seems to show a drop-off from 2016, the trend line suggests a moderate increase in average level of specificity over time. It should be noted, however, that the increase depicted does not even reach the mid-point of the scale (2.5), suggesting that on average the NAPs do not feature even a “broadly defined” budget according to our coding scheme (which would include, for example, the provision of an overall total amount for the implementation of the NAP), let alone specific allocations to defined agencies or initiatives.



**Figure 8**  
Average level of budget specification in current NAPs from the OSCE region (n=36)

The NAPs from the OSCE region seem to represent two different models of budget specification, where budget specification exists: specified top-level versus devolved budget. Several of the current NAPs propose to fund all necessary activities within existing budgetary resources allocated to the implementation agency. This model involves devolved responsibility for budgeting, per the Austrian NAP (2012), for example, which mandates that “Financing of the activities resulting from implementation of the Action Plan will be ensured by the responsible ministries within the funds available in their respective budgets;”<sup>73</sup> the Finnish NAP (2018) and UK NAP (2018) contains a similar provision. The UK NAP supports this position by citing the findings of an independent review of the UK NAP 2014-2017, which found “little evidence that a ring fenced funding pool would significantly improve the UK’s delivery of WPS initiatives compared to other measures such as ensuring that WPS is strategically and meaningful mainstreamed throughout programming.”<sup>74</sup> The field research component of this research, reported in the following section, explores the question of effective budgeting as part of implementation.

### 3.6: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

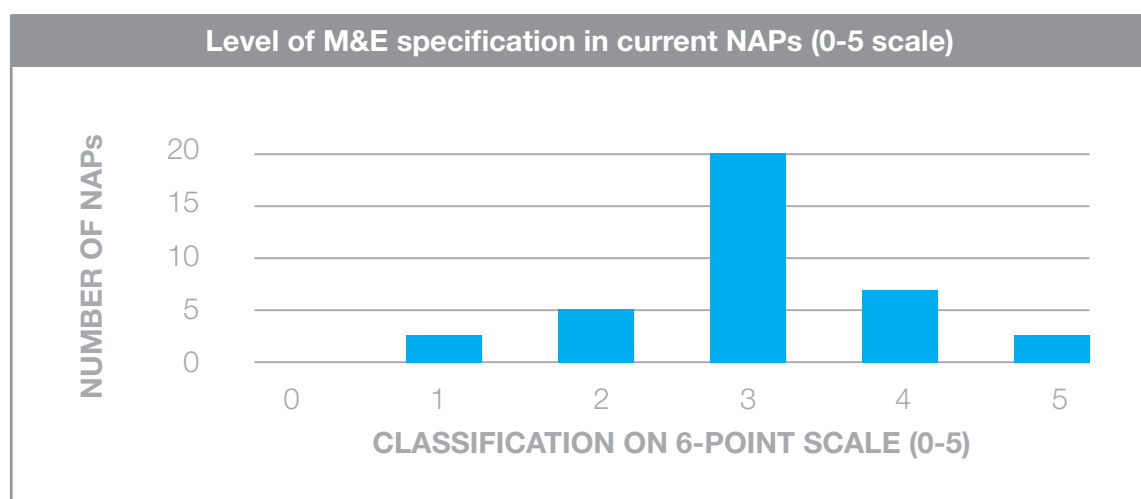
Any policy that aims to effect change requires a sound and robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to assess whether change is actually happening. In general terms, a policy document such as a NAP should include a high-level vision statement aligned with a clear *theory of change*. A theory of change relates to the vision statement by outlining *how* change will occur in the operating environment in order to realize the vision. Supporting the theory of change are a number of objectives, outputs/actions, and indicators of success or achievement. These are the elements of the policy that can be monitored and evaluated. Therefore, the higher the level of specificity regarding the objectives, outputs/actions, and indicators in a NAP, the easier it is to monitor implementation (success or achievement of the various indicators that an action has taken place or output has been produced) and thus evaluate the conditions conducive to implementation and the change that has been facilitated through the various undertakings.

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<sup>73</sup> Austrian NAP 2012, p.4.

<sup>74</sup> UK NAP 2018, p.24.

Figure 9 shows the level of specificity in the description of the M&E framework in the collection of NAPs from the OSCE region. A simple quantitative analysis was undertaken to code the level of M&E specification in the current NAPs on a six-point scale (0-5), where 0 represents no mention of M&E whatsoever and 5 represents full specification and detail provided in the relevant NAP. As shown in Figure 9, M&E can be considered better specified than budget in most cases. Over half of the NAPs included a moderately well-specified M&E framework, with activities broadly defined, timeframes included, and relevant agencies or parties broadly identified. Conversely, only 7 out of 36 NAPs have M&E frameworks that are poorly or relatively poorly specified, or absent altogether. Two NAPs have M&E frameworks that were coded as excellent, or exemplary: Albania and Ukraine. The Albanian 2018 NAP, for example, includes provisions for six-monthly progress reports and evaluation, as well as featuring a detailed M&E framework with clear indicators and budget allocation to each activity.



**Figure 9**  
*Level of M&E specification in current NAPs from the OSCE region (n=36)*

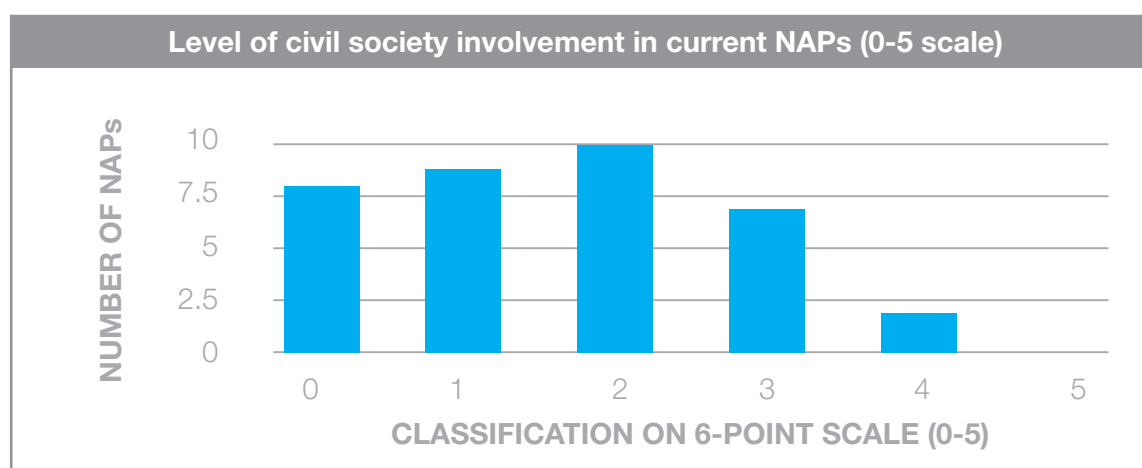
Another critical factor in the M&E of actions/outputs is the availability and inclusion of baseline data across the various fields or elements being monitored. If a country is intending to increase the number of women involved in conflict prevention through targeted intervention, for example, it is necessary to know the number of women involved in such activities prior to the intervention. The same is largely true across all areas of WPS work, and yet a relatively small number of NAPs include or mention baseline or “status quo” data against which progress can be measured.

Some do, though, including the NAPs produced by Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Montenegro, and Moldova. This can be considered good practice.

### **3.7: INCLUSIVE PRACTICE**

The WPS agenda has a vibrant civil society constituency; indeed, it was institutionalized as an item on the agenda of the UN Security Council largely due to the efforts of women's civil society organizations. The continued engagement of civil society in WPS governance has been a linchpin of the agenda since its inception. Further, as discussed in Part 2, recent research suggests that an inclusive design process, involving civil society organizations, can

The two highest-ranked NAPs, according to the coding undertaken here, are the Dutch NAP (2016) and the Irish NAP (2019). These represent good practice in engaging civil society organizations in the development and monitoring of the NAP. Civil society organizations were involved in drafting the Dutch NAP, and are signatories to the NAP. The Irish NAP similarly brings together government agencies and civil society stakeholders around the vision of the NAP: “The Oversight Group will be independently chaired and its membership will consist of 50% representation from the relevant government departments and state agencies and 50% representation from civil society, academia and independents.”<sup>75</sup>

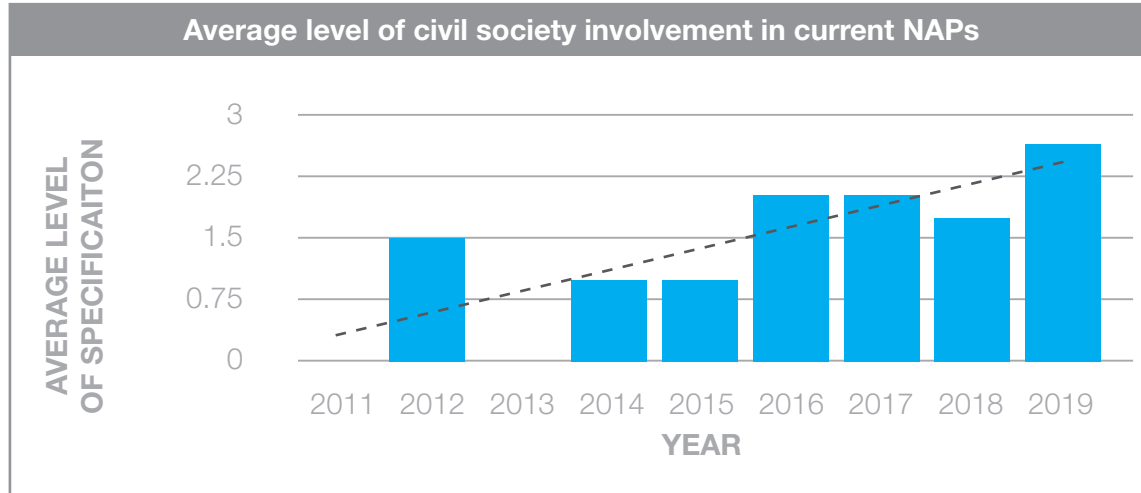


**Figure 11**

*Level of civil society involvement in current NAPs from the OSCE region (n=36)*

In Figure 12, a positive trend is visible when considering the average level of civil society involvement over time. Between 2011 and 2019, the average level of civil society involvement shows a remarkable increase. NAPs could offer better opportunities for civil society involvement, and could include civil society more effectively in development and monitoring of the NAPs, as the average level of specification is less than 3, which means that on average, NAPs in the OSCE region make no reference to civil society being involved in a working group or steering committee or similar involvement in governance. The field research component of this research, reported in the following section, explores whether OSCE countries are indeed developing closer collaboration in WPS work between government and civil society organizations.

