
Annual Report 2021



Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe

Cover: Roma and Egyptian women and youth learned about electoral law changes and voting procedures during a voting education campaign conducted by the OSCE Presence in Albania ahead of 25 April 2021 parliamentary elections. (OSCE)

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OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid. (OSCE/Mickey Kröll)

Message from the Secretary General

As I write this message to introduce the 2021 Annual Report, the events of 2022 weigh heavily on us all. Ukraine remains under siege, with devastation on a scale that has not been seen in Europe for decades. Thousands have perished, millions have sought refuge beyond Ukraine's borders, and many others are displaced within the country. We are in the process of closing the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission and the Office of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine (PCUK) is operating out of a temporary location in Uzhhorod in Western Ukraine. We earnestly hope that peace will be restored soon so that Ukrainians can return to their homes and start to rebuild their country. In the meantime, while we continue the programmatic work in Ukraine conducted by PCUK and others to the extent possible, the Organization is doing all that it can to facilitate the cessation of hostilities, support the provision of humanitarian assistance, and to help the Ukrainian people in their hour of need.

Yet in this moment of crisis we should not lose sight of the importance of the OSCE's work in all its facets. Our efforts to strengthen security in all its dimensions – political-military, economic and environmental, and human rights – make a real difference in the lives of women and men across our region and beyond. The 2021 Annual Report shines a light on this human impact, with stories about OSCE activities from the perspective of the individuals and communities that they serve.

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic threatened global health and stability for a second year. At the same time, the destructive effects of climate change intensified and increased in number, with a growing impact on our shared security. The OSCE Ministerial Council's adoption of a decision to strengthen co-operation on tackling challenges caused by climate change sends a strong political signal that will add momentum to the Organization's work in this area. 2021 also brought instability and humanitarian tragedy to Afghanistan; and many at the Ministerial Council noted the pressing need to mitigate the risks to the OSCE region. Supporting participating States confronted with the implications of the situation in Afghanistan will be an ongoing priority.

I am firmly convinced that in our endeavours to strengthen security we must focus on the future. The OSCE will continue its efforts to prevent and manage conflicts and to tackle current threats to security in all dimensions, but we also need to be ready to handle emerging challenges. Climate change is one of them. The impact of new technologies, digitalization and artificial intelligence is another. In confronting these

challenges, co-operation will be more important than ever. We also need to engage with younger generations, as the future we are shaping today will be theirs tomorrow.

And in all that we do, we must ensure that we are standing by all of our principles, including gender equality. Empowering and meaningfully including women – economically, politically, and as peacebuilders – is crucial. Many of the stories in this report feature women, not only to showcase how the OSCE benefits them and their communities, but to highlight how they are contributing to our common security.

Throughout 2021, I initiated steps to ensure that the OSCE is well equipped to respond effectively to both current and future challenges. Through a whole-of-OSCE approach we are working to more closely link the many entities of the Organization. In discussions on how to improve OSCE effectiveness, a number of challenges were highlighted, including that of the OSCE budget. Our budget for 2021 saw a zero nominal growth and was adopted eight months into the year, severely hampering our activities and the fulfilment of our mandates. I welcome the intent of many participating States to reform budget processes and increase the OSCE budget going forward.

In closing, I wish to thank the 2021 Swedish Chairpersonship and Troika members Albania and Poland for their co-operation and leadership during last year. I also wish to pay tribute to the outstanding commitment of OSCE staff across the entire Organization. Their creativity and dedication continued to enable the OSCE to fulfil its mandates and support our participating States, including in crisis situations where the OSCE plays an essential role.

While this Annual Report is not a comprehensive account of all our activities in 2021, it illustrates the scope of the OSCE's work in all three dimensions of security. I invite you to read about the work of our remarkable Organization, which is unparalleled in its potential to build trust and foster co-operation in our region to strengthen security for us all.



Helga Maria Schmid
OSCE Secretary General Vienna,
May 2022

CHAIRPERSONSHIP

The OSCE Chairpersonship is selected by the OSCE Ministerial Council for a one-year term. The post of Chairperson-in-Office is held by the foreign minister of the selected participating State.



Stockholm, Sweden. (Unsplash/Adam Gavláč)

Our commitments, our security, our OSCE

Chairperson-in-Office: **Ann Linde**

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Sweden assumed the Chairpersonship in challenging times in the midst of a global pandemic. Throughout the year, the Chairpersonship sought to defend the European security order, uphold the OSCE comprehensive concept of security and contribute to the resolution of conflicts in accordance with international law, standing up for principles and commitments to which all OSCE participating States have signed up.

GOING BACK TO BASICS

Sweden assumed the Chairpersonship at a time when the OSCE region was facing major challenges, with the COVID-19 pandemic adding a strain on the region and on international co-operation, resulting in increasing inequalities and democratic challenges, adding pressure to an already fragile security situation.

Throughout the year, the Swedish Chairpersonship underscored the importance of multilateral co-operation as a means of addressing common challenges, enabling the OSCE to make a difference on the ground and defending the principles on which the Organization was founded. In this spirit, Sweden outlined three main priorities:

- Defending the European security order
- Upholding the OSCE comprehensive concept of security
- Contributing to solving conflicts in accordance with international law

Sweden stated that it was time to go back to basics, emphasizing the fundamental tasks of the OSCE.

DEFENDING THE EUROPEAN SECURITY ORDER AND BUILDING SECURITY FOR STATES AND INDIVIDUALS

To showcase the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security, the Chairpersonship introduced monthly topics, emphasizing particular aspects of the comprehensive security concept and mainstreaming them across all dimensions. Monthly topics included confidence-building; gender equality; democracy; freedom of expression; conflict prevention, conflict resolution and OSCE tools; and civil society.

The Chairpersonship put gender equality and Women, Peace and Security high on the OSCE agenda, integrating priorities into the everyday work of the Organization, including through the work of field presences and Special Representatives. The

Chair's efforts aimed to ensure that gender equality would be mainstreamed into all OSCE dimensions and that this would remain high on the Organization's agenda in years to come. Some examples include the newly launched Advisory Group on Women, Peace and Security in support of the Chair; two seminars on the conflict cycle, focusing on inclusive processes and the role of women and civil society; and a Code of Conduct event in Stockholm focusing on women in the armed forces. At the Human Dimension Seminar, which was held for the first time in four years, particular attention was given to preventing and combating violence against women.

The Chairpersonship also mainstreamed the role of youth in contributing to the promotion of democracy, human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law throughout the year. The OSCE's first Personal Representative on Children and Security was appointed by the Swedish Chairpersonship.

In the first dimension's military sphere, the Swedish Chairpersonship provided both civilian and military high-ranking officials for various security dialogues – for example, for a joint meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Permanent Council on UNSCR 1325, and for the High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar. The Annual Security Review Conference discussed issues such as developments with respect to Ukraine, other conflicts in the OSCE region, transnational threats and confidence-building measures.

The prevention of organized crime was one of the Swedish Chairpersonship's priorities and hence the topic of the civilian working session at the Annual Security Review Conference. The Alliance conference on human trafficking and the drugs conference further discussed concrete ways to combat specific aspects of organized crime. The counter-terrorism conference and the conference on cyber/ICT security further advanced work on these topics.

In the second dimension, Sweden dedicated the three Economic and Environmental Forum meetings to women's economic empowerment, recognizing that women are disproportionately exposed to economic vulnerabilities and



(Government Offices of Sweden/Kristian Pohl)

“During the year, I have visited some 20 participating States and met with all OSCE field presences to support our priorities. I have seen first-hand the essential contribution that our organization makes to improve the lives of the people affected by conflict in our region.

“As Chair, we have worked hard to ensure respect for the commitments and accountability when they are breached. Over the course of this year, we have seen how violations of our commitments have continued to

challenge the foundation on which the OSCE is built. By our consistent focus on our priorities, I am proud to have contributed to security in our region and to the work of coming Chairs.”

Ann Linde

OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden

that the security and stability of the OSCE region is closely interlinked with equal participation in economic life.

During the year, significant progress was made on climate and security. This issue was discussed at the first thematic meeting of the Economic and Environmental Committee of 2021 and at the Bonn Conference. The Swedish Chairpersonship also commissioned the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) to produce a policy brief with recommendations on how to advance the role of the OSCE in the field of climate security. Participating States were able to agree on new commitments on strengthening co-operation to address the challenges caused by climate change, with a landmark decision adopted at the Ministerial Council in Stockholm.

In the third dimension, the Chairpersonship underlined democratic processes, civic space and participation as central to protecting and promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law. ODIHR's 30th anniversary was celebrated in Warsaw, bringing together participating States, OSCE institutions and civil society

to mark ODIHR's many achievements of the last three decades, consider current challenges and opportunities, and discuss the Office's role in continuing to promote democracy and human rights in the future. As a concrete step, the Chairpersonship launched a new smartphone application, HD Commitments, enabling searches among all OSCE commitments related to human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The Chairperson-in-Office and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media hosted the Stockholm Conference on Media Freedom in the OSCE Region. The Chairpersonship also organized a virtual expert meeting on combating anti-Semitism in the OSCE region. Its recommendations were presented at the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism by the Chairperson-in-Office's Personal Representative on Combating Anti-Semitism. Furthermore, the first Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting was dedicated to media freedom and gender equality. The Chairperson-in-Office also took part in the conference marking the 25th anniversary of the HCNM's *Hague Recommendations regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities*.

Regarding the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, which all participating States have committed to holding annually, the Chairpersonship had to conclude with regret that consensus could not be reached despite long and intensive negotiations, but underlined that this was without prejudice for coming years.

The Swedish Chairpersonship of the Advisory Committee on Management and Finance focused on efforts to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Organization and achieved a number of concrete results. The Unified Budget for 2021 was adapted to the continued impact of COVID-19 on travel and in-person meetings, which allowed a repurposing of resources to finance imminent needs related to staff costs and inflation. At the same time, the Swedish Chairpersonship regretted that the adoption of the Unified Budget was delayed by more than eight months, which resulted in unprecedented financial and administrative consequences for the whole Organization.

EFFORTS TO RESOLVE CONFLICTS THROUGH PREVENTION AND CONFIDENCE-BUILDING

The OSCE's role in resolving conflicts and avoiding escalation is one of the Organization's most important functions. Throughout 2021, the Chairpersonship engaged in active and intense diplomacy on crises and conflicts in the OSCE region, including in Georgia, Moldova the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict context and developments with respect to Ukraine. The Chairperson-in-Office visited all the participating States directly affected by conflicts, meeting with political leaders and civil society, including human rights defenders and women's organizations, to support their work for democracy, the rule of law and human rights. She also met with all OSCE field missions in a show of support for their crucial

contribution to conflict resolution. During her visits, the Chairperson-in-Office also prioritized meeting with elected representatives.

Within the framework of the Chairpersonship's ambition to strengthen the OSCE's conflict resolution efforts in the long term, the Chairperson-in-Office hosted a meeting with her Special Representatives who focused on the protracted conflicts in the region. The Chairpersonship also worked actively to include OSCE field missions and their perspectives in all activities.

Developments with respect to Ukraine remained the most serious challenge to the European security order. The Chairpersonship placed a high degree of importance on contributing to a peaceful resolution of the conflict with full respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. In eastern Ukraine, civilians continued to fall victim to the armed violence on the contact line and to face far-reaching restrictions, including on the right to freedom of movement, limiting their access to basic services. This issue was highlighted at a side event at the Stockholm Ministerial Council, against the backdrop of a thematic report on this issue from the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM).

The SMM continued to play a crucial role in conflict management by monitoring the security situation and facilitating maintenance of critical civilian infrastructure in eastern Ukraine. Throughout the year, the Chairperson-in-Office expressed deep concern about the systematic and unacceptable impediments to freedom of movement that the SMM faced in non-government-controlled areas of Ukraine.

At a time of increased tensions over Ukraine, the Swedish Chairpersonship explored all possible options in the



OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ann Linde, on an official visit to Ukraine, 20 January 2021. (OSCE/MFA Sweden)



OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid; OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde, and; Permanent Representative of Sweden to the OSCE and Chair of the Permanent Council Ulrika Funered, opening the 2021 OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, 31 August 2021. (OSCE/Micky Kröll)

OSCE toolbox for conflict prevention. As Chair, Sweden guided the participating States through the process that followed Ukraine's activation of Chapter III, paragraph 16.3 of the Vienna Document, whereby clarity on Russian troop movements in and around Ukraine was sought. Moreover, the Chairpersonship appointed a new Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG), as well three new co-ordinators of the TCG working groups (thereby also improving the TCG's gender balance).

The Chairpersonship underlined that effective and comprehensive monitoring of the Ukrainian–Russian state border remained essential to improving the security situation and to finding a sustainable political solution to the conflict. It was with deep regret that the Chairpersonship saw the OSCE Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk discontinued on 30 September 2021, as consensus on the extension of its mandate could not be achieved despite extensive consultations.

The ceasefire following the Trilateral Statement of November 2020 in the aftermath of 44 days of armed escalation in and around Nagorno-Karabakh remained fragile. Incidents during the year demonstrated the need to address outstanding issues. The Chairpersonship fully supported the efforts of the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, including via the active engagement of the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office to resume substantive and sustained negotiations, as well as the personal engagement of the Chairperson-in-Office with the sides.

Relating to Georgia, the OSCE, UN and EU Co-Chairs of the Geneva International Discussions continued mediation efforts on the basis of the 2008 ceasefire agreement, with

particular focus on security and humanitarian issues. The Swedish OSCE Chair highlighted the situation of conflict-affected populations, and also increased the focus on the different ways conflict affects women and men. The Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism in Ergneti addressed responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, the closures of crossing points, detention cases and so-called borderization processes. The Chairpersonship, through its Special Representative, also explored ideas on further confidence-building measures in the broader South Caucasus region.

With regard to the Transdniestrian conflict, the common goal of the OSCE remained attaining a comprehensive, peaceful and sustainable settlement based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders with a special status for Transdniestria that fully guarantees the human, political, economic and social rights of its population. The Chairperson-in-Office's visits to Moldova focused on identifying concrete steps to further build trust and constructive dialogue between the Sides to move the process forward together with the Chairperson-in-Office's Special Representative. The need to keep Women, Peace and Security as well as gender equality high on the agenda in this context was also emphasized.

The Chairpersonship remained deeply concerned about developments in Belarus and welcomed the fact that the Moscow and Vienna mechanisms were activated before and during Sweden's Chairpersonship. The Chairperson-in-Office called on Belarus to fully implement OSCE commitments and principles as well as international law. She expressed the OSCE's readiness to support Belarus in this regard and regretted that the offer by the previous and current Chairpersons-in-Office to support and facilitate dialogue in Belarus was not yet accepted.



OSCE foreign ministers and heads of delegations at the 28th OSCE Ministerial Council in Stockholm, 2 December 2021. (Government Offices of Sweden / Ninni Andersson)

Decisions and declarations adopted at the 2021 OSCE Ministerial Council

Decision on strengthening co-operation to address the challenges caused by climate change

Decision on the OSCE Chairmanship in the year 2025

Ministerial statement on the negotiations on the Transdniestrian settlement process in the “5+2” format

Decision on the time and place of the next meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council

In April, the Chairperson-in-Office travelled to Central Asia, where demonstrating support to the OSCE field operations in the region was one of her objectives. She attached great importance to the promotion of education, including among young women, and was impressed by the achievements of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek. Accordingly, Sweden made a financial contribution to the Academy's newly launched extrabudgetary project. The Chairperson-in-Office also visited the Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe, and commended this flagship OSCE institution.

The Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in mid-August and the unfolding humanitarian crisis in the country posed security and economic challenges to the OSCE region. At the Stockholm Ministerial Council, the Chairperson-in-Office together with the Secretary General shared a food-for-thought paper on the OSCE's potential response to the implications of the situation in Afghanistan for the OSCE region.

The Swedish Chairpersonship continued to promote ongoing dialogue and joint activities with the Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation with support from the 2020

Albanian and the 2022 Polish Chairs. For more information on these activities, please see the chapter on Partnerships.

28TH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL 2-3 DECEMBER 2021, STOCKHOLM

The Stockholm Ministerial Council was held on 2-3 December, gathering nearly 50 ministers – a record number in recent years. For the first time, negotiations on Ministerial Council deliverables were concluded in Vienna before the meeting started in Stockholm, thus contributing to the efficiency of the Organization. In the same spirit, the Stockholm Ministerial Council was organized in a new, shorter format that enabled a more politically focused meeting. Besides important statements in the plenary, ministers could engage in high-level political discussions on pertinent issues during the dinner and lunch discussions, numerous bilaterals and side events. The Ministerial Council thus brought participating States back to basics, fostering dialogue to build trust in challenging times. The Ministerial Council also delivered a landmark decision on climate change.

TRILATERAL CONTACT GROUP



AMBASSADOR MIKKO KINNUNEN
Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact

In 2021, the Trilateral Contact Group brought together representatives from the OSCE, Ukraine and Russia as well as, by agreement of its members, participants from certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Facilitated by the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, the Trilateral Contact Group was the only forum where the conflict sides met regularly to discuss the implementation of the Minsk agreements, as well as practical issues of critical importance for the civilian population. Its agenda covered a wide range of topics in the political, security, socio-economic and humanitarian fields.

The Trilateral Contact Group and its working groups met throughout the year in an online format. Despite formal adherence to the July 2020 additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire agreement, the security situation – as monitored by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine – continued to deteriorate throughout 2021, with an increasing number of ceasefire violations as well as the presence and use of weapons banned by the joint commitments. While the pandemic led to the further disconnection of the non-government-controlled areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions from the rest of Ukraine, the Trilateral Contact Group and its working groups maintained constant attention to enabling, for example, the supply of water across the contact line. Particular attention was also paid to environmental hazards near the contact line. Participants in the Political Working Group worked throughout the year on the preparation of an action plan for implementation of the Minsk agreements, upon specific tasking by the Trilateral Contact Group. In the Humanitarian Working Group, participants continued to discuss, among others, issues concerning the opening of two new crossing points in the Luhansk region. If realized, this would have facilitated human contacts across the contact line – including contacts with family members and access to services, pensions and education – with the aim of improving life for the local population.

The Special Representative liaised continuously with the participants in the Trilateral Contact Group discussions, with the OSCE Chairpersonship and the OSCE participating States, as well as with members of the Normandy Four group. He also conducted a number of outreach activities, including in the areas affected by the conflict.



AMBASSADOR ANDRZEJ KASPRZYK
Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference

Budget **€1,179,700** (Unified Budget)
Staff **17**

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Throughout the year, the Personal Representative and his team, with the engagement of the sides, explored opportunities for confidence-building measures. The Office supported the Chairperson-in-Office and the Minsk Group Co-Chairs, providing regular reporting from the region, including, when required, detailed information on specific incidents or developments and assistance and input for the Co-Chairs' meetings and visits. The Office's monitoring activities remained suspended.

In this changed environment, the Office has been charting a way forward together with the Co-Chairs, starting with a planning and co-ordination meeting in Kraków hosted by the Personal Representative in January. Ambassador Kasprzyk consulted widely with the Chairpersonship, the Conflict Prevention Centre, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and in particular the parties themselves, ascertaining both humanitarian needs and possibilities for confidence-building measures aimed at lowering tensions. Thus far, a series of measures have been proposed, and with an additional eight armoured vehicles donated by one participating State, the Office is well placed to operationalize these plans.

Since May, much of the Office's attention has been on the Armenian–Azerbaijani border, where a series of clashes

resulted in dozens of casualties on both sides and additional detentions, complicating an already fraught situation regarding detainees, and threatening to undermine the relative calm established with the 9 November 2020 Trilateral Statement.

Upon request, the Personal Representative provided briefings to or held consultations with a range of interlocutors in 2021, including the current and incoming Chairpersons-in-Office, the OSCE Secretary General, the Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council, the Swedish OSCE Taskforce, the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia, and various UN and ICRC officials. Additionally, often together with the Co-Chairs, he consulted with high-level interlocutors at the US Department of State and National Security Council, the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation and various embassies and international organizations.

Both individually and together with the Co-Chairs, the Personal Representative held a series of meetings with the sides at the foreign minister level – and once at the level of heads of State – culminating in joint meetings in New York in October and in Paris in November. The leaders of both countries have expressed willingness, in principle, to meet under the auspices of the Co-Chairs. Trilateral meetings at the level of deputy prime minister have resumed, with the parties discussing the opening of transport links, among other issues. They have acknowledged the need for border delimitation and demarcation as a necessary and important step forward. The Personal Representative, under the guidance of the Chairperson-in-Office and together with the Co-Chairs, continues his efforts to advance the process.

THE HIGH-LEVEL PLANNING GROUP



COLONEL CLAES NILSSON
Head of the OSCE High-Level Planning Group

The High-Level Planning Group (HLPG), which is the only military planning group in the OSCE, is mandated to make recommendations to the Chairperson-in-Office on developing a plan for the establishment, force structure requirements and operation of a multinational OSCE peacekeeping force in the area of conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference. Following the trilateral statements of 9 November 2020 and 11 January 2021, and the deployment of a Russian Peacekeeping Contingent, the HLPG initiated and conducted a scenario-based conceptual analysis to assess the relevance of its planning options in this changed environment.

As the nature of peacekeeping is constantly evolving, the HLPG has continued to engage with international organizations and other actors, including relevant UN and EU institutions, in order to learn from their expertise and to exchange views on their respective planning procedures. The HLPG also established contacts and conducted meetings with primary actors and stakeholders, relevant institutions as well as the OSCE Secretariat. The HLPG also conducted annual briefings for the military advisers of the OSCE participating States.

In 2021, the HLPG initiated and completed a Gender Action Plan that is in line with the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. It also created a new Gender Annex to its planning options. Both these documents have been validated by the OSCE Secretariat's Gender Issues Programme, and the Gender Annex has also been validated by the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations. The HLPG also engaged in preparations for the multinational exercise Viking 22 organized by the Swedish Armed Forces.

SOUTH CAUCASUS



AMBASSADOR ANNIKA SÖDER
Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the South Caucasus

In 2021, the OSCE Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office for the South Caucasus, Ambassador Annika Söder, and her fellow Co-Chairs from the UN and the European Union restored regular meetings of the Geneva International Discussions, with pandemic mitigation measures in place.

This vital format continued to prevent escalation and destabilization on the ground. The Co-Chairs continued to focus on pursuing discussions on the non-use of force and international security arrangements, and on improving the situation of conflict-affected populations, including the different ways conflict affects women and men.

Together with the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia, Ambassador Söder also guaranteed more frequent meetings of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) in Ergneti, co-facilitating seven rounds of IPRM talks over the course of the year to address responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, closures of crossing points, detention cases and the erection of obstacles (“borderization”). The de-escalation of the security situation in the Chorchana-Tsnelisi area and the resolution of outstanding missing persons cases were also a major focus of the Chairpersonship.

Ambassador Söder also explored further confidence-building and co-operation measures in the broader region, conducting outreach to Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia to explore the OSCE’s potential support for the development of a positive, peaceful vision for the region’s future.



Participants at a high level retreat for the Special Representatives and Personal Representatives dealing with conflict in the OSCE region convened in Vienna by the Chairperson-in-Office on 20-21 October 2021. (Swedish OSCE Chair)

TRANSDNIESTRIAN CONFLICT



AMBASSADOR THOMAS MAYR-HARTING
Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the Transdniestrian Settlement Process

In 2021, the Swedish Chairpersonship worked in close cooperation with the OSCE Mission to Moldova to promote full implementation of the Berlin Plus “package of eight” and to facilitate discussions on further confidence-building measures. The Chairperson-in-Office paid two visits to the Republic of Moldova, in February and October. Special Representative Thomas Mayr-Harting was there five times, including for the joint visit by all observers and mediators to Chisinau and Tiraspol in June. The year saw an increased frequency of meetings between the Sides, as well as interaction in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, including with regard to the provision of vaccines and other assistance by the Moldovan authorities to Transdniestria. But it also saw additional challenges with regard to vehicles from Transdniestria participating in international road traffic, which were the subject of intense discussions between the Sides at various levels. Throughout the year, the Chairpersonship stressed the need to take into account the specific situation of women, as well as the importance of fully involving them in the settlement process. Despite repeated efforts by the Chairpersonship, it proved impossible to organize a conference in the 5+2 format in 2021. At the Stockholm Ministerial Council in December, the 57 OSCE participating States adopted a ministerial statement on the negotiations on the Transdniestrian Settlement Process in the 5+2 format, which welcomed the commitment of all concerned to hold a results-oriented meeting in this format as soon as possible.

COMBATING CORRUPTION



PROFESSOR ANITA RAMASASTRY
Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Corruption

As Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Corruption, Professor Ramasastry focused on addressing the impact of corruption across all three OSCE dimensions, examining how key OSCE commitments across these dimensions were critical to preventing corruption and fostering sound, sustainable and peaceful economies.