<sup>75</sup> Irish NAP 2019, p.24.



**Figure 12**

*Average level of civil society involvement in current NAPs from the OSCE region (n=36)*

### 3.8: CONCLUSIONS

The above analysis explored a dataset of NAPs produced by OSCE participating States, from 2005 to mid-2019, with a particular focus on post-2014 NAPs to chart development since the previous OSCE study. It is clear that the range of issues with which NAPs are concerned is growing, with the number of concerns addressed under the auspices of WPS proliferating, although attention is still paid to the traditional “pillars” of WPS activity, notably participation and prevention. There has been an increased focus on prevention since 2014 and NAPs have begun to feature emerging WPS issues such as disasters and terrorism and violent extremism. In terms of the features that make for an effective NAP, much room for improvement remains in the sphere of budgeting and the specification of financial arrangements, as most OSCE region NAPs do not feature even a “broadly defined” budget, let alone specific allocations to defined agencies or initiatives. Specification of monitoring and evaluation has remained somewhat steady in the period under investigation, and much greater levels of specificity are evident in the sphere of M&E than in budgeting. Since 2014 there has been a marked uptick in levels of inclusive practice specified in the OSCE region NAPs, though they could still offer better opportunities for civil society involvement.

# 4. NAP Implementation in the OSCE Region

Current discussion on the NAPs on UNSCR 1325 calls for more attention to their effective implementation.

This chapter examines the implementation of NAPs in five OSCE participating States: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine. The research explored experiences in designing and implementing NAPs; co-ordination amongst state institutions and agencies; co-operation between state institutions, civil society and international partners; common challenges such as monitoring and evaluation or budgets; experiences in localizing NAPs; how NAPs fit in with the broader national women's machinery (NWM); and emerging good practices.

This study is not a comparative evaluation of the respective NAPs of five countries. The NAPs are incomparable for a number of reasons: they are at different stages of implementation; some countries have had numerous NAPs while others are implementing their first one; the administrative structures and set-ups for the NAPs differ; and the action plans cover different thematic issues.

In total, 108 people in the five countries participated in the interviews for the study, including representatives of state ministries and other state institutions and agencies, security sector institutions, members of parliament, local administrative bodies, civil society, and international organizations, including OSCE staff. All information in this chapter is based on the interviews and focus group discussions carried out in the five countries, unless other sources are indicated. All interviews were anonymized for the sake of confidentiality. Furthermore, the respective NAPs and other relevant background documents were analysed.

The five countries were chosen to give a degree of geographical breadth to the study (Central Asia, Eastern Europe, South-eastern Europe) and also to capture a snapshot of countries at different stages of NAP implementation, ranging from a newly-adapted first NAP to the end of a third-generation NAP. The five countries are in some ways representative of a large section of OSCE participating States in that they are middle-income rather than high-income



countries, and are going through reform processes – importantly, also in the security sector. Only countries hosting OSCE field operations were included in this part of the study, in order to better explore how the OSCE has promoted the implementation of the WPS agenda in practice, following the provisions of the OSCE 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality.

While there are obvious historical, political, geographical, and other differences between the five countries, some similarities were also identified. Unlike many OSCE region NAPs (see section 3.4.), all five countries have NAPs which are more “inward-facing” rather than “outward-looking.” In other words, rather than focusing mainly on integrating WPS into participation in peace support operations (PSOs) externally or development assistance, they focus mainly on activities within the country. That said, especially elements such as gender training for PSO participants abroad have been included in the five countries’ NAPs, but this is much less of a focus than internal activities. This internal focus has in part determined which actors are involved, and the kinds of issues the NAPs focus on. For example, where outward-looking NAPs tend to have a central role for Ministries of Foreign Affairs and institutions engaged with Overseas Development Assistance, the NAP processes of the five countries examined here saw much less engagement from state foreign policy actors.

In each of the cases studied here, individual women activists and women’s organizations had been involved in national, regional or global discussions on WPS, but also on the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW long before the respective NAP processes started. Thus, CSOs often had had more opportunities to engage in-depth with global debates on WPS and its implementation than state institutions. At the same time, in all countries there are a range of women’s organizations and other CSOs working directly on issues related to NAPs, such as GBV prevention and response or working to increase marginalized women’s social, economic and political participation, who are not directly involved with – or perhaps even aware of – the existence of a NAP process.

#### **4.1: BACKGROUND TO COUNTRY CONTEXTS**

All five countries can be considered conflict-affected, though at different phases in the conflict cycle. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia have both experienced violent conflict during the 1990s. Moldova has been in a settlement process over the status of the region of Transdniestria since 1990. Ukraine has been in an active conflict in the east of the country since 2014, with contests over the status and control of parts of the eastern region of

Donbas as well as the Crimean peninsula. Kyrgyzstan experienced interethnic violence in Southern Kyrgyzstan in 2010. More recently in 2019, border skirmishes took place on the Kyrgyz-Tajik border in Batken. Kyrgyzstan and the wider region of Central Asia has also experienced a threat from violent extremism in recent years.

As with all violent conflicts, the impacts on civilians have been gendered. The use of sexual violence as a weapon of war, for example, was widespread against civilians in conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, particularly (though not exclusively) women and girls. As a result, the prosecution of perpetrators through the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) represented the first recognition of rape as a war crime as well as a crime against humanity. The effects of mass displacement resulting from conflict are also deeply gendered: for example, in Ukraine where there is a large number of displaced people,<sup>76</sup> the burden of care for families is disproportionately born by women. OHCHR has reported on an increase in transactional sex in response to difficult economic circumstances caused by the conflict.<sup>77</sup>

Even beyond periods of violent conflict, many forms of violence and insecurity that particularly affect women persist. For example, a recent OSCE survey found that many women report experiencing physical or sexual violence from a current or former partner since the age of 15 in Bosnia and Herzegovina (11 per cent), Moldova (34 per cent), Serbia (17 per cent) and Ukraine (26 per cent).<sup>78</sup> A similar study in Kyrgyzstan in 2012 found that one in four women who had been married had experienced physical violence from her partner.<sup>79</sup> In many of these contexts, trust in security institutions is low, and women rarely report their experiences of violence to the police.<sup>80</sup> Other forms of gendered insecurity also prevail: according to a recent UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) survey, despite being prohibited by law, bride kidnapping – in which men abduct a woman or girl in order to pressure her family into allowing them to marry – remains to be an issue in Kyrgyzstan.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, all five countries are, to differing extents, source and transit nations for women and girls trafficked for the sex trade or forced labour.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Currently, there are 1.3 million internally displaced people in Ukraine. UN Human Rights Council, A/HRC/40/CRP.3.

<sup>77</sup> OHCHR, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ukraine, 14 March 2014-31 January 2017 (2017).

<sup>78</sup> OSCE, OSCE-Led Survey on Violence Against Women: Wellbeing and Safety of Women – Main Report (2019), p. 34.

<sup>79</sup> National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, Kyrgyz Republic Demographic and Health Survey 2012, (2012), p. 245.

<sup>80</sup> OSCE, OSCE-Led Survey on Violence Against Women: Wellbeing and Safety of Women – Main Report (2019), p. 96.

Despite these challenges, women in all five contexts have played roles in building peace and promoting security. For example, in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Serbia, women and women’s organizations have mobilized to oppose violence and ethnonationalism, to promote reconciliation across political and social divides, as well as justice and accountability for gender-based harms against women during conflict. However, women have often been excluded from formal peace negotiations. For example, no women from Bosnia and Herzegovina participated in the negotiation of the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement, which has been critiqued by women’s rights organizations as being gender-blind.<sup>83</sup> In Serbia, although the EU-facilitated Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue is included in the WPS NAP, there has been little progress in terms of women’s participation in the Track I process, while there have been civil society-led Track II efforts involving women. Similarly in Ukraine and in Moldova women have been under-represented in the ongoing official processes, while many civil society peace and dialogue initiatives have been led by women.<sup>84</sup>

Some progress has been made in increasing women’s participation in political life more broadly. Kyrgyzstan, for example, is in many ways a leader in women’s participation in Central Asia, having the first female president in the region as well as being the first country with a WPS NAP. A new quota of minimum 30 per cent female representation in village councils was adopted in June 2019, and has already been successfully used in the elections in Issyk-Kul province village in September 2019; the quota will also be used in nationwide village council elections in 2020. In Moldova, women’s civil society organizations and female parliamentarians worked together to successfully achieve the adoption of Law 71 in 2016, a package of measures to promote gender equality, including 40 per cent quotas for women as electoral candidates and cabinet nominees. In Ukraine women’s representation in Parliament leapt from 11.6 per cent to more than 20 per cent in the 2019 elections, despite a significant “anti-gender” backlash in recent years.<sup>85</sup> In Serbia, quotas have led to greater political participation by women, who hold 37.7 per cent of seats in the National Assembly and 19 per cent of ministerial positions.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> The practice of bride kidnapping is sometimes consensual, but in others it is coercive and involves physical and sexual violence. See UNFPA, *Gender in Society Perception Study* (2016).