The Special Representative participated in a cross-dimensional discussion of corruption and good governance jointly hosted by the chairs of the three OSCE committees in July. At the Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting in October, she focused on the importance of transparency and good governance for preventing corruption and fostering economic development. She worked with the Gender Issues Programme to highlight corruption’s disparate impact on women and girls and the need to address gender as part of strong anti-corruption strategies.

The Special Representative worked closely with ODIHR on numerous events. She participated in a Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting focusing on the importance of ensuring democratic participation in lawmaking, where she connected the importance of strong transparency and conflict-of-interest rules in parliaments to increased confidence in government institutions.

The Special Representative conducted an expert workshop on responsible recovery and addressing the threat of corruption across all three OSCE dimensions. A round table on this topic with staff from the OSCE Secretariat and field presences on lessons learned and good practices by participating States resulted in a report of preliminary findings on key OSCE measures and good practices essential to addressing future challenges and promoting responsible recovery from economic recession and the global pandemic.

The Special Representative emphasized the need for OSCE participating States to fulfil their existing commitments to prevent corruption, including their commitments to transparent and open public procurement, open data and digitalization for government services, strong conflict-of-interest rules for parliaments, media freedom and transnational co-operation to tackle organized crime networks.

These commitments are key to preventing and addressing major challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, since many States have relaxed or abandoned anti-corruption safeguards in public institutions, including healthcare systems. They will also be critical to tackling corruption linked to climate change, particularly as States transition to green economies.

PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY



LILIANA PALIHOVICI

Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Gender

In 2021, the Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on Gender promoted greater understanding among OSCE participating States of the international security implications arising from gender inequalities and women's lack of participation, and advocated for increasing women's participation in peace processes. In her March address to the Permanent Council, the Special Representative called on all OSCE participating States to speed up implementation of their gender equality commitments, and urged them to improve national policies to tackle all forms of violence against women and to ratify and implement the Istanbul Convention. In partnership with the OSCE's Gender Issues Programme, she participated in regional expert consultations to discuss the challenges countries face in combating violence against women. She partnered with the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, emphasizing the trafficking risks for both women and men and how innovative approaches can diminish them, at the launch event for a paper on applying gender-sensitive approaches in combating trafficking in human beings. She also partnered with ODIHR to promote

human rights and security, with a special focus on improving the response of OSCE participating States to preventing violence against women, supporting women's organizations and diverse women activists focusing on this issue.

The Special Representative encouraged participating States to work harder to implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda and to contribute to the work of the Advisory Group on Women, Peace and Security created by the Swedish Chair. She addressed this issue at a number of regional and national events, where she advocated for increased investments in women's capacities to participate in peace mediation and negotiation processes.

The Special Representative participated in the launch of the OSCE Secretary General's networking platform for women leaders, including peacebuilders and mediators. During a visit to Kyiv, she discussed the challenges facing women in conflict-affected regions with the Ukrainian authorities, and stressed the importance of engaging civil society organizations (CSOs) in the implementation of the National Action Plan for implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325. She also addressed the need for CSO participation in developing Kazakhstan's National Action Plan on the platform of the Civil Forum of Kazakhstan facilitated by the OSCE Programme Office in Nur-Sultan. As a speaker at the World Forum for Democracy, she highlighted the need for more gender-sensitive strategies and interventions to respond to the environmental and humanitarian crises caused by climate change.

TOLERANCE AND NON-DISCRIMINATION



RABBI ANDREW BAKER
Personal Representative of the OSCE
Chairperson-in-Office on Combating
Anti-Semitism



AMBASSADOR MEHMET PAÇACI
Personal Representative of the OSCE
Chairperson-in-Office on Combating
Intolerance and Discrimination
against Muslims



ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
REGINA POLAK
Personal Representative of the
OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on
Combating Racism, Xenophobia
and Discrimination, also focusing
on Intolerance and Discrimination
against Christians and Members of
Other Religions

Promoting tolerance and non-discrimination was a priority of the Swedish OSCE Chairpersonship. Following OSCE tradition, in February the Chair convened a high-level expert meeting to examine the complex problems of anti-Semitism and to offer strategies to address them, which all three Personal Representatives addressed. At both this event and alongside the Chairperson-in-Office at the Malmö Forum, Rabbi Baker shared a number of strategies and best practices, including the value and importance of adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of anti-Semitism, practical tools to address Jewish community security and the importance of interfaith dialogue and co-operation.

In his statements at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum and at other events, Ambassador Paçacı highlighted growing hostility and discrimination towards Muslims and those perceived to be Muslims, and expressed concern that Muslims were being stigmatized by racist political discourse that normalized anti-Muslim hatred, which was manifested in legislation that could lead to a narrowing of fundamental rights, including freedom of association and freedom of religion or belief.

In her interventions at OSCE meetings and other events, Professor Polak stressed the necessity of strengthening the right to freedom of religion or belief, putting a strong focus on the importance of combating hate crimes, in particular against religious and ethnic minorities, people perceived to be of Asian background, Roma and Sinti, and women.

All three Personal Representatives pointed to the negative impact on human rights, including the rights of ethnic and religious minorities, of the COVID-19 pandemic and measures to contain its spread in their joint messages on the International Day Commemorating Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief, the International Day for Tolerance and the International Day of Human Rights. They called for robust hate-crime legislation, support for victims, and accountability and punishment for perpetrators. They also urged governments to work together with civil society, especially with religious leaders and communities, as well as women and young people, to fight intolerance and strengthen resilience in a time of crisis.

The three Personal Representatives resumed in-person country visits in 2021, travelling together to Finland and Uzbekistan for meetings with religious, civil society and community leaders as well as government officials.

Throughout the year, the three Personal Representatives participated in a number of other OSCE conferences and discussions, including the Stockholm Conference on Media Freedom in the OSCE Region organized by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, a retreat organized by the Swedish Chair and an informal meeting with the OSCE Human Dimension Committee to discuss tolerance and non-discrimination.

YOUTH AND SECURITY



ROSALINE MARBINAH
Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Youth and Security

The OSCE Special Representative on Youth and Security advised the Swedish Chairpersonship throughout the year on issues related to youth and security, putting special emphasis on the involvement of the youth movement and the engagement of youth in democratic processes.

She participated in several events to raise awareness of these issues, including an event in Strasbourg organized by the Swedish Chairpersonship in April on youth participation in legislative and policy processes. The Special Representative also met with the Group of Friends of Youth and Security, highlighting, among other things, the importance of co-ordination among OSCE structures regarding youth and security.

The representative also communicated on these issues to a wider public, including via a post on the OSCE blog on International Youth Day in which she pointed out how youth all around the world contribute to comprehensive security by standing up for democracy, human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law: "They are organized, courageous and peace-builders. Through their work, they expand the democratic space in the OSCE region."

She also put forward a number of suggestions on how to advance the youth, peace and security agenda within the OSCE, ranging from bigger budget allocations and more Ministerial Council decisions to developing a cross-dimensional youth action plan and putting together a permanent consultative expert panel of youth organizations to comment on proposals and advise on steps forward related to youth, peace and security.

CHILDREN AND SECURITY



AMBASSADOR RITA IZSÁK-NDIAYE
Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Children and Security

In 2021, the Swedish Chair established the mandate of the Chairperson-in-Office's Personal Representative on Children and Security to call stronger attention to the situation and rights of children in the OSCE region. The Personal Representative conducted initial research on the status of children's rights issues to assess the current level of awareness and ongoing activities in this field. She reviewed all relevant existing materials and documents and conducted interviews with OSCE staff members, field missions and representatives of the institutions. Ambassador Izsák-Ndiaye also prepared a survey on children and security and invited all staff members to contribute in order maximize the outreach, feedback and recommendations formulated by OSCE colleagues.

The Personal Representative participated in and contributed to several online and in-person seminars and meetings, including of the Human Dimension Committee and a round-table discussion organized by the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues. She spoke at ODIHR's 30th-anniversary conference in Warsaw in a panel discussion on democracy as the only legitimate system of government in the OSCE region. She emphasized the importance of inclusive democracies and of ensuring children's participation in decision-making processes.

During her tenure, Ambassador Izsák-Ndiaye emphasized the need for OSCE structures and participating States to pay dedicated attention to the issue of children and security and to increase regular exchanges and activities in this regard to better protect children and their interests.

ASSISTANCE WITH BILATERAL AGREEMENTS



LIEUTENANT COLONEL HELMUT NAPIONTEK
OSCE Representative to the Latvian-Russian Joint Commission on Military Pensioners

The Representative continued to assist with the implementation of the 1994 bilateral agreement between the governments of Latvia and the Russian Federation on social guarantees for military pensioners from the Russian Federation and their families residing in Latvia. Some 5,464 people currently fall under the special provisions of the agreement; this represents a decrease of 530 people compared with 2020.

No certified COVID-19 cases among the military pensioners were brought to the attention of the Representative in 2021.

As a stable trend since 2008, no individual complaints by military pensioners were submitted in 2021. In essence, there are currently no new fundamental issues concerning the work of the Representative. The 2021 report to the Permanent Council concluded that, in the future, the Representative's role should exist on a standby basis, operating only if requested by either of the parties or by an individual military pensioner.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK



AMBASSADOR HELMUT TICHY
Chairperson of the Informal Working Group on Strengthening the Legal Framework of the OSCE

The Informal Working Group focuses on finding a solution that would grant international legal personality to the OSCE, in accordance with one of four options that emerged during discussions in previous years. The Swedish Chairpersonship convened two meetings of the Informal Working Group in May and October 2021, which were chaired by Ambassador Helmut Tichy. Both meetings were held in a blended format due to COVID-19. The four options were discussed, and the Secretariat also provided delegations with valuable updates on the operational consequences of the lack of a clear legal status for the OSCE. The October meeting featured a presentation of a recent paper on operational challenges prepared by the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, "A Peaceful Presence: The First Five Years of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine".

PERMANENT COUNCIL

The Permanent Council is the OSCE's principal body for regular political dialogue and decision-making among representatives of the OSCE participating States. It meets weekly in Vienna.



Delegates at the Permanent Council. (OSCE/Mickey Kröll)

Permanent Council

www.osce.org/permanent-council

The weekly meetings of the Permanent Council throughout the 2021 Swedish Chairpersonship were chaired by Sweden's Permanent Representative to the OSCE, Ambassador Ulrika Funered. Despite two lockdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic that posed serious challenges to the continuity of the Organization's work, the Swedish Chairpersonship, building on the working methodology put in place by the Albanian Chairmanship in 2020, managed to hold 52 sessions of the Permanent Council, including 12 special sessions.

Between 25 May and 18 November, sessions were held in a blended format, with preventive measures such as the wearing of masks, social distancing and requiring proof of low epidemiological risk in place. Throughout the year, delegates could participate either in person or remotely. This ensured the smooth running of Permanent Council meetings and equal access for all.

The weekly meetings of the Permanent Council serve as the main platform for dialogue, debates, consultations, the exchange of ideas and decision-making not only on recurring issues on the OSCE agenda but also in matters related to the Chairpersonship's priorities and to unpredicted developments in the OSCE area. Throughout the year, Ambassador Funered welcomed distinguished guest speakers to the Permanent Council, including foreign ministers and deputy ministers from the participating States and high-level representatives from international organizations.

Whether addressing the Permanent Council in person at the Hofburg, in a blended format or entirely online, guest speakers highlighted issues of special relevance to the Chairpersonship, such as gender equality and the Women, Peace and Security agenda; monitoring the situation in and around Ukraine; defending the European security order; upholding the OSCE concept of comprehensive security; the full enjoyment of human rights; democracy; the role of civil society; rule of law; freedom of expression, including media freedom; as well as economic and environmental security.

The Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group, Ambassador Heidi Grau, and her successor, Ambassador Mikko Kinnunen, and the Chief Monitor of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, Ambassador Yaşar Halit Çevik, addressed the Permanent Council four times regarding the crisis in and around Ukraine. The Chairperson also called special meetings – for example, to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, to facilitate the decision-making process on the 2021 Unified Budget and on holding the



(OSCE/Mickey Kröll)

“Sweden took on the Chairpersonship of the OSCE in a challenging time with the aim to go back to basics and adhere to our common commitments by building trust for our common security. I am proud that we have contributed to security in our region through steadfast focus on our priorities and hope that our work has laid a good foundation for coming Chairs. I would like to thank all participating States for their support and co-operation for strengthening our common security and the OSCE.”