<sup>82</sup> United States Department of State, *2019 Trafficking in Persons Report* (2019).

<sup>83</sup> *Kvinna til Kvinna, To Make Room for Changes: Peace Strategies from Women Organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (2006), p.12.

<sup>84</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, *OSCE Toolkit on the Inclusion of Women and Effective Peace Processes*, 2019.

## 4.2: CO-ORDINATION AND OWNERSHIP OF NAPs

As shown in Table 2, the five countries have used different set-ups to co-ordinate the development and implementation of the NAPs. All have had some degree of co-operation amongst security sector institutions and their respective line ministries, gender equality ministries and/or state agencies, civil society organizations and development partners.

Where the co-ordinator role of a NAP sits within the government machinery this can have important implications for its implementation (see also section 3.4). For example, in Moldova, the current pen-holder of the NAP is the Bureau for Reintegration under the Deputy Prime Minister of Moldova for Reintegration. While it has no ministry of its own, limited staff and no direct decision-making power over security sector institutions (SSIs), it does have some hierarchical leverage over line ministries, more so than if any one line ministry were to be the pen-holder, which gives the NAP a high status. Similarly in Ukraine, the co-ordinating role of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for the European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine in NAP implementation was seen by respondents as having been an important step in giving the NAP process more impetus. Previously, the Ministry of Social Policy had struggled at times to co-ordinate the security and defence-related ministries and agencies.

In other cases, cross-departmental bodies have been set up specifically to promote implementation, such as the Co-ordination Board for the Monitoring of Action Plan Implementation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, co-chaired by the Ministry of Security (MoS) and Ministry of Defence (MoD). The Co-ordination Board includes some CSO representatives, allowing for closer civil society oversight of implementation, even if CSO respondents felt that their voice needed to be stronger.

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<sup>85</sup> For analysis see International Foundation for Electoral Systems, IFES Comment on women's representation in the new parliament and further steps to maintain and facilitate better women's representation in politics 26 July 2019.

<sup>86</sup> Inter Parliamentary Union, Women in Politics: 2019 (2019).

COUNTRY	CURRENT NAP PERIOD	PREVIOUS NAPS	LEAD AGENCY	MAIN SUPPORTING AGENCIES
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2018-2022	2010-2013 2014-2017	Agency for Gender Equality of the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees	Coordination Board for the Monitoring of Action Plan Implementation co-chaired by the Ministry of Security (MoS) and Ministry of Defence (MoD)
Kyrgyzstan	2018-2020	2013-2014 2016-2017	Ministry of Internal Affairs and Department of Defense, Law Enforcement and Emergency Situations of the Office of Prime Minister	State Committee for Defence Affairs as well as the Ministry for Emergency Situations (MoES), State Agency for Self-governance and Interethnic Relations
Moldova	2018-2021	Draft version 2016	Bureau for Reintegration under the Deputy Prime Minister of Moldova for Reintegration	Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Protection, Ministry of Internal Affairs
Serbia	2017-2020	2010-2015	Co-ordination Body for Gender Equality under the office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	Ministry of Defence
Ukraine	2016-2020 (amended 2018)		Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for the European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine and Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP)	Ministry of Defence (MoD) and Ministry of the Interior (MoI)

**Table 2**  
Overview of NAPs of the five case study countries

## BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF DIFFERENT “PENHOLDERS” OF NAPS

- **Independent “expert agencies”** (e.g. national agencies for gender equality) are able to push the envelope and challenge institutions to do more, can provide technical assistance, but often lack the personnel capacity and resources of ministries, and may be side-lined by ministries as not having authority.
- **Security-related ministries** have clout within SSIs and security-related expertise, but often not on gender. There may also be “turf wars” between different security and defence sector ministries.
- **Ministries and state agencies on gender equality** often have gender-related expertise but may lack security and defence expertise, as well as leverage over SSIs and security-related ministries.
- Situating the NAP with a **higher-ranked institution**, e.g. Prime Minister’s or Deputy Prime Minister’s, or President’s Office gives leverage over ministries, but as these are often tied to political personalities, the degree of institutionalization may be low.

### 4.3: NAP DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES

The development processes of NAPs differ from country to country, some with a very high degree of CSO involvement, others led chiefly by state institutions with little civil society involvement, and with differing degrees of input by outside actors (see also section 3.7). In all of the five countries covered, especially the development of the respective first NAPs saw selected representatives of security-relevant ministries engaging closely with civil society representatives with WPS expertise, with at times substantial technical support from development partners, including the OSCE.

In all five countries, the engagement between state institutions and those CSOs involved in the process was described generally as having been good, transparent and in a co-operative spirit. The processes did, however, require finding a common language and

identifying internal champions and allies in SSIs and other state institutions. CSOs needed to have the necessary expertise to be able to engage with the defence and security sector. Respondents pointed out that CSOs brought valuable expertise into the process, often with subject matter expertise that included research, policy formulation, analysis and advocacy as well as service provision and programme implementation. Furthermore, they have a strong grasp of programme and project design, monitoring and evaluation – skills which have not always been as present on the side of state institutions.

Co-operation was particularly close in the case of Moldova, where CSOs gave not only thematic support but also hands-on support on drafting and developing indicators. Those involved in the process from both the state and CSO side saw it as a very collaborative process, one in which according to a CSO representative, “CSOs were not just consulted but co-created the NAP.” Respondents often highlighted that working together on NAPs illustrated a change from previously more antagonistic relationships.

However, not all CSOs have been entirely satisfied with the NAP processes. Some CSO representatives interviewed for this study felt that the CSO participation was selective, and that there was an imbalance between state representatives and CSOs in co-ordinating groups. They also perceived a lack of transparency and limited sharing of discussions between state actors and CSOs and among CSOs themselves. At least one CSO in Serbia chose not to participate in what it saw as a militarization of WPS, an issue which has led to intense debate among women’s organizations elsewhere as well. Generally speaking, capital-city based, policy-oriented CSOs often have had an advantage in accessing these processes, though at least in Kyrgyzstan and Serbia active efforts were made to broaden the reach by organizing civil society participation workshops around the country.

The involvement of SSI representatives in the NAP development process was important in all five countries, where respondents saw a sea change in how the security and defence sectors started engaging with gender issues. For example, a respondent in Serbia saw exposing defence and security officials to a wider range of understandings of what “security” meant concretely to people of different backgrounds, including ethnic minorities, persons living with disabilities, or persons of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (SOGIE), as a major impact in itself. Ministries responsible for defence and security and SSIs have not always been consistent in their enthusiasm in implementing WPS NAPs, often depending on the personal commitment of key personnel. Nonetheless they were mentioned by several respondents in Serbia and Ukraine as positive examples for

less security-oriented ministries to emulate in terms of embracing and “owning” the NAP, and subsequently implementing and reporting on it.

External actors, such as the OSCE, UN Women, bilateral and multilateral donors, and thematically-focused INGOs and think-tanks such as DCAF – the Geneva Center for Security Sector Governance and Inclusive Security, played important supporting and enabling roles in all five countries (see also section 4.10.). For a number of the armed forces, but not all, NATO and the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations have also been important partners. The roles of international partners differed between the contexts, but included funding, capacity-building and training, advice, as well as creating platforms such as workshops, seminars and conferences both for information exchange and keeping the momentum going. The importance of external exchanges and study visits to countries which had already developed NAPs was highlighted in all five countries.<sup>87</sup> In all five countries, the respective OSCE Missions have been engaged with supporting the WPS processes, arguably playing the most active role in Kyrgyzstan. In Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Moldova, where the OSCE played a catalytic role earlier on and has since taken more of a back seat as other development partners have become more active, state and civil society interviewees called for a renewed engagement of the organization with the processes.

#### **4.4: NAPs AND THE BROADER NWM/OTHER ACTION PLANS**

National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security are only one part of an array of national-level legal mechanisms and action plans to advance gender equality and tackle gendered security issues. Other national instruments may include over-arching national strategies for promoting gender equality; implementation plans for and reporting on Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW; different action plans to combat violence against women and girls (VAWG) or GBV more broadly; or action plans on human trafficking or preventing violent extremism (PVE). In addition to this, there may be particular sectoral implementation plans, such as for example around police reform.

WPS NAPs thus risk overlapping with other action plans and strategies, leading to duplication, confusion between plans, competing competencies, or even somewhat contradicting goals if proper harmonization is missing. Lack of an overview of which plans cover what may

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<sup>87</sup> Especially exchanges with Georgian colleagues and study trips there were mentioned in all countries as being particularly important, but also mutual exchanges between the five countries studied. Particularly for the Western Balkans, these mutual exchanges were also seen as a form of practical post-conflict reconciliation work.



also lead to gaps emerging that are not covered by any plans. Often, the various plans have been developed with different goals in mind, have different timeframes and different reporting mechanisms. This can become a burden for implementers, especially in already overstretched and under-resourced local government bodies.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, increased efforts have been made to harmonize the WPS NAP with the over-arching Gender Action Plan (GAP). The current, third, WPS NAP covers the same period as the Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina i.e. the period 2018-2022.<sup>88</sup> The GAP is in line with the State's international gender commitments, including the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW, UNSCRs on WPS and UN SDGs. The GAP has an earmarked implementation fund, the Financial Mechanism for Implementation of Gender Action Plan in Bosnia and Herzegovina (FIGAP) that pools state resources and funds from four bilateral donors. The FIGAP has also been used to fund WPS NAP implementation. The GAP makes explicit reference to the NAP, and respondents felt that the WPS NAP was specifying the broader gender equality plan for the security and defence sector.<sup>89</sup> The Agency for Gender Equality, which co-ordinates both the GAP and the NAP, has been making a conscious effort to harmonize reporting processes and assist implementing agencies with the process. The Agency, together with implementing ministries, has also been seeking to mainstream WPS objectives into other policies, strategies and action plans, for example on anti-corruption. From a civil society perspective, however, the work on the various gender strategies and action plans appeared to be siloed and lacking synergy, with state actors viewed as unwilling to reach out beyond the narrowly defined roles and responsibilities.

In Moldova, the key over-arching document is the National Gender Equality Strategy 2017-2021. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection (MoHLSP) is the focal point for peace and security issues in the National Gender Equality Strategy. Initially, the MoHLSP was not completely supportive of having a separate WPS NAP. However, the formulation of sector-specific actions and goals in the WPS NAP has meant that it now complements the National Gender Equality Strategy, making it more concrete, and thus easier to implement, for the security sector.

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<sup>88</sup> Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2022. (2018).

<sup>89</sup> Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2022.

In addition to the WPS NAPs, Kyrgyzstan has had five consecutive NAPs on Gender Equality (the current one running 2018-2020) and an overall long-term Strategy on Gender Equality which is being implemented from 2012-2020. The lead agency on the Gender Equality NAPs is the Ministry of Labour and Social Development to whom implementing agencies report, while the Mol collects information on the WPS NAP. Respondents at the ministerial level in Bishkek felt that the different NAPs were harmonized and fitted together under the over-arching Strategy on Gender Equality. However, other respondents felt that there was a degree of confusion, in particular at the local level, and that under-resourced administrative structures often struggled to successfully implement numerous action plans.

Serbia has a National Strategy for Gender Equality for the years 2016-2020, the implementation of which is co-ordinated by the Coordination Body for Gender Equality. The strategy is aligned with the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW and other UN and Council of Europe commitments. Respondents assessed that the second WPS NAP was better harmonized and integrated with the broader national state policies and frameworks on gender equality than the first plan. Several respondents voiced concerns that the multiplicity of different action plans increased the workload and resulted in confusion between broader gender equality action plans and the localization of the WPS NAP, especially at the local self-governing body level. At the local self-governing body level, some respondents also perceived the WPS issues to be less tangible than other gender equality issues and as an additional burden. A contributing factor may be that from early on in Serbia the Mol and MoD were keener than the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy to participate in the WPS NAP process, and continue to hold a greater sense of ownership of the WPS NAP.

In Ukraine, the MoSP has been in charge of reporting on both the WPS NAP and broader Gender Equality Action Plan. The respondents said that the initial WPS NAP was not fully harmonized with broader women's empowerment and gender equality policies. However, the amendments made at mid-term helped in this respect, as these were drafted at the same time as implementation plans on the broader Gender Equality policy and CEDAW recommendations, allowing for cross-referencing and harmonization between the three. In part, as for example also in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kyrgyzstan, the harmonization process was helped by the fact that there was an overlap in terms of the people drafting the various action plans. At the ministerial level within the Mol, there was also an effort made at internally harmonizing institutional implementation plans on the WPS NAP as well as CEDAW, Gender Equality, VAWG prevention and response, and other commitments.

## 4.5: THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS

In all five countries, the NAPs cover all four pillars of WPS (participation, prevention, protection as well as relief and recovery), adapting these to the particular national needs and capacities and using the pillars in part to structure the respective NAP. The definitions of the pillars varied over time and between countries. For example, a broad definition of participation refers to women's participation in politics, society and economy on issues pertaining to peace and security, while a narrow definition is limited to women's participation in security sector institutions, peace negotiations or peace support operations. From this perspective, the general trend in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kyrgyzstan has been to move from broader NAPs to more focused and narrow ones, though with the latest NAPs highlighting several new and emerging WPS issues such as PVE, small arms and light weapons (SALW), migration or natural disasters. Both the Moldovan and Ukrainian NAPs tend to be comparatively narrowly framed. The two Serbian NAPs have had a strong focus on SSIs, though the second NAP covers a broader range of issues than the first one.

The focus on narrow but concrete steps has allowed for easier-to-implement plans, but has meant that women's participation in peacebuilding, conflict management and resolution is largely absent from the NAPs. The focus on the security sector of many NAPs has sometimes led to a perception that WPS is primarily an issue for SSIs, security- and defence-related ministries and security-focused CSOs. According to respondents, this has led to a situation where actors who not directly working on traditional "hard" security issues are less, or not at all, engaged with WPS. Thus the comprehensive approach to security that is at the core of WPS agenda, may become less prominent in the NAPs and their implementation.

In Moldova, the comparatively narrow framing of NAP came in part out of the trajectory of the process, which partially had its roots in internal plans developed for the armed forces and the police. Respondents also stated that it was framed based on the needs and the capabilities of Moldovan implementing actors. Similar sentiments were voiced in Serbia. Both state and CSO representatives in the two countries felt that keeping a narrow framing had been a good decision, as the broader issues were to be covered by the overall national Gender Equality Strategies, which the NAP complimented and gave more substance to in terms of security sector commitments and obligations. Having clear tasks and goals made implementation in the security and defence sector easier, corresponded to the institutional culture, and increased internal buy-in in the SSIs. Also, as one Moldovan CSO representative noted, a more focused plan was "easier to monitor and assess," and made

it possible for implementers to “achieve small victories which then motivate to go further.” The representative of another Moldovan CSO noted that having concrete tasks, goals and indicators made co-operation with ministries and SSIs on the development of the NAP easier and more tangible than what it would have been if the focus had been broader.

In both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, the second (and in Bosnia and Herzegovina also the third) NAPs sought to focus more on human security, in an attempt to make the plans more relevant to immediate, real security threats faced by the population, including for example responses to natural disasters. Gender and natural disasters have also been included as a topic in the Kyrgyz NAP (2018), with the focus being mainly on the prevention of GBV in this context. However, given the vulnerability of the country to climate change impacts, this could potentially be an area in which more preventive gender and security work could be done more broadly.

## **CSOs BRIDGING THE LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS: WOMEN INITIATIVE GROUPS IN KYRGYZSTAN**

In all five countries covered by the field research, women's civil society groups have been in key positions to advocate for the adoption of WPS NAPs, to help develop them, to take part in implementation as well as in monitoring the implementation process. CSOs can play an important role in connecting different levels: many have very good regional and international connections, but are also rooted at the local level. They can help to bring international and national level concepts and plans to the local level and simultaneously feed local level insights, experiences, and concerns into national and international discussions.

Women Initiative Groups in Kyrgyzstan are a good example on how CSOs, with support from international actors, started working on WPS issues before the first NAP was adopted by the state, and have since continued to support developing and implementing NAPs. The groups were initially set up in Osh, Batken and Jalal-Abad in 2011 in the wake of the 2010 violence by the NGO Ensan Diamond, with support from the OSCE Osh Field Office that was present there at the time. Initially, the groups were active in the south of Kyrgyzstan only, but by now 35 groups exist across the country as a WPS network.

The groups consist of women volunteers with diverse ethnic backgrounds and of different ages. The groups carry out active conflict prevention work across the ethnic communities in their respective constituencies, help build social cohesion, promote gender equality and support victims of GBV. They work both on their own and with state actors at the local level, and have received extensive technical support from the OSCE. This support has included training on conflict prevention and mediation, on writing legal complaints, supporting victims of gender-based violence, as well as budgeting.<sup>90</sup> The Women Initiative Groups thus act both as “localising” actors in implementing WPS but have also informed NAP development processes by raising local concerns at the national level.

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<sup>90</sup> OSCE Centre in Bishkek trains women in southern Kyrgyzstan on conflict prevention and mediation, 20 May 2016.

Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE) was an emerging issue in several countries, in particular in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan and, to a lesser extent, Serbia. This is an issue on which the OSCE has published two good practices guidance in 2019, looking especially at the role of civil society and the role of gender in PVE.<sup>91</sup> In all three countries, as in the wider OSCE region, the focus of the public debate has been on violent forms of radical Islam rather than on a broader perspective of ethnonationalist radicalization. Concerns were raised in all three countries to differing degrees about whether this topic should be part of the WPS agenda, given its potential to stigmatize particular population groups and put women at risk. Recent civil society research in Kyrgyzstan highlights two more broadly shared concerns in the efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism: PVE measures may lead to excessive state scrutiny of some minority communities, and the diversion of peacebuilding and development funds into PVE efforts can mean that deeper structural issues will be neglected.<sup>92</sup> Nonetheless, the support for having the issue of Islamic radicalization and its gendered impacts as part of the WPS NAP was widely supported both by civil society and state institutions respondents in Kyrgyzstan.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan and Serbia, gendered responses to natural or man-made disasters have also been included in the current NAPs. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the triggering factor were the 2014 floods. The OSCE Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina supported to prepare a gender analysis of the response to flooding. The Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina developed a protection and rescue system development programme for 2018-2022, and the natural disasters topic was integrated into the country's third WPS NAP.<sup>93</sup> In Serbia, the NAP incorporates the development and implementation of gender-sensitivity training for civil defence and protection actors that play a key role in disaster response. The issue of such training was also raised by respondents in terms of localizing the NAP. In Kyrgyzstan, the MoES has led, with support from the OSCE, UNDP and CSOs, a process to integrate a gender perspective into disaster preparedness and risk reduction, especially through local level capacity-building and awareness-raising. The MoES is currently developing trainings for preventing VAWG in emergency situations, as indicated in the WPS NAP.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> OSCE, *The Role of Civil Society in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Focus on South-Eastern Europe* (2019); and OSCE, *Understanding the Role of Gender in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization That Lead to Terrorism - Good Practices for Law Enforcement* (2019).