Ambassador Ulrika Funered

Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council,
Permanent Representative of Sweden to the
Organization for Security and Co-operation in
Europe

CHAIRPERSONS OF THE THREE COMMITTEES APPOINTED BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL

Ambassador Neil Bush, United Kingdom: Chairperson
of the Security Committee

Ambassador Florian Raunig, Austria: Chairperson of
the Economic and Environmental Committee

Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen, Norway:
Chairperson of the Human Dimension Committee

Annual Security Review Conference, as well as to ensure the extension of the mandate of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine.

The meetings of the Permanent Council provided an opportunity to foster close, mutually beneficial co-operation with other international organizations active in the OSCE area through the participation of high-level representatives such as the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, the Deputy Executive Director of UN Women and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

CHAIRPERSONS OF THE INFORMAL WORKING GROUPS APPOINTED BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL

Ambassador Károly Dán, Hungary: Chairperson of the Informal Working Group established by PC Decision No. 1039 on Development of Confidence-Building Measures to Reduce the Risks of Conflict Stemming from the Use of Information and Communication Technologies

Ambassador Cristóbal Valdés y Valentin-Gamazo, Spain: Chairperson of the Informal Working Group on the Structured Dialogue on the current and future challenges and risks to security in the OSCE area pursuant to Ministerial Council Declaration No. 4 of 2016

Ambassador Helmut Tichy, Austria: Special Adviser to the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Strengthening the Legal Framework of the OSCE and Chairperson of the Open-Ended Informal Working Group on Strengthening the Legal Framework of the OSCE

Ambassador Ketevan Tsikhelashvili, Georgia: Chairperson of the Informal Working Group on Scales of Contributions

Ambassador Siniša Bencun, Bosnia and Herzegovina: Chairperson of the Informal Working Group on civil society participation at OSCE meetings

High-level speakers at the Permanent Council in 2021

- 14 January:** **Ann Linde**, 2021 OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden
- 21 January:** **Lord Peter Bowness**, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
- 28 January:** **Michaela Küchler**, Chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance
- 15 April:** **Lasha Darsalia**, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia
- 20 May:** **Åsa Regnér**, Deputy Executive Director of UN Women
- 25 May:** **Jeygyn Bayramov**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan
- 10 June:** **Marija Pejčinović Burić**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe
- 15 July:** **Zbigniew Rau**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland
- 16 September:** **Margareta Cederfelt**, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
- 30 September:** **Ruslan Kazakbaev**, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan

FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION

The Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) is the OSCE's key decision-making body on politico-military aspects of security. Its participants meet weekly in Vienna to discuss issues such as arms control and confidence- and security-building measures. The Forum Chairmanship rotates among the OSCE participating States, with each state chairing the FSC for four months. In 2021, the FSC was chaired by the United States of America, Armenia and Austria.



Forum for Security Co-operation, 19 May 2021. (OSCE/Mickey Kröll)

Forum for Security Co-operation

www.osce.org/forum-for-security-cooperation

In 2021, the Forum for Security Co-operation continued to demonstrate its ability to conduct its work despite the challenging circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. With the invaluable support of the FSC Support Unit of the Conflict Prevention Centre, all scheduled FSC plenary, working group and related meetings were conducted either in a blended format or remotely via teleconference. While recalling politico-military commitments and their relevance in times of crisis, the FSC Chairs continuously highlighted the importance of their implementation, and of co-operation among participating States. To that end, participating States were encouraged to resume verification activities under the Vienna Document 2011 as a means of fostering confidence and security.

In the course of the year, the strategic discussions during the security dialogues highlighted the FSC's importance as a platform for dialogue addressing security issues of common interest and concern. The situation in and around Ukraine continued to be a dominant topic of discussion in the Forum. In April 2021, the Vienna Document 2011 mechanism for consultation and co-operation as regards unusual military activities was invoked and was followed by a special joint meeting of the FSC and the PC to assess security concerns.

A variety of other active discussions on a broad range of topics were held during a total of 20 security dialogues

organized by the three FSC Chairs. Several initiatives undertaken by participating States led to the adoption of six decisions designed to support the implementation of existing commitments.

The US, Armenian and Austrian FSC Chairs dedicated security dialogues to arms control and confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs), covering the following topics: modernization of the Vienna Document; confidence-building amid strategic ambiguity; challenges of new-generation warfare; arms control and CSBMs; transparency in military exercises and activities; the OSCE Framework for Arms Control, risks and challenges to security and the future of conventional arms control. The Austrian FSC Chair held a special FSC meeting on the reissuance of the Vienna Document (paragraph 152) in October. In addition, the 31st Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting was held in March while the United States was FSC Chair. Led by Mongolia and Montenegro, this meeting provided an opportunity for delegations to discuss issues related to the implementation of agreed CSBMs.

The ninth High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar took place online in February under the FSC Chairpersonship of the United States. Held every five years in accordance with the Vienna Document 2011, this event provided an important opportunity for high-level military personnel to meet,



US FSC Chairperson Courtney Austrian, Chargé of the US Mission to the OSCE. (OSCE/Mickey Kröll)

exchange strategic assessments on doctrine and discuss trends in the first dimension. The Austrian FSC Chair dedicated a security dialogue to military-to-military contacts on doctrines and promoted the idea of further exchanges between sessions of the High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar.

Four security dialogues and many informal meetings were devoted to small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA). The security dialogues dealt with man-portable air defence systems and explosive hazards in Central Asia (US Chairmanship), the OSCE practical assistance mechanism (Armenian Chairmanship) and ongoing initiatives in the field of SALW and SCA (Austrian Chairmanship). The latter included a demonstration of practical aspects of implementation of the assistance mechanism. Additionally, throughout the year, the comprehensive review and update of the OSCE's *Handbook of Best Practices on Small Arms and Light Weapons* and the *OSCE Handbook of Best Practices on Conventional Ammunition* continued, including the adoption of an updated "Best Practice Guide on National Procedures for the Destruction of Small Arms and Light Weapons" in June. The OSCE meeting to review the implementation of OSCE assistance projects in the field of SALW and SCA was held by the Austrian Chair in October.

Two security dialogues were held with a view to promoting regional stability and comprehensive and co-operative security. The US FSC Chair convened a security dialogue on NATO's enhanced forward presence. The Armenian FSC Chair held a security dialogue on regional security arrangements, in particular the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

To facilitate implementation of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, the Armenian FSC Chair held security dialogues on compliance with international humanitarian law. The Austrian FSC Chair devoted a security dialogue to the integration of women in armed forces. An

October visit to Sweden on the Code of Conduct focused on actions taken within the Swedish Armed Forces to safeguard the full and equal participation of women in the armed forces. In addition, the tenth Annual Discussion on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security in June and a regional seminar hosted by Albania on the OSCE's Code in May were held online while Armenia was FSC Chair.

Moreover, a security dialogue on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 was held under the aegis of the Armenian FSC Chair.

The FSC Chairs devoted one security dialogue and one joint FSC-Permanent Council meeting to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and another security dialogue to gender equality. Moreover, the Austrian FSC Chair mainstreamed gender issues in all of its security dialogues.

The FSC also contributed to the 2021 Annual Security Review Conference within its mandate, providing inputs to relevant sessions and focusing on politico-military elements.

All three FSC Chairs co-operated closely with the Swedish OSCE Chair and the Permanent Council on cross-dimensional issues of relevance to both bodies. Three joint meetings of the FSC and the Permanent Council were held on the topics of UNSCR 1325, countering terrorism and the Structured Dialogue.

The FSC continued to serve as an important platform for dialogue and decisions while at the same time providing participating States with a forum to discuss matters related to politico-military issues. Despite COVID-19, the FSC proved successful in taking measures to adapt to the current situation and in keeping up with its regular work under the challenging circumstances.



Armenian FSC Chairperson Armen Papikyan, Permanent Representative of Armenia to the OSCE. (OSCE/Mickey Kröll)



Austrian FSC Chairperson Florian Raunig, Permanent Representative of Austria to the OSCE. (OSCE/Mickey Kröll)

OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Bringing together 323 parliamentarians from across the OSCE region, the Parliamentary Assembly provides a platform to engage in dialogue, conduct diplomacy, observe elections and promote governments' compliance with OSCE commitments. In 2021, the Assembly focused its efforts on reaffirming the common purpose of the OSCE and increasing its political support.



OSCE Winter Meeting, Vienna and online, 25 February 2021. (OSCE/Mickey Kröll)

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Secretary General: **Roberto Montella**

Budget **€3,643,000**
Staff **38** (including 9 research assistants and 6 junior political officers)

www.oscepa.org

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TOWARD HELSINKI +50

At the end of 2020, the Parliamentary Assembly (PA) issued a **Call for Action** signed by former Chairpersons-in-Office, OSCE PA Presidents, Secretaries General and heads of other institutions. In 2021, a series of web-based roundtable events were held to explore how to enhance the OSCE's effectiveness and promote genuine political dialogue in view of the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act. Co-ordinated by former OSCE Secretary General and High Commissioner on National Minorities Lamberto Zannier, the round tables focused on themes such as building accountability and transparency in the OSCE's human dimension of security, enhancing the role of women in peace and security, involving youth in decision-making and ensuring that the OSCE is able to fully utilize all of its tools and mechanisms in order to address challenges and crises facing the region.

HYBRID PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY

The OSCE PA continued to work throughout 2021 in a hybrid format due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a remote session convened in the summer to elect Assembly officers and hold debates. After a year of online meetings, OSCE parliamentarians began to resume in-person diplomatic visits, with the PA President leading high-level delegations to Tajikistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan. OSCE PA members also actively engaged with counterparts within and outside of the OSCE on issues such as corruption, terrorism, human trafficking and climate change.

Following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt (Sweden) convened an online meeting in August with the heads of OSCE PA delegations and representatives of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre and OSCE field offices in the region to discuss the situation. Afghanistan's humanitarian crisis was the focus of a virtual meeting of the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Migration in September, featuring participation by the Norwegian Refugee Council and the International Organization for Migration. At the Parliamentary Assembly's Autumn Meeting, over 30



(OSCE/Mickey Kröll)

"We need to keep discussions about international challenges on our domestic agendas. We need to highlight the work of the OSCE in our national debates. And we need to regularly question our governments on the implementation of their international commitments."

Margareta Cederfelt

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President

parliamentarians took part in a debate on current security challenges stemming from Afghanistan.

The OSCE PA worked closely with the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings on the issue of preventing trafficking of migrants in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). A series of online meetings with BiH officials in March was followed by an in-person visit in July, with a focus on support for victims and assistance for local authorities in combating human trafficking.

The PA actively contributed to the pre-COP26 Parliamentary Meeting in Rome, and issued a **Parliamentary Plea for Resolute Climate Action** in conjunction with the climate summit in Glasgow as a strong call from PA leaders for drastic reductions of greenhouse gas emissions, bolder adaptation



OSCE PA Head of Delegation Farah Karimi and OSCE Special Co-ordinator Peter Juel-Jensen speaking to a poll worker on election day at a polling station in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 28 November 2021. (OSCE PA/Nat Parry)

CONTRIBUTING POLITICAL EXPERIENCE TO OSCE ELECTION OBSERVATION

OSCE PA election observers contributed their political experience, judgement and visibility to this essential OSCE endeavour while working closely with ODIHR and other international partners. In 2021, more than 450 OSCE PA observers deployed for elections in Albania, Armenia, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Uzbekistan.



MEETINGS

Winter Meeting: Vienna/Online, 24–26 February

Remote Session: Vienna/Online, 30 June to 6 July

Autumn Meeting: Online, 3–4 November

strategies, immediate mobilization of funds and closer collaboration across the board.

Together with the OSCE Transnational Threats Department, the PA organized the first-ever regional policy dialogue with legislators from South-Eastern Europe on the challenges posed by the return and repatriation of foreign terrorist fighters and their families. Over 30 MPs from the region took part in the event, exchanging views and lessons learned on this critical topic with leading experts. Working with

international partners, the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism co-organized the third Parliamentary Conference on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism. The event included debates on the latest terrorism trends during the pandemic and the need to prevent radicalization online and in places of detention.

Addressing the OSCE PA's Mediterranean Forum in November, Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs and OSCE PA Vice-President Pascal Allizard (France) noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had exacerbated tensions and crises in the region, highlighting the need for collective responses at both the governmental and parliamentary levels.

Webinars throughout the year focused on issues such as promoting predictability in military affairs, universal health care as a human right, pollution and public health, gender-based violence and humanitarian impacts of conflicts.



OSCE Special Co-ordinator Reinhold Lopatka and Head of OSCE PA Delegation Daniela De Ridder at a polling station in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 24 October 2021. (OSCE PA/Anna Di Domenico)

FIELD OPERATIONS

The OSCE maintains a network of field operations in Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Field operations assist host countries in putting their OSCE commitments into practice and foster local capacities through specific projects that respond to their needs. Activities vary with the context of the host country and are governed by the mandate of each field operation. Field operations enable the OSCE to manage crises and to play a critical post-conflict role, helping to restore trust among affected communities. Several field operations contribute to early warning and conflict prevention, and some also monitor and report on developments on the ground.



Luhansk Monitoring Team visiting a school in Zolote. (OSCE/Kristina Babic)

Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine

Chief Monitor: **Ambassador Yaşar Halit Çevik**

Budget €108.7 million for the mandate period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 (€91.3 million from assessed contributions and €17.4 million from extrabudgetary contributions). Total expenditure for mandate 2021/2022 as of 31 December 2021 was €74.7 million, including €5.9 million extrabudgetary actual expenditure.

Staff 1,291 (814 international, 477 national), including 622 monitoring officers across ten teams as of 31 December 2021.

[OSCE SMM – Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine | Facebook](#)

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www.osce.org/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine

The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to Ukraine is a civilian mission that was deployed in March 2014. Operating 24/7, the Mission is mandated to monitor, establish facts, gather information and report on the security situation throughout Ukraine with the aim of reducing tensions and fostering peace, stability and security. It also monitors and supports respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and it facilitates dialogue on the ground.

MONITORING IN EASTERN UKRAINE

The Special Monitoring Mission observed a significant change in the environment in which it operates in eastern Ukraine, which was marked throughout 2021 by a steady degradation of the ceasefire as well as an increase in restrictions on freedom of movement experienced by the

Mission. Throughout the year, the SMM observed that the number and severity of ceasefire violations steadily increased. By November, the number of ceasefire violations exceeded those recorded before the 22 July 2020 Measures to strengthen the ceasefire agreement. The number of observations by the SMM of heavy weapons proscribed by the Minsk agreements deployed to the contact line also



SMM monitoring officers preparing to launch a UAV near Hnutove, Donetsk region. (OSCE/Germain Groll)



Donetsk Monitoring Team on patrol in Starohnativka. (OSCE/Germain Groll)

grew, as did their reported use in ceasefire violations. Pilot disengagement areas – established to designate places along the contact line free of weapons and personnel – themselves became hotspots, as the SMM observed and reported the sides regularly firing in or near these areas.

Against this backdrop, the Mission continued to face a growing and acute number of restrictions on freedom of movement for both its ground patrols and its unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Ground patrols continued to experience restrictions mostly in non-government-controlled areas, particularly in border areas and on those routes that allowed the SMM to cross the contact line. This latter problem led to a security review within the Luhansk Monitoring Team in November and December 2021, as the SMM found itself with no safe, usable vehicular crossing routes between government- and non-government-controlled parts of the Luhansk region. The SMM's UAVs also faced a growing number of jamming and shooting incidents in 2021. Jamming of the long-range UAVs led to the temporary suspension of all flights between July and September, and the relocation of the flight operations base from Stepanivka to Varvarivka. Long-range UAV test flights resumed on 20 September from the new take-off and landing site and continued through the rest of the year. Incidents of jamming and shooting at mini- and mid-range UAVs led to the loss of 10 of these assets throughout the year.

The increase in ceasefire violations also had the downstream effect of leading to higher numbers of civilian casualties and damage to property. Between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2021, the Mission corroborated 88 civilian casualties (46 due to shelling and small-arms fire and 42 due to mines, unexploded ordnance and other explosive objects) and damage to 211 civilian objects and infrastructure sites.¹

The Mission also facilitated 392 “windows of silence” in 2021 to enable the repair and maintenance of critical infrastructure

facilities such as water, gas and electricity networks benefiting civilians on both sides of the contact line.

The SMM continued to monitor the impact of crossing restrictions and the partial closure of the contact line to civilians. Since June 2020, civilians were able to cross the contact line only at two of the five operational crossing points: near Stanytsia Luhanska on a daily basis, and near Novotroitske twice a week, as the corresponding checkpoint of the armed formations near Olenivka was open only on Mondays and Fridays. All other checkpoints of the armed formations remained permanently closed, while crossing points on the government-controlled side remained open. The crossing points near Zolote and Shchastia were operational, but the corresponding checkpoints of the armed formations were not. These two crossing points were supposed to be opened in November 2020, in line with the commitments made by the sides at the Normandy Four Paris Summit in December 2019. The severely curtailed civilian freedom of movement resulted in a 95 per cent decrease in civilian crossings compared with the pre-COVID-19 period, reduced opportunities for people residing in conflict-affected areas to (re-)connect with families and communities, and limited their access to health care, education, pensions and civil documentation as well as their ability to sustain their livelihoods.

MONITORING IN CENTRAL AND WESTERN UKRAINE

The Mission's eight monitoring teams in central and western Ukraine continued to monitor the security situation, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the situation of internally displaced persons. The teams also gathered information on respect for the rights of religious communities and national minorities, including language and education rights and respective legislative and policy developments. In particular, the Mission followed up with persons belonging to national minorities on their reactions to the Law on Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine, the draft law on

¹ Additional allegations of civilian casualties and damage to civilian objects and infrastructure that occurred in 2021 are pending SMM corroboration.

national communities, the Law on Preventing and Combating Anti-Semitism in Ukraine and the Strategy for Promoting the Realization of the Rights and Opportunities of Persons Belonging to the Roma National Minority.

Total SMM Patrols in 2021	
Team	Total
KYIV Head Office	145
MT CHERNIVTSI	568
MT DNIPRO	459
MT IVANO-FRANKIVSK	497
MT KHARKIV	496
MT KHERSON	527
MT KYIV	424
MT LVIV	496
MT ODESSA	316
MT DONETSK	6,946
MT LUHANSK	6,465
Long-range UAV	481
Grand Total	17,820

MT: monitoring team

INTRODUCING EGIS

On 30 November, the SMM launched a new database and information management system, the Enterprise Geographic Information System (EGIS), to provide Mission members with an advanced, user-friendly tool for collecting, sharing and analysing the Mission's observations and data. The introduction of EGIS was a significant milestone for the Mission. The system provides a common, Mission-wide database, so instead of managing local copies of information, such as violations related to the Minsk agreements or UAV flight paths, the entire Mission has a centralized database where data flows converge.

PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

In April, the Mission launched its third Gender Equality Action Plan, covering 2021–2023. The Plan provides the Mission with a detailed road map for promoting gender equality and

gender sensitivity in all its activities. Its framework consists of two parts: one focused on gender parity and the working environment; the other on monitoring, reporting and other outside engagements. In September, the Mission published its third report on the gender dimensions of SMM monitoring, *“Women’s perceptions of security and their contributions to peace and security”*. The report highlights some of the security concerns of women living close to the contact line and various ways security threats affect women and girls differently than men and boys. It also describes some of the many contributions that women from civil society make towards peace and security and dialogue throughout Ukraine. In December 2021, the Chief Monitor handed out the first-ever SMM Gender Champion Award, acknowledging critical efforts by Mission members to create a professional and gender-sensitive environment and the outstanding work done to promote gender mainstreaming in the Mission’s activities.

THEMATIC REPORTS

In 2021, the OSCE SMM published six thematic reports:

“Restrictions to the SMM’s freedom of movement and other impediments to the fulfilment of its mandate” (July–December 2020)

“The impact of mines, unexploded ordnance and other explosive objects on civilians in the conflict-affected regions of eastern Ukraine” (November 2019 – March 2021)

“Gender dimensions of SMM monitoring: women’s perceptions of security and their contributions to peace and security” (1 November 2018 – 15 June 2021)

“Restrictions to civilian freedom of movement at crossing points along the contact line and the impact on civilians” (16 November 2020 – 30 September 2021)

“Restrictions to the SMM’s freedom of movement and other impediments to the fulfilment of its mandate” (January–June 2021)

“SMM facilitation of repair and maintenance of civilian infrastructure along the contact line in Donetsk and Luhansk regions” (1 July 2019 and 31 October 2021)



Monitoring officers in Severodonetsk, January 2021. (OSCE/Evgeniy Maloletka)

ON PATROL AT THE CONTACT LINE



Monitoring officers on patrol in Verkhnotoretske, Donetsk region. (OSCE/Monika Olszewska)

On a wintry morning, preparations for an SMM patrol begin: Monika, the patrol leader seconded by Poland, gets the security update and arranges logistics. Christine, Diana and Eddrina, the patrol drivers, check their vehicles to ensure that the electronics work, the tires are in good condition and all required gear is loaded.

They are about to embark on a high-risk patrol to the villages of Novhorodske and Verkhnotoretske. In addition to poor road conditions, the all-female patrol faces an unpredictable security situation. To mitigate the risk, among a host of measures, the patrol has a paramedic on board, and each member dons a flak jacket, helmet and – due to COVID-19 – a facemask.

Eddrina, the Kramatorsk Hub leader, skilfully manoeuvres one of the five-ton armoured vehicles. A former US police officer who has worked with the United Nations in Kosovo and Haiti, she has no higher priority than the safety of her team. With her is Maka, a monitoring officer who previously worked in the humanitarian field in her native Georgia. Maka explains the added value of female monitoring officers. “Generally, women have greater access to different interlocutors,” she says. “Women and children especially open up more easily. This enables us to provide a fuller picture of the actual situation on the ground”.

Before reaching Novhorodske, the patrol stops to fly an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) and check on a sign indicating mines that Christine, a German monitoring officer with a background in human rights, noticed a few days earlier. Fiona, a British monitoring officer and expert UAV operator, prepares the drone, but the flight fails due to a lack of GPS signal.

In Novhorodske, the patrol meets the head of the town council. He asks for the SMM’s assistance to enable repairs to a damaged water pipeline running across the contact line that has limited the community’s access to potable water for weeks.

Since 2014, the SMM has been facilitating the repair and operation of critical civilian infrastructure providing water, gas and electricity to millions of people on both sides of the contact line. In 2021, the Mission organized 392 “windows of silence” for repairs to 322 civilian infrastructure facilities in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

The patrol members climb back in their vehicles, and Monika gives the signal to head to Verkhnotoretske. There the patrol confronts the harsh reality of life along the contact line, which cuts off neighbours, friends and family just across the line in Betmanove, forcing them to travel hundreds of kilometres to visit people who are sometimes literally within shouting distance. “The journey is costly and time-consuming,” says Diana, a monitoring officer from Canada, as she points to a minefield, “but the alternative entails a heavy price in civilian lives”.

The patrol visits Verkhnotoretske’s recently renovated House of Culture, which was damaged by shelling in 2014. Thanks to the renovation, “we will be able to organize activities for children and adults alike,” says the centre’s director. “We also received an outpatient clinic for basic medical assistance.”

“It’s the contradiction of life here,” Monika remarks as the patrol departs. “Lines are drawn dividing people, but everywhere I see people coming together to make things better.”

Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine

Project Co-ordinator: **Ambassador Henrik Villadsen**

Budget **€3,618,500** (Unified Budget),
€3,019,712 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff **5** international, **97** local

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[Project Co-ordinator: Henrik Villadsen | LinkedIn](#)

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The Project Co-ordinator's work in 2021 focused on supporting Ukraine's efforts to implement reforms, address security challenges and enhance implementation of OSCE commitments. This included developing systemic approaches to humanitarian demining and rehabilitation of conflict-affected people; mitigating the growing risks of cybercrime, trafficking and domestic violence; and supporting ongoing transformations in the rule of law, anti-corruption, decentralization and other spheres.

ADDING CIVIL SOCIETY ENERGY TO REFORM EFFORTS

Civil society is a powerful ally in transformations, both locally and in nationwide reforms. A new National Strategy for Promoting Civil Society Development in Ukraine for 2021–2026, developed with OSCE support and approved by the President in September 2021, envisages efforts to improve the climate for civic activism, including opportunities for the use of public funds by NGOs. To promote this strategy, the Co-ordinator supported training in the use of a new electronic grant procedure for civil society, with 229 activists

and officials from all over Ukraine taking part in six regional seminars. The use of public funds requires high standards of accountability, and since January 2021, more than 3,000 managers of civil society organizations have taken an online course developed by the Co-ordinator to learn to introduce good governance standards into practice.