<sup>92</sup> K. Tricot O'Farrell and J. Street, *A threat inflated? The countering and preventing violent extremism agenda in Kyrgyzstan*, (Saferworld, 2019).

<sup>93</sup> Bosnia and Herzegovina NAP 2017, pp. 21-22.

<sup>94</sup> Government of the Kyrgyz Republic Decree, 21 September 2018, No. 334-p (r)

Conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) is mentioned as an issue in the NAPs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Ukraine. In the first two cases, the focus is more on the historical legacy of the conflicts in the 1990s. Addressing the needs of survivors of CRSV in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Serbia has been an extremely slow and highly politicized process. The multitude of barriers, challenges and gaps in reparation and access to justice for victims have been covered elsewhere, including by the OSCE, and go beyond the scope of this study, and to an extent beyond the scope of the NAP.<sup>95</sup> In Serbia, the question of the country's involvement in the conflict in the 1990s remains a politically highly sensitive topic, and though the issue of CRSV is mentioned in the NAP, progress on it has been slow.

Whether or not the WPS NAPs should focus specifically on CRSV or on GBV more broadly, including CRSV, has been a matter of debate. In Ukraine, for example, the mid-term evaluation of the NAP saw the inclusion of domestic violence as a “mistake” and recommended that the NAP should focus on CRSV, with other forms of GBV being covered by other policies and plans.<sup>96</sup> In Serbia, on the other hand, the integration of domestic violence/intimate partner violence and related police responses into the NAP was perceived in a positive light. The scope of what is and is not covered by the term CRSV is also a matter of debate, as beyond a narrower focus on direct sexual violence by conflict parties it can also be understood as including exploitation of power differentials by members of armed forces in cases of transactional sex, trafficking for sex work by armed actors or increased DV/IPV perpetrated by current and former combatants, an issue also highlighted by recent OSCE research.<sup>97</sup> Furthermore, prevention work tends to focus on awareness-raising, and emphasizes GBV/VAWG rather than violence more broadly. As one respondent in Moldova noted, awareness-raising campaigns and increasing the number of women in institutions were easy steps, but impact beyond numbers, especially at the local level, was needed, a sentiment echoed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, and Serbia.

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<sup>95</sup> See for example OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, *Towards Justice for Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Progress before Courts in BiH 2014–2016* (2017).

<sup>96</sup> A. Niazova, *Midterm Evaluation of the Ukrainian National Action Plan on Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on “Women, Peace and Security” Until 2020*. Kyiv: UN Women/Office of the Vice-Premier Minister for the European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine, (2018), p. 54.

<sup>97</sup> OSCE, *OSCE-led survey on violence against women: Main report*, (2019).

Civil society respondents assessed positively the inclusion of emerging issues such as gender and migration, trafficking, natural disasters or SALW, into NAPs. However, they also raised concerns over the capacity of already over-stretched and under-resourced state institutions, especially at the local level, to realistically address these issues. A particular threat raised in Ukraine, but relevant also to other contexts, was that of hybrid warfare and the discussions on gender equality play in that. More broadly speaking, digital threats were also seen by one respondent as an area hitherto not covered by NAPs. New security threats were seen as complex and gendered, but respondents saw a lack of an understanding of the role played by gender in these thematic areas among WPS actors. Both state institutions and civil society were also seen as being too thematically siloed to be able to effectively respond to complex and gendered threats. Broader WPS NAPs do have the advantage of responding more realistically to real life threats and thus going beyond focusing on increasing the number of women in SSIs. However, they run the risk of “mission creep” and overstretch, especially given a lack of resources, and may lead to WPS NAPs duplicating issues already or better covered by other strategies.

In all five countries, as tends to be the case in WPS NAPs globally, there is very little or no engagement with men and masculinities, nor is there always an intersectional lens used for examining women. Although there are some exceptions, women tend to be treated as a homogenous category, disregarding particular needs linked to, for example age, class, ethnicity, location, sexual orientation or disability.<sup>98</sup> Work on transforming men’s attitudes, behaviours, and understandings of masculinity was not explicitly included in any of the NAPs.<sup>99</sup>

#### **4.6: NAP IMPLEMENTATION AND BUDGETING**

On the whole, the NAPs in all five countries were seen by respondents as having had the greatest impact in terms of SSIs taking gender perspectives on board, increasing the number of women in SSIs and improving their situation. Broader women’s participation, for example in conflict resolution, mediation or resolution has received comparatively less attention.

In all five countries, there was a palpable sense of ownership of the NAP, and pride in the

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<sup>98</sup> H. Myrntinen, *Security Sector Governance, Security Sector Reform and Gender*, Gender and Security Toolkit Tool 1 (Geneva/Warsaw/New York: DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR, UN Women, 2019)

<sup>99</sup> In Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, at least, there are several local CSOs working on transforming masculinities and UNFPA has published a study on masculinities in Ukraine, and Promundo is currently implementing a survey there. Regionally in the Western Balkans and Moldova, SEESAC has begun examining masculinities and small arms.



accomplishments so far especially among respondents from defence and security sector state institutions, line ministries tasked with its implementation and especially those working directly on WPS in SSIs. Concrete steps taken to implement NAPs included:

- **the adoption of anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies;**
- **the opening up of previously closed positions to women;**
- **increasing the intake of women into SSIs (in particular in military, police and other security sector-related academies);**
- **capacity building on gender;**
- **the appointment of gender advisers and focal points in ministries and SSIs;**
- **increased participation of women in PSOs and improved gender training for PSO participants;**
- **better human resources policies (such as on maternity/paternity leave) that aim to promote more gender equal representation.**

NAPs in Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine have also engaged with the state intelligence apparatus, which required more confidentiality than the engagement with other SSIs. In several countries, respondents noted that a “healthy competition” had emerged among line ministries and SSIs as to who was better implementing the NAP.<sup>100</sup> The hierarchical structure of SSIs has helped in ensuring implementation once decisions on activities and goals had been made.

Individual projects in SSIs in the five countries have been piloting innovative approaches to gender mainstreaming, including the use of gender coaching as part of the support given by the Swedish Police to the Serbian Mol and national police.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> To an extent, one can also see this “healthy competition” playing out between countries in a given region with respect to their WPS NAPs.

<sup>101</sup> <http://moismeu.rs/index.php/en/projects/spap-ii-en/43-english/projects/spap-ii/241-gender-agenda-at-the-moi-of-the-republic-of-serbia>

## GENDER COACHING

Gender Coaching was initially developed in the private sector, but pioneered in the security and justice sector by Sweden.<sup>102</sup> This capacity-building model has been replicated also in the Serbian National Police through the Swedish assistance programme, as well as in the OSCE Secretariat at the Secretary General and Secretariat Directors' level.<sup>103</sup> Standard gender mainstreaming approaches often focus on training lower-ranking staff and assume that senior staff already support and are knowledgeable about gender equality. However, senior and mid-level managers also often require training, support and accompaniment on how to contribute to institutional change thorough gender-responsive leadership, be it in longer-term strategy or in everyday practice.

Gender coaching programme provides each participating manager with access to a personal gender coach, who is a senior expert on gender equality and WPS. This personal coaching is flanked by workshops and seminars designed to impart further knowledge and to mediate cross-learning between participants. At the end of the programme, participants formulate an individual development plan to strengthen the integration of new knowledge and skills on gender equality into the organization.

Each cohort receives coaching for two years, with the first year focusing on increasing knowledge on gender equality and mainstreaming, progressing from establishing broader knowledge frameworks towards increasingly concrete skills and practices. In the second year, participants are expected to implement these in their respective organizations with the support of their gender coach. Throughout, process emphasizes moving from simplistic notions of “adding women” to more comprehensive understandings of gendered power dynamics, and challenging particular masculinised norms and institutional cultures.

The research highlighted the importance of professional associations of women within SSIs in driving the implementation of NAPs within their respective institutions, as well as for bringing in expertise and lived experiences into the NAP process as well as into capacity-building and training. While they can be important allies “on the inside” in NAP processes, their members are however bound to a degree by the constraints of the SSI in question. They also often run on very small budgets and are based on volunteer work, and thus would need support and funding to function more effectively.