The draft law on public consultations, a tool to expand civic participation in state decision-making elaborated with the Co-ordinator's help, was adopted by the Parliament in the first reading. To prepare for its implementation, 150 representatives of local authorities from 10 regions and



Rescuers from the State Emergency Service of Ukraine take part in an exercise organized by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in which they practise preventing leakage of a toxic substance in a traffic collision scenario in Kharkiv, 13 October 2021. (OSCE/Andrii Dziubenko)

the city of Kyiv enhanced their skills in conducting public consultations at six training events organized by the OSCE.

Promoting dialogue as a tool for conflict prevention and management was the focus of a weeklong training course on dialogue in public consultations, which was attended by 21 communication officers from 18 central authorities. In addition, 16 public servants from six ministries received training and supervision support in facilitating their own dialogue processes for reforms. The Co-ordinator also produced a handbook on using dialogue in reform processes together with a flowchart and explanatory cartoon that help officials assess how to use dialogue in different situations.

ADDRESSING GENDER INEQUALITIES WITH CONSTITUTIONAL JUSTICE TOOLS

As gender stereotypes are deeply rooted, it is not unusual for disputes over equality to end up in court. To enable people to defend their rights in Ukraine's Constitutional Court, the Co-ordinator supported the legal and practical introduction of a constitutional complaint mechanism, and undertook a two-year effort in 2020–2021 to promote its use in addressing gender-related and discrimination issues. Some 380 human rights defenders, lawyers, activists, lecturers and students gained insights on gender-based discrimination and the peculiarities of argumentation and the review process for constitutional complaints in four online and two advanced in-person training courses. A manual developed with the Co-ordinator's support, *Gender Equality: Theory and Practice in Comparative Constitutional Law*, presents international practices and reviews the concept of equality in various historical and social contexts, and a draft guidebook for Constitutional Court justices provides a toolkit for gender analysis in constitutional proceedings. With OSCE support, gender-sensitive constitutionalism was widely discussed at various legal conferences.

ENHANCING PROTECTION FROM CHEMICAL THREATS

Ageing Soviet-era infrastructure and the ongoing conflict in heavily industrialized Donbas make Ukraine especially vulnerable to risks from dangerous chemicals. In 2021, crowning a three-year effort to align Ukraine's regulatory system with modern standards, the Co-ordinator presented the government with a compendium of draft documents. These included a law on chemical safety and security, two technical regulations – on safety of chemical products, and on their classification, labelling and packaging – 17 national standards for handling chemicals, and a set of legislative and regulatory amendments to procedures for the prevention of major chemical accidents. Following OSCE recommendations, lawmakers have already amended the law on high-risk establishments.

The Co-ordinator also developed a modular training programme for Ukrainian rescuers on chemical, biological and radiological (CBRN) emergency response, produced three handbooks on CBRN threats, prepared 35 trainers and outfitted the training institutions of Ukraine's State Emergency Service (SESU) with training equipment, including hazmat coveralls, gas masks, decontamination cabins and hazmat and wound simulation kits.

Identification of toxic substances is key to dealing with chemical emergencies; SESU approved and now uses methodological guidelines on sampling during chemical emergency response developed by the OSCE. The Co-ordinator also provided SESU with an advanced mobile chemical identification laboratory to use in the conflict-affected areas of eastern Ukraine and trained 15 local responders to use it.



Activists brainstorm to develop indicators for implementing the National Strategy for Development of Civil Society at an event organized by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator at the tenth Civil Society Development Forum in Kyiv on 30 November 2021. (OSCE/Kostiantyn Chernichkin)

COMBINING PASSION WITH SERVICE



Viktoriia Dorosh with her service dog Dzhakart during an official event where the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine donated specialized equipment to support the canine units of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine. Kyiv, 19 August 2021. (SBGS/Valerii Oliinyk)

Viktoriia Dorosh loves dogs. As a child, she dreamed of becoming a dog trainer. She went on to study veterinary medicine. She also participated in various dog training courses and took up dog breeding. After finishing her studies, she got a job in the Aviation Security Service at Kyiv's Boryspil International Airport, where she had daily contact with canine specialists from the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (SBGS). Their work inspired her to enrol in specialized training at the SBGS Canine Training Centre.

Today Viktoriia is a first-category inspector and canine specialist for the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine. She works at Boryspil International Airport with her service dog, a four-year-old Rottweiler called Dzhakart.

Dzhakart has been trained to search for weapons, ammunition and explosives. Viktoriia leads him through daily practice in which he is totally focused on identifying relevant scents. Although none of the items Dzhakart has been trained to find have been discovered at Boryspil Airport while he has worked there, Viktoriia knows he does his job very well. Dzhakart regularly participates in competitions for service dogs, and thanks to his continuous training, he always achieves the highest scores.

Viktoriia and Dzhakart are one of approximately 1,500 teams of canine experts and their service dogs working in State Border Guard Service canine units throughout Ukraine. In 2021, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine provided the SBGS canine service with specialized equipment to help its teams do their work. This donation was part of a larger OSCE project to support the State Border Guard Service in Ukraine in preventing and combating illicit trafficking in weapons, ammunition and explosives. The project supports the introduction of best international practices and the development and improvement of staff training programmes, including for the canine service. It is part of the OSCE's comprehensive programme to assist the Ukrainian authorities in strengthening their capacities to prevent and combat all aspects of illicit trafficking in weapons, ammunition and explosives.

In 2021, SBGS service dogs detected 188 weapons, 6,000 items of ammunition and 25.62 kilograms of explosives.

Viktoriia is proud to serve in the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, and working with Dzhakart is a dream job for her: "I can combine my passion for dogs with service for the benefit of the state."

Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk

Chief Observer: **Ambassador György Varga**

Budget	€1,031,800 (for the period of the mandate from 1 February 2021 to 30 September 2021, and closure costs covering 1 October to 15 November 2021)
Staff	22 international

www.osce.org/observer-mission-at-russian-checkpoints-gukovo-and-donetsk-discontinued

After the Russian Federation announced its decision not to extend the mandate of the OSCE Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk beyond 30 September 2021, and following the Chair's announcement at the Permanent Council on 16 September 2021 that all options to reach consensus on a mandate extension had been exhausted, the Observer Mission's activities were discontinued as of 1 October 2021.

OBSERVATION TRENDS

In 2021, the Observer Mission observed that the movement of people crossing at the two border crossing points (BCPs) decreased slightly in comparison with 2020, from 2,491,640 to 2,392,750. Overall, the Donetsk BCP continued to experience more traffic than the Gukovo BCP.

The Mission also observed that, over time, the number of people in military-style uniforms crossing at these two border crossing points gradually decreased after mid-February 2015.

From its deployment in July 2014 through its closure in September 2021, the Observer Mission observed the following movements:

25,069,781	people ²
39,487	people in military-style uniforms
2,683	families moving with a significant amount of luggage (travelling in both directions)
247,834	trucks
54,769	cargo minivans
712	ambulances
140	funeral service vehicles
100	Russian convoys crossing into Ukraine through the Donetsk border crossing point ³
7,263	trains
207	aircraft (flying over the territory of the Russian Federation)

² This figure does not include people crossing the border in both directions from 18 to 24 July 2018. The Observer Mission did not receive the relevant data from the competent authorities of the host country for that week.

³ At the time the report was drafted, the Observer Mission had observed 100 Russian convoys, while Russian officials account for 102 convoys. The discrepancy comes from the fact that the convoys crossed at the Matveev-Kurgan / Uspenka BCP on two occasions. The Observer Mission in this case was not able to observe the convoys and therefore could not record them. Hence, the Observer Mission's count of the Russian convoys differs from the official number provided by the Russian Federation.

Deployed in 2014 in the lead-up to the signing of the Minsk agreements, the Observer Mission served as an important element of the OSCE's response to the crisis in and around Ukraine, helping to reduce tensions and build confidence in the region. Operating under the principles of impartiality and transparency, the Mission's observers were entrusted with monitoring and reporting on the situation at the Russian checkpoints of Donetsk and Gukovo, as well as on movements across the border.

The Observer Mission was established by a decision of the Permanent Council on 24 July 2014 in response to an invitation from the Russian Federation. The invitation followed the Berlin Declaration of 2 July 2014 in which the foreign ministers of France, Germany, the Russian Federation and Ukraine invited the OSCE to deploy international observers to two crossing points on the Russian side of the border with Ukraine. The Mission's initial mandate period was agreed for three months. Starting in 2018, the Mission's mandate period was extended on a four-month basis; however, in May 2021 it was reduced to two months.

Throughout the entire tenure of the Mission, its mandate remained the same, and 26 OSCE participating States seconded personnel to enable the Mission to fulfil its mandated tasks. In 2021, 22 international observers were seconded by 15 participating States.

Through its presence in 24-hour shifts at the two Russian checkpoints, the Observer Mission increased transparency on the Russian-Ukrainian border. Despite its small size and limited observation area, the Mission served as a unique and reliable source of timely information on movements across the two crossing points. Its observations were reflected in 375 weekly updates, 100 spot reports on Russian convoys bound for Ukraine bearing the inscription "Humanitarian aid from the Russian Federation" and frequent reports to the Permanent Council. The Mission's weekly and spot reports remain available on the OSCE website in both English and Russian.

The Mission was able to implement its mandate without interruption, including during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mission to Moldova

Head of Mission: **Dr. Claus Neukirch**

Budget **€2,302,700** (Unified Budget),
€42,722 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff **13** international, **39** local

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Head of Mission: Claus Neukirch | LinkedIn

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The Mission to Moldova remained actively involved in facilitating a comprehensive and lasting political settlement of the Transnistrian conflict throughout 2021. Besides the challenges created by limited in-person interactions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mission continued building confidence, facilitating interaction between the Sides and strengthening the protection of human rights on both banks of the Dniester/Nistru River.

DIALOGUE IN THE TRANSNISTRIAN SETTLEMENT PROCESS

In concert with the Swedish Chairpersonship, the Mission continued to work at all levels of the Transnistrian Settlement Process to achieve tangible progress in the implementation of all agreements expressed in the protocols of the “5+2” meetings in Rome (2018), Vienna (2017) and Berlin (2016), thus contributing to a solid basis for further confidence-building measures.

In 2021, the Settlement Process benefited from the strong support of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office: Minister Ann Linde paid two working visits to Moldova, where, among other issues, she stressed the need to keep Women, Peace and Security as well as gender equality high on the agenda of the negotiations.

During the course of the year, the Mission continued its good practices for connecting the Sides on all levels through online tools and provided good offices to the nine in-person meetings of the Chief Negotiators and 24 thematic working group meetings facilitated by the Mission.

International partners remained united in their efforts to advance the Settlement Process. This was reflected in the joint statement issued by the mediators and observers after a visit led by the Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office, Thomas Mayr-Harting, to Chisinau and Tiraspol on 3–4 June.

The constructive interaction between the Sides on the COVID-19 vaccination campaign served as an excellent example of how confidence-building measures can benefit the people on both banks of the river.



A monitoring team from the OSCE Mission to Moldova interacting with a local resident in the Security Zone. (OSCE/Igor Schimbator)



Members of the Moldovan armed forces attending a course on ammunition storage safety. (OSCE/Mihail Tcaciuc)

The pragmatic approach to the negotiations displayed in 2021 provides a basis for advancing the settlement process in the following year.

STRENGTHENING OMBUDSPERSON INSTITUTIONS ON BOTH BANKS

In 2021, the Mission continued building confidence and strengthening the protection of human rights on both banks of the Dniester/Nistru River. In September, the Mission organized four online workshops to enhance the human rights monitoring capacities of the ombudsperson institutions on both banks. Participants worked together on case studies, shared best practices and discussed current challenges. In two separate sessions, participants learned about the role of national human rights institutions in a public emergency and reflected on their experiences and challenges in this field. Two joint sessions brought together about 25 representatives from both institutions and provided a platform to establish

dialogue and share experiences. During the joint sessions, participants learned about standard operating procedures and modern methodologies in the field of human rights monitoring with a special focus on public emergencies.

REDUCING THE EXPLOSIVE RISK OF CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION STOCKPILES

Over the past year, the Mission continued its efforts to improve the overall safety of Moldovan citizens by minimizing the risks posed by ammunition storage sites.

In 2021, the Mission completed the installation of a chemical laboratory that was furnished and extensively equipped, including with a high-performance liquid chromatograph that will assist with an analysis of ammunition and an assessment of its condition and compliance with safety standards. Starting in September, Austrian experts were training personnel to make the laboratory operational.

The Mission also organized five training courses in the framework of a project to mitigate explosive risks at National Army ammunition depots. With assistance from Austrian and Belarusian experts, 26 participants enhanced their skills in ammunition conservation storage management, propellant chemical analysis and digital record-keeping systems.

In line with OSCE best practices and international standards, the Mission also supported the Moldovan National Army's assessment of conventional ammunition storage sites, including visual inspection of stockpiles, palletization and categorization, to reduce risks and safeguard the security of arms and munitions storage.



Ann Linde, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, paid two working visits to Chisinau and Tiraspol on 18 February and 6 October 2021. (OSCE/Igor Schimbator)

Presence in Albania

Head of Presence: **Ambassador Vincenzo Del Monaco**

Budget **€2,981,200** (Unified Budget),
€1,405,078 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff **20** international, **84** local

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The OSCE Presence in Albania works with its Albanian partners in advancing arms control and confidence-building measures; upholding the rule of law and law enforcement; combating corruption, organized crime and trafficking in human beings; reforming electoral legislation; enhancing the capacities of the Assembly; supporting the freedom of opinion and expression; promoting human rights, including protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities as well as gender equality; and empowering civil society and youth.

BOLSTERING CO-OPERATION WITH THE ASSEMBLY OF ALBANIA

The Presence actively supported the Central Election Commission and other Albanian institutions in the preparations for and conduct of the 25 April parliamentary elections. All parties participated in the election and took their seats in the newly elected Assembly. This sets a hospitable scene for the Presence's continued work with the Assembly, a long-term partner, including but not limited to proactive follow-up to ODIHR's key recommendations.

The Presence's long-term support to the Assembly reached a milestone with the drafting and approval of a well-defined

mid-term Strategic Plan for 2021–2025. The Presence has supported the Assembly in an inclusive consultation process to collect feedback, involving administrative services as well as key parliamentarians as the main stakeholders. In July 2021, the Assembly approved the Plan, which was accompanied by an Action Plan with detailed information on budget planning aligned with the Assembly's Mid-Term Budget Framework. The Presence co-ordinated the overall strategic planning process and introduced some of the best international standards and practices from the national parliaments of other OSCE participating States, including expertise from the Austrian, Danish and Greek parliaments.



The increased role of women in countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism was the focus of a conference organized by the OSCE Presence in Albania. Tirana, 14 October 2021. (OSCE/Joana Karapataqi)

PARTNERING WITH THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

After two years without adjudication of constitutional justice due to the lack of a quorum, the expectations of citizens, domestic institutions and the international community for an effective Constitutional Court are high. The Court's new composition, combined with a considerable backlog of pending cases, implies the need to rapidly strengthen the Constitutional Court's capacities. The Presence stepped up its support to the Court, in co-operation with other partners, to develop a Strategy and Action Plan for 2021–2023 to enhance the Court's impartiality, independence, accountability, efficiency and transparency as well as access to the Court. Presented to the public in a live-streamed round table, these are the first strategic documents for the Court's operation since its establishment in 1992. In parallel, the Presence assisted the Court in assessing its internal case management system and provided professional literature and access to legal research. In April, the Head of Presence and the Court's Acting Chair signed a memorandum of understanding for continuous co-operation to intensify the Presence's provision of capacity-building and technical support to equip the Constitutional Court with additional tools and resources.

STRENGTHENING THE FISCAL AUTONOMY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Not least due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all 61 municipalities in Albania faced financial challenges to exercising their mandated functions. In 2021, in response to the findings of a 2020 Presence-led study, the Ministry of Interior requested support in assessing the potential for introducing municipal natural capital in Albania. The Presence responded

by developing a comprehensive methodology to enable government institutions, municipality associations and the Agency for the Support of Local Self-Governance to develop an innovative approach on a pilot basis, which can then be replicated in all 61 municipalities. Once endorsed, the methodology will be used to support local governments in assessing natural capital for improved fiscal resources.

WOMEN AT THE FOREFRONT IN PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND RADICALIZATION

Recognizing that women can play a key role in preventing violent extremism and radicalization that can lead to terrorism, in 2021 the Presence convened a regional conference that brought together national co-ordinators for countering violent extremism, women leaders, policymakers, academics and other experts from South-Eastern Europe as well as Austria, Italy and the United Kingdom to comprehensively assess the role of women in violent extremism and terrorism in the regional context. The Director of Albania's Coordination Centre for Countering Violent Extremism said that the establishment of various networks to prevent violent extremism was a key focus of the Centre's work, including a women's network that offers an open voluntary platform constantly supported by civil society organizations. Albania's Deputy Minister of Health and Social Security presented the government's increased efforts to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and to promote gender equality, while praising civil society as a key partner in these efforts. The conference concluded with concrete recommendations for further research and analysis on the causes that drive women to violent extremism and how to create better and more gender-sensitive responses in addressing violent extremism and radicalization in the context of South-Eastern Europe.



Albania's Constitutional Court presents its first-ever strategy and action plan prepared with support from the OSCE Presence in Albania. Tirana, 22 April 2021. (OSCE/Joana Karapataqi)

OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Head of Mission: **Ambassador Kathleen Kavalec**

Budget **€11,682,000** (Unified Budget),
€760,518 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff **314.5** posts (34 international, 280.5 national)

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Head of Mission:
Kathleen Kavalec (@KathleenKavalec) | Twitter
Kathy Kavalec | LinkedIn

In 2021, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina applied innovative approaches to promoting security, including supporting host country efforts to address corruption, process war crimes cases, strengthen independent media and deal with the impact of environmental challenges and the COVID-19 pandemic. It developed new ways to engage youth and to build the host country's capacity to aid victims of domestic violence. Despite the pandemic, the Mission continued working towards its long-term goals: helping to foster a stable, secure and democratic society.

PROTECTING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

When a group of women and children returned to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) from a refugee camp in Syria in 2019, there was no legal way to register the births of children born in Syria. As a result, these children were denied access to basic public services and rendered invisible to the BiH administrative system. To overcome this denial of basic human rights, the Mission, together with international

partners, successfully advocated for amendments to the Law on Extrajudicial Proceedings of the Federation of BiH in 2021, enabling the births of affected children to be registered and ensuring that they have access to vital services. A number of birth registrations have already been processed, with more in the works. The Mission is closely following the court proceedings and supporting the government and civil society organizations to ensure a positive and sustainable outcome.



Žepče clergy of all faiths continue to work together for a better present and future for all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. (OSCE/Sanin Muftić)



The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina works with young people across the country to support them in their peace-building efforts and their commitment to a brighter future for their country. (OSCE/Edib Jahić)

ONE MONUMENT, ONE COMMUNITY

Twenty-five years after the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords, post-war reconciliation remains a challenge in BiH, and many communities remain divided. Some communities, however, stand out for their commitment to building peace and promoting genuine reconciliation.

Žepče and Bosanski Petrovac are two prominent examples of communities committed to promoting co-existence, mutual respect and trust. In 2017, Žepče became the first municipality in BiH to erect a memorial to all civilian victims of war that has been fully endorsed by all local war veteran associations. In 2021, the memorial was refurbished with Mission support, and in June it was unveiled in conjunction with a visit by the international community co-organized by the Mission to commend Žepče for embracing dialogue and reconciliation. In September 2021, Bosanski Petrovac marked World Peace Day by unveiling a new monument to peace and designating September as a Month of Peace and Tolerance to help overcome the painful legacy of the forced displacements of the Bosniak and Serb communities in 1992 and 1995 respectively. The Mission co-organized a high-level international visit to demonstrate the international community's support for Bosanski Petrovac's efforts.

Žepče and Bosanski Petrovac have set an example for communities across the country. The Mission will build on these successes to foster positive examples of co-existence and reconciliation in the interest of all citizens.

TRAINING ENVIRONMENTAL LAWYERS

A paucity of court cases on environmental matters and the lengthy processing time for such cases due to a shortage of environmental legal experts undermine access to justice in BiH and allow environmental degradation to go unchecked. To help build the next generation of environmental lawyers, in 2021 the Mission co-operated with the Aarhus Centre Sarajevo to expand a semester-long Environmental Legal Clinics Programme from two to four universities, also bringing the initiative to the Herzegovina region for the first time. Through a combination of lectures and practical workshops, 40 law students learned about environmental legislation and cases – which are not covered in law faculties' core curricula – while developing their research, case preparation and advocacy skills. The top students from previous Environmental Legal Clinics have gone on to work with the Aarhus Centre, gaining experience working on real-life environmental cases and giving back to the local community by providing consultations and advice to citizens and civic associations.

OSCE Mission in Kosovo

Head of Mission: **Ambassador Michael Davenport**

Budget **€17,462,600** (Unified Budget),
€460,470 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff **115** international and **375.5** local

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Head of Mission:
Michael Davenport (@DavenportOSCE) | Twitter

In 2021, the Mission continued its work with institutions in Kosovo⁴ on protecting human and community rights, empowering youth and women, promoting media literacy and enhancing public safety. The Mission published the fifth edition of its landmark *Community Rights Assessment Report*, organized the now-traditional dialogue and youth academies that bring together women and youth from different communities, and worked with law enforcement agencies to increase the number of non-majority community members in their ranks. In response to the proliferation of fake news and misinformation related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mission ran a Kosovo-wide TV and social media campaign to highlight the importance of seeking out accurate sources of information.

A BREAKTHROUGH IN LANGUAGE RIGHTS

After more than two decades of a deep linguistic divide, Kosovo saw a significant breakthrough in the area of language rights and access to education in 2021. With assistance from the Mission, the Balkanistics Study Programme at the University of Prishtina's Faculty of Philology was reaccredited and reopened. This represents

a milestone for students from all communities, who now have the opportunity to study both Albanian and Serbian, as well as the history of the Balkans. Beyond bridging language barriers, the programme seeks to graduate proficient translators and interpreters to address the need for language professionals in government and the private sector.

The launch of this initiative was the culmination of four years of the Mission's advocacy and technical support to the University. In addition to assisting in the design of the curriculum and recruitment of candidate professors, the Mission provided IT equipment, specialized textbooks and

⁴ All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this Report should be understood in compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244.



Participants in the seventh OSCE Dialogue Academy for Young Women with Deputy Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo Kilian Wahl. Mavrovo, North Macedonia, 16 October 2021. (OSCE/Dragana Soćanin)



The OSCE Mission in Kosovo supports engagement between community members and the police to help build public trust and confidence in the police. (OSCE)

relevant literature, which have helped the programme meet the immediate needs of the first cohort of 11 students who enrolled in the autumn of 2021.

EMPOWERING WOMEN TO BECOME AGENTS OF CHANGE

Every October for the last seven years, the OSCE has brought together young women from Prishtinë/Priština and Belgrade to participate in the Dialogue Academy, a women's leadership development programme. Given the divisions in the region, the likelihood of these women meeting in other contexts is not very high, so they apply to the Academy seeking to overcome these barriers. In the words of one participant, the Academy offers "an amazing opportunity for women from the region to get together and focus on the things they have in common". Participants expect "to keep the special bond that was created, either by seeing each other after the Academy, or by creating initiatives that would help people".

In 2021, Secretary General Helga Schmid visited the Dialogue Academy and shared her reflections on being a woman leading high-level negotiation processes, and her experience as the first woman to serve as Secretary General of the OSCE. Her engagement with the participants inspired and motivated them to further strengthen their relationships and networks and empower each other.

The Mission also supports a network of 160 alumnae of the Dialogue Academy through visits to Prishtinë/Priština and

Belgrade, which have enabled some participants to visit each other's societies for the first time. The alumnae also work on developing initiatives to inspire others, implementing over 20 projects involving all communities. The OSCE will continue expanding this group of extraordinary women who are voicing women's rights as human rights, enhancing public participation and gender equality, and overcoming barriers in the region.

HELPING THE KOSOVO POLICE TO BETTER SERVE THE PUBLIC

To foster a safe and secure environment for all communities, the Mission works with the Police Inspectorate, the body that oversees the work of the Kosovo Police, to promote and strengthen police accountability, and improve the public's trust in and satisfaction with the police. An important outcome of training on conducting independent inspections of police structures and functions that the Mission provided in 2020 for 17 Police Inspectorate officers was the 2021 publication of the Police Inspectorate's first report on monitoring public confidence and satisfaction with the Kosovo Police. The report presents the results of a survey of nearly 1,800 people across Kosovo about their interactions with and opinions about the Kosovo Police. The report's conclusions and recommendations are helping the police address areas of concern and improve their performance in providing services to the public.

Mission to Montenegro

Head of Mission: **Ambassador Dominique Waag**

Budget **€2,152,100** (Unified Budget),
€227,318 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff **11** international, **30** local (including 9 under
extrabudgetary projects)

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Head of Mission:
Dominique Waag (@DominiqueWaag) | Twitter

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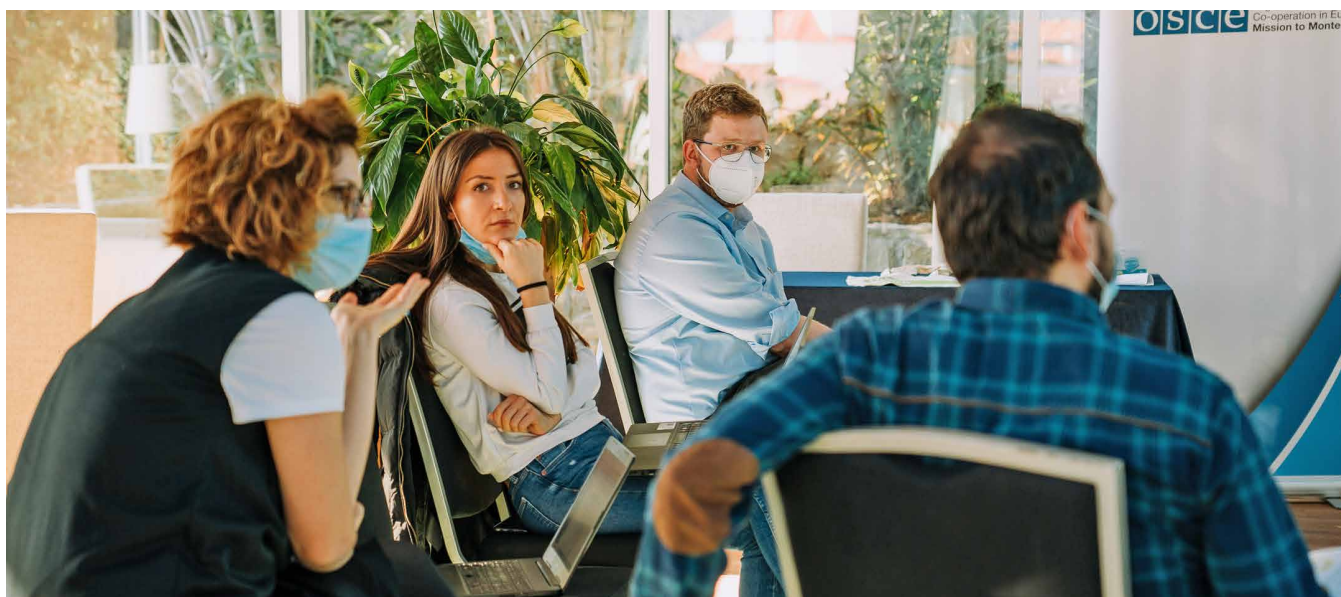
The Mission continued to work with Montenegrin institutions by providing effective and results-oriented programmes that foster security co-operation, support electoral reform, strengthen democratic institutions, promote gender equality, strengthen an independent and professional media landscape, and support regional youth reconciliation and exchanges through co-operation with the local branch office of the Regional Youth Co-operation Office.

ENCOURAGING WOMEN TO JOIN THE POLICE

To help recruit more women to join the police, the Mission launched a public information campaign together with the Police Directorate and the Police Academy. The campaign ran on television, billboards and social media platforms and featured six 30-second videos promoting women as police officers. The Police Academy subsequently reported that 38.8 per cent of enrolled candidates were women, up from 28 per cent the previous year.

Ivana knew she had to enrol when she saw the campaign. She loved sports and helping people, so she knew that policing

was the career for her. Anastasija saw herself in a police uniform, with policewomen from the videos as her future colleagues. She decided to apply to the Police Academy and was accepted. She had always wanted to enrol, but it was the campaign that gave her the courage to apply. Likewise, Andjela was drawn to the campaign through billboards, posts on social networks and TV spots. Encouraged by the campaign, she faced down prejudices about the role of women in society and applied to the Police Academy. She encountered resistance to her decision, so she enjoyed the opportunity to prove that women are equal. At the Academy, she found no discrimination; on the contrary, all her colleagues helped each other.



Young people finalizing the Regional Youth Co-operation Office (RYCO) Strategy 2022-2024 at a workshop supported by the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, Budva, 22 November 2021. (RYCO)



Students from the Department of Media Studies and Journalism at the University of Montenegro learning to use drones donated by the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, Podgorica, 19 November 2021. (OSCE)

OPEN PARLIAMENT

To enhance the openness of parliamentary activities, the Mission supported Parliament's public outreach initiatives with a donation of robotic cameras, computers and production equipment, enabling citizens to easily follow the work of their MPs. In March 2021, Parliament began live-streaming committee sessions and events on its YouTube channel and broadcasting live on the new Parliamentary Channel of the national public broadcaster. Ratings for the new channel reflected the popularity of these broadcasts. "Open and friendly co-operation with the OSCE Mission to Montenegro helped us increase the transparency and public outreach of Parliament," said Speaker of Parliament Aleksa Bečić. The Mission also enabled Parliament to convene electronic committee meetings and provide simultaneous interpretation for parliamentary sessions, meetings and events, enabling Parliament to reach a wider national and international audience. According to research by the Center for Democratic Transition, the Parliament of Montenegro ranked first in the region for the transparency of its work.

AGENCY FOR ELECTRONIC MEDIA TACKLES CRISIS MANAGEMENT

The Agency for Electronic Media, Montenegro's regulatory body for electronic media, turned to the Mission for assistance in crisis communication and preventing negative publicity. The Mission engaged an international expert to work with the Agency's communications team, which at that time was confronting the challenge of dealing with media outlets broadcasting hate speech and discriminatory content. As part of the training provided by the expert, the team analysed responses to different crisis scenarios that could strengthen both the public's and the media's trust in the Agency and could avoid and minimize reputational damage. The Mission also supported the development of a Crisis Action Plan that provides a system of responses to possible crises that enable the Agency to fulfil its regulatory responsibilities while preserving its legal and functional independence. Elvira Ceković, Head of Public Relations and General Affairs at the Agency for Electronic Media, said that the Mission had strengthened the Agency's capacity in challenging times, helping to "build stronger links among the Agency, media and the public".

Mission to Serbia

Head of Mission: **Ambassador Jan Braathu**

Budget	€6,258,600 (Unified Budget), €1,121,098 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff	21 international, 112.5 local (including 15 under extrabudgetary projects)

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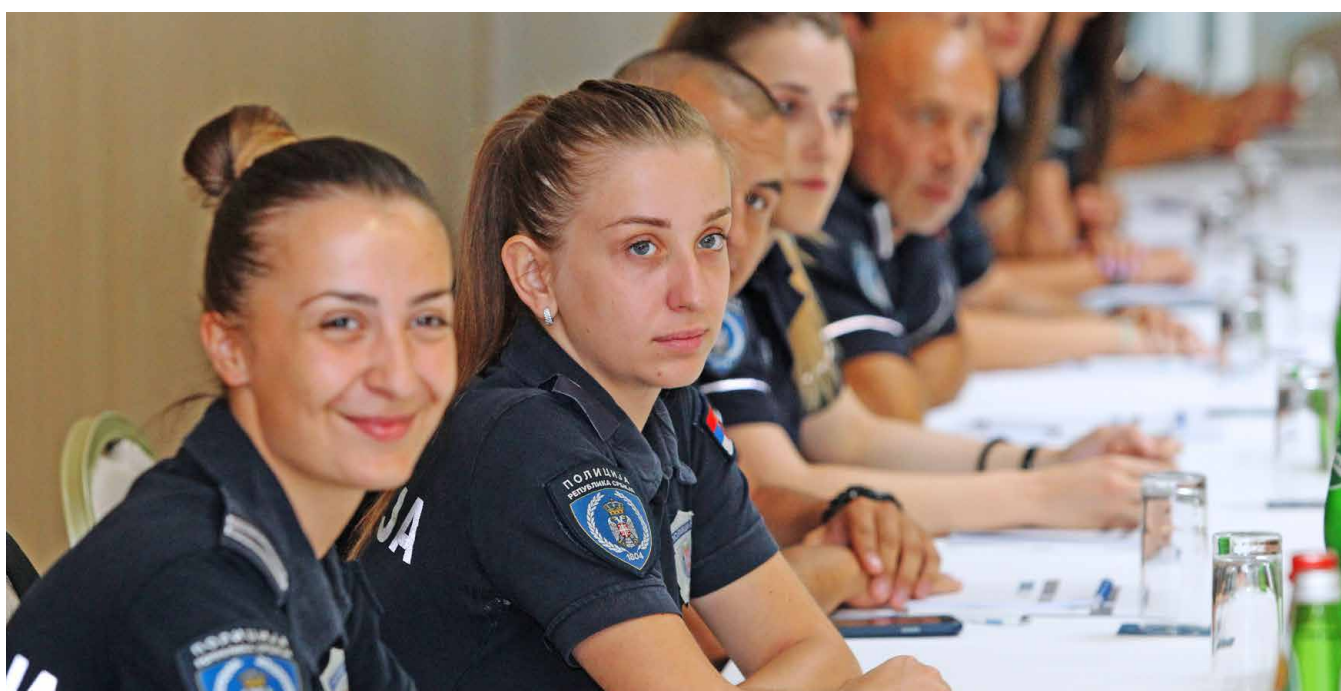
In 2021, the Mission supported Serbia's reform process in areas related to its mandate: strengthening the rule of law and judicial independence, combating organized crime and corruption, protecting human rights, ensuring media freedom and pluralism, and fostering integration of national minorities. It continued to adapt its working methods to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and to work in partnership with Serbia's institutions, media, civil society and international partners to foster an inclusive democratic system accountable to all its citizens.

PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE

Following the 2020 National Assembly and local elections, the Mission provided training for new MPs and councillors on their legislative, representative and oversight roles. The Mission supported amendments to the Code of Conduct for MPs and rolled out ethics codes for local self-government units, which were translated into the languages of national minorities. The Mission supported cross-party initiatives – the Women's Parliamentary Network and the Green Parliamentary Group – facilitating their outreach to local

constituents to promote gender-responsive budgeting and responsible environmental governance.

As Serbia works to enhance the separation of powers through constitutional reform, the Mission supported debates among judges and prosecutors on amendments to the Constitution concerning the judiciary. The Mission has also been training judicial stakeholders to uphold independence and integrity, to protect the rights of victims and witnesses of crimes – including by donating videoconferencing equipment to five courts – and to ensure human rights-compliant treatment of prisoners.



Training for police officers on youth safety, Belgrade, 7 May 2021. (OSCE/Milan Obradović)



Participants in the Professional Practice Programme from south-west Serbia share their experiences with the Deputy Head of Mission, Belgrade, 25 June 2021. (OSCE/Milan Obradović)

INTERCULTURAL YOUTH DIALOGUE AND REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

As an investment in Serbia's future, the Mission engaged youth across all its programmes. For example, 197 youth from various communities and religious groups took part in Mission-sponsored intercultural training activities, while the Summer School on Human Rights and the anti-discrimination legal clinic taught 52 students to recognize and address discrimination and hate crime. For the third consecutive year, the Mission's Professional Practice Programme enabled youth from minority areas to spend six months working in state institutions. Together with the Mission in Kosovo, the Mission to Serbia organized the seventh Dialogue Academy for young women from Belgrade and Pristina to promote mutual understanding, mediation and reconciliation. To foster positive narratives in the region, the Mission and the OSCE Presence in Albania organized a learning exchange for journalism students from Serbia and Albania. Building upon the Mission-supported initiative Humans of Albania and Serbia, the youth councils of the two countries signed a memorandum of co-operation. The Mission continued promoting education opportunities for youth from national minorities, including at the bilingual Bujanovac Department of Economics. Serbian–Albanian language courses held in Bujanovac to help intercommunity dialogue saw the highest enrolment rate since 2016.

SECURITY AND SAFETY FOR ALL CITIZENS

In partnership with the Interior Ministry, the Mission worked to strengthen police accountability and ensure a more inclusive police service. The Mission built the capacities of 174 police officers to investigate corruption, cybercrime and terrorism financing, including through a series of workshops in six areas related to organized crime and transnational threats. Boosting regional investigative co-operation, the Mission continued supporting the