## ASSOCIATIONS OF WOMEN IN SECURITY AND JUSTICE SECTOR INSTITUTIONS

Professional associations of women in security and justice sector institutions have been established in all five countries, often with technical support of the respective OSCE field operations. These associations include:

**Bosnia and Herzegovina:** the Network of Women Police Officers in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Women Police Officers Network of the Republika Srpska Ministry of Interior (RS WPON);

**Kyrgyzstan:** the Kyrgyz Association of Women in the Security Sector (KAWSS) and Association of Women Judges;

**Moldova:** the Association of Women in Law Enforcement;

**Serbia:** the Network of Policewomen of the Republic of Serbia;

**Ukraine:** the Association of Women in Law Enforcement Agencies.

These associations have been key allies in formulating the needs and concerns of as well as challenges faced by women working within SSIs and in bringing these issues into NAPs thanks to their insider perspectives. They also provide important broader expertise on security sector-related issues for NAPs. Although some of the gains made have been symbolic, e.g. not only using male forms of job titles or increased visibility of women in SSIs in public events or in internal and external publications, these seemingly small steps are important in shifting institutional cultures and making women feel valued and welcomed. They also help shift public perceptions of SSIs in a positive way, as for example the OSCE-funded research in Moldova has shown.<sup>104</sup> The servicewomen's associations are furthermore important partners in terms of implementing and monitoring the implementation of NAPs, although the degree to which these associations can be watchdogs, as it were, can be curtailed by the demands of institutional loyalty.

The associations often provide important and essential support to women working in SSIs and can, similar to gender focal points and gender advisors, become go-to points for staff facing for example gender-based discrimination, SGBH or SEA issues. While the support given is often extremely necessary and helpful, it should be human resources, legal, disciplinary and ombudspersons' institutions and complaints mechanisms which need to deal with such issues, rather than volunteer associations. The work of the associations should be better resourced and their political and institutional independence guaranteed to the extent possible.

In spite of the advances, challenges remain in the implementation of the NAPs in SSIs. These included the pervasive masculinist institutional cultures, a lack of capacity on gender equality issues, a lack of advancement of women in to top ranks, and a sense that senior management and leadership may be engaging in “tick-box” exercises or only paying public lip service to promoting gender equality and WPS.

In all five countries, some respondents assessed that masculinist institutional cultures have led to a de facto devaluing of WPS in spite of public lip service, and continued lack of transparent decision-making in informal male-dominated (or exclusively male) spaces. Publicly embracing WPS was seen as a potential “quick win” for political leaders and institutions, especially vis-à-vis the donor and international community, while necessary fundamental change in gendered attitudes, norms, and power dynamics remain elusive. As respondents pointed out, engaging with WPS is often easier in the abstract than through concrete personal and institutional change. Resistance to gender equality and WPS, or a lack of interest in it, as well as pervasive gender stereotypes were seen as challenges in all five countries. In many countries, there has been an increased politicization of anything around “gender,” be it around debates on the Istanbul Convention or LGBTI. While this has not yet had an impact on NAPs, future impacts cannot be ruled out. In Ukraine, some respondents saw the “anti-gender” backlash as part of broader threats that should be a topic addressed in future NAPs.

Gender-based discrimination and sexual and gender-based harassment (SGBH) was an issue which different SSIs in the five countries were grappling with, with varying degrees of success. A number of the institutions are in the process of developing response mechanisms to address SGBH and discrimination and the Office of the Inspector General of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina especially stood out in this respect with its ambition to take action on the issue. While CSOs acknowledged the will of SSIs to address the issue, many were critical of the chances of success unless there were fundamental changes in institutional cultures and senior management take the issue seriously, junior staff (in particular women) are able to voice their concerns and complaints, and credible response mechanisms

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<sup>102</sup> For a comprehensive study of the Swedish Armed Forces’ implementation of gender mainstreaming, see for example R. Egnell, P. Hojem & H. Berts, *Implementing a Gender Perspective in Military Organisations and Operations: The Swedish Armed Forces Model*, Report / Department of Peace and Conflict Research 98, (2012).

<sup>103</sup> For an assessment of the approach, see L. Olsson and A. Björsson, *Gender Training for Leaders: The Swedish Gender Coach Program*, (Washington DC: Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, 2017).

<sup>104</sup> V. Bodrug-Lungu and I. Triboi, *Report on the Survey “Perception of the Public of the Gender-Responsiveness in Institutions of the Security and Defence Sector”* (Chisinau: OSCE Mission to Moldova, 2016).

are put in place. A further obstacle in addressing SGBH in SSIs that was identified was a fear of negative publicity by the institutions if reports came out.

The personal commitment and expertise of key people in civil society, ministries and SSIs in the respective NAP processes continues to be an important driving force in all five countries. While this has been laudable and a key success factor, it does raise issues of how to better institutionalize WPS beyond individual champions. High staff turnover at all levels means that training and capacity-building efforts have to be repeated frequently, creating challenges around systematization and sustainability. Respondents from implementing ministries in all five countries highlighted challenges in retaining and passing on institutional knowledge. Further challenges were identified in ensuring that those who receive training pass their new knowledge on to colleagues, and in implementing what was learned independently and proactively outside of the training. The hierarchical nature of state institutions and especially SSIs, means more trained junior staff are often not able to speak out and potentially contradict less knowledgeable senior staff.

Consistent with the findings on NAPs from the wider OSCE region, the number one challenge raised in all five countries was the lack of a dedicated budget for the NAP and its activities (see section 3.5.). Certain amounts have been allocated directly in some countries, such as in the second Serbian NAP and Ukraine, but these are quite small and most of the NAP activities are expected to be covered by external funding resources. In Ukraine, only around four to five per cent of the NAP is to be covered from the national budget, 15 per cent from regional (oblast) budgets and the rest by donors. In most cases, donor funds were expected to cover a large part of expenses.

The lack of a dedicated budget can result in competition between using funds for WPS-related work and other funding needs, or a competition between what WPS-related work to prioritize, e.g. whether to upgrade barracks to have separate sanitary facilities for male and female staff or invest in WPS capacity-building. WPS implementers in ministries and other institutions have often sought to find creative ways around this, such as using no-cost solutions where possible, although this can lead to an invisibilization of the time and effort required from staff to implement these. The dependence of the NAP implementation on donor funding means that they are exposed to volatility in shifting donor priorities, that funding cycles tend to be short and that sustainability is not ensured. Further, civil society respondents reported difficulties accessing funding, especially for smaller, non-capital city-based women's organizations. One respondent specifically criticized international

organizations and INGOs competing with local organizations for funds and then hiring the latter as sub-contracted service providers.

Partly as a result of budgetary challenges, Gender Focal Points (GFPs) and, to a lesser extent Gender Advisers, are often volunteers, which is good in terms of motivation, but means this work competes and often loses out to other tasks and responsibilities. Often, much of their time is taken up responding to issues which should be taken care of by human resources departments or ombudspersons. In addition to over-burdening GFPs and under-resourcing gender work, this can send the message that gender/WPS work is not valued. In some countries (e.g. Moldova, Serbia), capacity gaps have been filled by bringing in externally funded experts, and while this can fill short-term gaps, these arrangements are dependent on donor priorities and often do not lead to an institutionalization of WPS knowledge. Similarly, sub-contracting work through CSOs can help, but knowledge and ownership remain partially outside of the institutions. Furthermore, this can lead to an outsourcing of tasks which should be the state's responsibility to civil society.

#### **4.7: LOCALIZATION**

Localization of NAPs was an issue which has been explored to differing degrees in all five countries, and is a topic that is gaining increasing attention from national and international actors, including the OSCE, UN Women and the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), the latter of whom has published a toolkit on the issue.<sup>105</sup> The OSCE has also supported the development of Local Action Plans (LAPs).<sup>106</sup> Localization ideally makes NAPs more meaningful in terms of their impact, better in responding to human security needs and also takes into account that different parts of a country face different kinds of security risks. While the respondents saw localization as a positive step in theory, many were sceptical of its implementation and efficacy in practice. A comprehensive review of localization efforts was however not possible, given a lack of centralized data in all countries on LAPs and their implementation, which also presents a key challenge for national level WPS implementers. In Kyrgyzstan, several LAPs have been developed, in part by copying the NAP for use at the local level, and the NGO Women's Support Centre has also been working with UN

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<sup>105</sup> M, Cabrera-Balleza and A. Fal Dutra Santos, *From Best Practice to Standard Practice: A toolkit on the Localization of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women and Peace and Security*, (New York: Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, 2018).

<sup>106</sup> <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/353751?download=true>

Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on a pilot project on strengthening the capacity of women's committees and Public Prevention Centres in ten “newly built neighborhoods” (novostroyki) surrounding Bishkek. The focus of this project has been on increasing women's participation, prevention of GBV, and crime prevention more broadly.<sup>107</sup> In Moldova, initial WPS localization workshops have been held, including in Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia. More sustained and systematic efforts at localization have been made in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Ukraine. Bosnia and Herzegovina has seen the piloting of LAPs in several municipalities; in Serbia, localization has been an explicit aim of the second NAP, and in Ukraine, regions (oblasts), identified in the NAP as implementing agencies, have been tasked to develop oblast-level action plans.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, LAPs were developed in six pilot municipalities in 2015-2016 with the aim of addressing “women's daily security concerns: [including] protection from gender-based violence and human trafficking, access to legal protection, education, healthcare, natural and economic resources, as well as implications of environmental and infrastructure concerns such as recent floods, landmines, street lighting, and public transportation.”<sup>108</sup> Following the pilot stage, five local action plans have been adopted and a further three other local authorities have been developing LAPs.<sup>109</sup> However, implementation has been slow and become a contested issue between the State and the entity-level authorities.

In Serbia, both the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities – Union of Cities and Municipalities of Serbia, and the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government were part of the Working Group drafting the second NAP, with the representative of the former acting as the Deputy President of the Working Group.<sup>110</sup> Both the Ministry and the Standing Conference can be key actors in helping municipalities in developing and implementing local action plans, but several respondents voiced concerns that they had not remained active in the implementation process after the development of the plan. The Ministry of Interior, on the other hand, has directed its 27 regional police directorates to support local administrations in implementing local action plans.

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<sup>107</sup> Review of unpublished project documents by implementing partners made available to the authors.

<sup>108</sup> K. Babic-Svetlin, M. Jacevic, and M. Mansury Localization of Women, Peace, and Security Agenda – Case Study of Six Local Governments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo/ Washington DC: Agency For Gender Equality, Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, Bosnia and Herzegovina/Inclusive Security (2016), p. 4.

<sup>109</sup> Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, Sixth Periodic Report to CEDAW Committee by Bosnia and Herzegovina, (2018).

The OSCE has been supporting the localization process including by organizing public consultations on a second NAP in six towns across Serbia together with the Serbian government's Office for Co-operation with Civil Society, and the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities in 2016 and continued supporting capacity building on WPS, including by presenting on the NAP to 25 municipal representatives in 2018.<sup>111</sup> At the local self-governing body level, local level committees on gender equality and on security are in a key position to develop and implement local action plans. However, they were seen as often lacking the capacity and external support in conducting this task. Depending on the location, local women's organizations and other CSOs have been active in developing plans as well, for example on issues of domestic violence/intimate partner violence, small arms or migration. Apart from a lack of interest or understanding of WPS, a key obstacle in localization have been lack of funding and capacity to develop action plans. Nonetheless, several plans have been developed, including in Niš, Tutin, and Pirot, with especially the latter being mentioned as a good example by several respondents.

In Ukraine, localization of the NAP has been written into the national plan and oblast governments have been tasked with developing WPS action plans by the MoSP. The development of oblast action plans has been supported by external partners, including the OSCE, UN Women and GNWP. At least 18 oblast governments have developed their own

## **SIX AVENUES OF LOCALIZATION**

**Localization of NAPs can be achieved through different pathways, each with their benefits and drawbacks.**

1. Developing a WPS action plan independently from “the ground up” based on localized gender and security analysis;
2. Top-down implementation of NAP through the local structures of national ministries or SSIs;
3. Integrating locally implementable activities into national level plans;
4. Copying activities from national action plans, adapting these and implementing them locally;
5. Integrating WPS-relevant aspects into existing or broader local gender equality implementation plans;
6. Implementing individual projects with relevance to WPS but not directly tie to a plan.



and others have integrated them into broader gender equality and/or social development action plans. The plans have been of a mixed scope and quality, with some developing their plans based on a localized gender and security analysis, often with substantial CSO input (e.g. Luhansk region); others integrating elements of WPS into other plans (e.g. Kherson and Zhytomyr); some focusing on the local implementation of activities outlined in the NAP (e.g. Odessa) and others simply copy-pasting from the NAP.<sup>112</sup> While the development of a context-specific, gender analysis based action plan was seen by respondents as the ideal case, with Luhansk region getting a special mention as a good case, the other options – short of simply copy-pasting the NAP – were seen as resource-effective ways of addressing WPS but had the drawback of not necessarily having much analysis of local needs going into them. Most of the regional plans do not have an earmarked budget. Situating the action plans at the oblast level did bring WPS closer to the local level, but does not necessarily translate into effective local implementation unless the next-lower level of administration, i.e. the municipalities, are properly engaged.

The capacity and willingness of local actors to engage with WPS as well as the openness of local authorities to work with civil society in the five countries on WPS was varied. Experiences shared by interviewees ranged from very good co-operation to open suspicion of and hostility towards CSOs. The degree of guidance given to local authorities varied. In Serbia and Ukraine, no template or blueprint was given for the plans and thus these are of varying scope and ambition. In Kyrgyzstan, a standardized template has been used in part. Compiling comprehensive information on local action plans has proven challenging in all countries, and would require a more systematic approach in order to be successful, including capacity-building support to local authorities, and better feedback mechanisms between local and national levels. Localization can also run into issues of competing competencies and authorities between national and local level actors.

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<sup>110</sup> Serbian NAP 2017.

<sup>111</sup> OSCE Mission to Serbia Supports Public Consultations on Implementation of UN SCR 1325–Women, Peace and Security (2016–2020) National Action Plan, June 10, 2016.

<sup>112</sup> Authors' review of Luhansk and Odesa oblast WPS Action Plans.

## 4.8: MONITORING, EVALUATION, REPORTING, AND IMPACT

Developing and using effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks for NAPs presents a range of practical challenges (see also section 3.6.). While reporting on activities undertaken on WPS can be relatively straight forward, finding ways to meaningfully measure the outcomes and impacts of those activities is often much more challenging. Co-ordinating bodies working on WPS are often overstretched and underfunded. As such, there is a trade-off between compiling and reporting M&E data to ensure transparency and accountability, and putting time and resources into implementing NAP commitments. While drawing on existing data that is already gathered through other processes can be a partial remedy in some cases, reliable data that is gathered regularly and meaningfully illustrates progress against NAP objectives is usually difficult to come by. There can also be a tension between the desire for NAPs to cover a longer period in order to allow time for measurable impacts and the potential for significant changes in the context to render NAP targets and indicators less relevant over time.<sup>113</sup> In spite of these challenges, regular reporting is essential for accountability, and NAPs around the world increasingly include commitments to produce regular (often annual) progress reports that are presented to legislative bodies and to civil society for scrutiny, while civil society organizations often produce their own shadow reports.<sup>114</sup>

Changes in political leadership or a lack of capacity in co-ordinating bodies can lead to bottlenecks in reporting. In Moldova, the change in the political leadership of the country, including the Deputy Prime Minister responsible for the NAP, has led to a sense of the reporting process being on hold. More broadly, the system in Moldova of having one ministry responsible for reporting on one section of the plan (including its implementation by other ministries) was seen as a cumbersome set-up by the ministries. In Serbia, the Co-ordination Body for Gender Equality has faced issues with a lack of capacity that has led to delays in reporting.

A lesson learned in the Bosnia and Herzegovina NAP processes was the need to spend ample time on developing indicators to ensure that these are workable, user-friendly, easy to report on, and make sense for the implementing parties. Also, the number of indicators needs to be manageable, which for example was not the case in the first Bosnian NAP which

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<sup>113</sup> Especially in Kyrgyzstan and Serbia, the short implementation cycles were seen by some respondents as problematic.

<sup>114</sup> R. Coomarasway, et al. *Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 | UN Women* (New York, NY: UN Women, 2015), p. 248.

initially had around 300 indicators. In both Kyrgyzstan and Serbia, implementers highlighted the need for NAPs to identify responsible implementers more clearly and ensure indicators are not too general or refer to multiple activities.

From the side of CSOs, there was a wish for more targeted and tailored indicators in order to better track implementation and identify gaps. Overall, the NAP indicators tended to be mostly quantitative and focused on activities, outputs, and numerical results (e.g. percentage of women in a given institution), but less, or not at all, on impacts.

One challenge in terms of evaluation was that relevant ministries or SSIs may in some cases only report on activities they have implemented rather than on all of their commitments.<sup>115</sup> While this may hide short-comings, it may also mean that other achievements in terms of WPS go unreported. Respondents in several countries highlighted the on-going need for more sex-disaggregated data to be collected across state institutions. An issue raised in several countries was that a range of WPS-related activities were being implemented by a variety of actors (e.g. local administrative structures, CSOs) which fall under the broad themes of the respective NAPs but were not being reported or captured.

#### **4.9: CONTEXT-SPECIFIC CHALLENGES**

Respondents were asked to point out what they saw to be key challenges for effective implementation of WPS NAP in their country context. A key challenge in Bosnia and Herzegovina was seen to be the tensions between the State and the entity-level authorities, which has impeded the implementation of the NAP at the national and sub-national level. In terms of implementing institutions' challenges, SSIs have struggled to recruit women – but, for that matter, also men – given a competitive job market and high levels of out-migration of young and skilled workers.

In Moldova, a key challenge was that the NAP steering committee had not been sitting since several months at the time of writing due to political changes. While there was an interest in bringing in Transdnistria into the scope of the NAP or at least into WPS work more broadly, this faces numerous challenges as Moldovan state authorities cannot directly support or implement activities on the left bank, leaving only openings for civil society and

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<sup>115</sup> See also A. Amling and M. O'Reilly, *From Global Promise to National Action – Advancing Women, Peace, and Security in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Philippines, Serbia, and Sierra Leone*, (Washington DC: Inclusive Security, 2016).

those international organizations with an appropriate mandate to work on these issues. The NAP falls under the responsibility of the Deputy Prime Minister for Reintegration who is also the Chief Negotiator of the Moldovan government in the Transnistrian settlement process. The Moldovan side has also engaged several women in the expert-level working groups that form a part of the settlement process. However, it continues to be a challenge to fully engage some security-related work with the WPS agenda, including the stockpile management of SALW and ammunition and ceasefire monitoring.

In Kyrgyzstan, respondents from civil society and state institutions repeatedly raised issues of Islamist radicalization and cross-border conflicts as key WPS issues and these have been reflected in the current NAP. However, the degree to which actual PVE work and reactions to cross-border incidents take WPS into account remains debateable. Especially, the reaction of security services involved in the various NAPs to the real-life crisis situation in Batken, and the lack of engagement of women's organizations in conflict management, triggered the respondents to raise questions about the degree to which the NAPs had indeed had real impact in shaping security responses or peacebuilding efforts. A further concern which was raised several times was the risk of an overburdening of under-resourced state authorities, in particular on the local level, with different action plans and strategies that come on top of mandatory routine activities, with WPS seen as an additional burden.

#### **4.10: EXTERNAL SUPPORT**

International organizations such as the OSCE, bilateral donors, INGOs and think tanks have been playing key roles in supporting the development and implementation of WPS NAP processes throughout the OSCE region. The support has been both direct, for example by giving technical assistance, or indirect, for example by catalysing exchanges of experiences by hosting regional workshops. In the case of the OSCE, the support for WPS NAP processes has been both direct and indirect, and has involved the respective OSCE field operations but has also been given through both the OSCE Secretariat and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). Key support from the OSCE Secretariat has for example included for example a series of OSCE Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan Academies on designing inclusive strategies for sustainable security through results-oriented NAPs (organized jointly with Inclusive Security in 2016-2018).<sup>116</sup> The OSCE has also supported maintaining political momentum through publishing Annual Progress Reports on the Implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality that highlight the organization's work on Women, Peace and Security.<sup>117</sup> The annual

exchange of information on the OSCE Code of Conduct also provides an opportunity to all participating States to voluntarily report on the implementation of Women, Peace and Security in their national contexts.

The various ways in which international actors and development partners have been supporting WPS NAP processes include technical and capacity support, financial, organizational, and personnel support, convening power and use of good offices, facilitating exchanges of experiences as well as using their political capital as an impetus to start the NAP processes and provide momentum for them to continue. Technical and capacity support has included giving expert input on WPS-related themes but also on the technicalities of designing, formulating, costing, managing, monitoring and evaluating NAPs. This support has been particularly useful during the drafting phases. External partners have also given more targeted support for particular kinds of activities (e.g. gender coaching or integrating gender into training curricula) or on particular thematic issues (e.g. gender and disaster risk management). Development partners have further supported the participation of personnel in trainings abroad, e.g. peacekeeper training courses. In Moldova and Ukraine, externally supported research has helped make the case for WPS integration in SSIs and supported those institutions in better integrating gender perspectives.<sup>118</sup> For example, in Moldova, DCAF's self-assessment form on gender mainstreaming in the security sector was used in order to help make the case for a WPS NAP and assist in its design.<sup>119</sup>

Given the lack of ear-marked funding for the WPS NAPs and broader budgetary constraints, development partners have also been key in financing the implementation of NAP-related activities in all five countries. In addition to directly funding activities, international partners have also covered salaries of external consultants brought in to support national institutions working on WPS to help overcome bottlenecks. Furthermore, development partners have been key supporters in helping set up local institutions that have emerged as key players in WPS implementation, such as servicewomen's associations or women's initiative groups.

International partners can and have played important roles as conveners of various national WPS-actors from civil society, academia, SSIs and line ministries, and using their "good offices" to catalyse discussions, which was seen as a key role in all five countries, especially

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<sup>116</sup> <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/294731>

<sup>117</sup> <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/260986>

<sup>118</sup> T. Bodrug-Lungu (2016), and UN Women in Ukraine, Gender Impact Assessment of the Security and Defense Sector in Ukraine, (Kyiv: UN Women in Ukraine, 2017).

<sup>119</sup> <https://www.dcaf.ch/gender-self-assessment-guide-police-armed-forces-and-justice-sector>

when starting NAP processes. International actors have also enabled national WPS NAP policy actors to exchange experiences, good practices and challenges with peers from other countries in all five cases. This has been facilitated both through study visits and by organizing regional workshops and conferences, and was seen by many respondents as key moments in the development processes. Some of the most useful exchanges in this respect according to respondents were within the region, among counterparts from countries facing similar constraints and challenges. At times, the transfer of knowledge has been in the opposite direction than usual in development co-operation, such as with the NAP experiences of Bosnia and Herzegovina helping to inform the third Finnish NAP (2018). Respondents also highlighted the political capital and impetus development partners such as the OSCE can bring into WPS processes, be it at the outset or in situations when national processes have stalled or are at risk of stalling due to flagging momentum, lack of political will, implementation gaps or government and staff changeovers.

# 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

As one interviewee stated, WPS NAPs have tended to be “great for women in the security sector, brought some benefits in terms of women and security [more broadly], but had much less impact for women and peace.”

The NAPs of the five countries have undoubtedly had an impact on the SSIs in terms of bringing gender into discussions on security and improving the way the security and defence sectors engage with gender equality, in spite of continuing challenges. While women’s participation in SSIs has been slowly increasing, the peacebuilding and prevention elements, as well as relief and recovery pillar, have seen less progress. Response mechanisms to domestic violence/intimate partner violence and other forms of GBV have been improved, and mechanisms against SGBH in SSIs are being developed, but fundamentally changing gendered institutional cultures has received little attention. While the security and defence sectors have shown in part enthusiastic ownership, “civilians struggle to see their place in the WPS agenda,” be it non-security focused ministries or CSOs. The WPS agenda needs to be seen as more than just security sector-centred NAPs, and both the localization of action plans and a broadening of the thematic scope can create openings for this.

The case studies also highlighted a key shortcoming of the WPS agenda, in that while NAPs are developed, adopted and implemented, they remain somewhat peripheral to the actual work on issues of peace and security, especially when there is a crisis situation. In spite of the existence of the NAPs, there has been little progress in terms of women’s participation, especially engaging with women’s organizations in the official, Track I. As numerous respondents in Kyrgyzstan highlighted, the state response to the Batken incidents showed a lack of integrating WPS perspectives, be it in protection or in participation in conflict management. Nonetheless, WPS could potentially become an opening and an entry point also for peacebuilding and reconciliation. Especially at the “Track II” level, for the various active and frozen conflicts faced by the five countries, thus helping fulfil some of the initial hopes placed by the women’s movement into UNSCR 1325. However, NAPs might not be

the right instrument for this, seeing as they are intimately linked to the respective state and its security machinery.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Throughout the research process, various good practices emerged, some of which have been implemented and some of which have not, but appear promising based on the research findings.

### **PHASE 1: Framing and developing NAPs**

- Undertake knowledge-sharing activities with state and civil society actors from contexts facing similar challenges, and provide the drafting group with capacity-building support where needed.
- Ensure the participation of individuals and CSO representatives from diverse backgrounds and which are not limited to capital city-based, policy-oriented organizations, to ensure that the diverse needs of women and girls, structured by intersecting axes of difference, are considered.
- Ensure Ministries of Finance are involved in NAP design processes from the outset in order to maximize buy-in as well as give budgeting/costing support, and use gender-responsive budgeting processes as an entry point to raise WPS-relevant issues with Ministries of
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## **PHASE 2: NAP implementation**

- Ensure that there is ownership, buy-in and understanding of WPS and gender issues at all levels of government, with properly resourced help desks for implementers and support for local administrative structures.
- Integrate tasks and performance indicators into job descriptions and performance reviews in order to ensure accountability for implementation.
- Reform institutional regulations to open up more positions to women in security and defence institutions, and consider the use of affirmative action measures where appropriate.
- Ensure gender advisers and gender focal points have the necessary mandate, political and institutional support, resources and capacity to fulfil their tasks, and that their superiors understand their role and mandate.

## **PHASE 3: Monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and impact**

- Ensure the entity responsible for collecting data on NAP implementation, evaluation and reporting has the necessary resources in terms of personnel, skills, and funding to carry out this task and has leverage with implementing agencies to ensure reporting occurs. Effective reporting is enhanced by the development of specific and realistic indicators that are achievable and feasible to monitor.
- Harmonize, to the degree possible, reporting processes for various gender- and security-related action plans (e.g. WPS, VAWG prevention, promotion of gender equality, prevention of human trafficking, disaster risk reduction).
- Create more opportunities for implementing ministries and institutions to problem-solve together and learn from each other beyond only reporting on implementation.
- Set up a dedicated parliamentary body responsible for scrutinizing government reports on NAP implementation in order to help ensure accountability to elected representatives.

## **Recommendations for OSCE and other international organizations**

- Explore ways to forge closer links between gender advisers and gender focal points in implementing agencies across participating States.
- Facilitate regular and inclusive ways of sharing good practices among participating States.
- Develop accessible resources such as one-page guides and infographics to guide the development, implementation, and M&E of NAPs based on good practice across participating States.
- Support to find better ways to implement WPS principles and commitments in the peace processes.

## ANNEX: SUMMARY OF OSCE NAP DATASET

COUNTRY	1ST NAP	2ND NAP	3RD NAP	4TH NAP
Albania	2018			
Armenia	2019			
Austria	2007	2012		
Belgium	2009	2013	2017	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2010	2013	2018	
Canada	2010	2017		
Croatia	2011			
Czech Republic	2017			
Denmark	2005	2008	2014	
Estonia	2010	2015		
Finland	2008	2012	2018	
France	2010	2015		
Georgia	2011	2016	2018	
Germany	2012	2017		
Iceland	2008	2013	2018	
Ireland	2011	2015	2019	
Italy	2010	2014	2016	
Kyrgyzstan	2013	2018		
Lithuania	2011			
Luxembourg	2018			
Moldova	2018			
Montenegro	2017			
Netherlands	2007	2011	2016	
North Macedonia	2012			
Norway	2006	2011	2015	2018
Poland	2018			
Portugal	2009	2014		
Serbia	2010	2017		
Slovenia	2010	2018		
Spain	2007	2017		
Sweden	2006	2009	2016	
Switzerland	2007	2010	2013	2018
Tajikistan	2014			
Ukraine	2016			
United Kingdom	2006	2012	2014	2018
United States of America	2011	2016		

Full dataset of OSCE NAPs by country and by year (n=75)  
 Years in red denote inclusion in the dataset of current NAPs (n=36)

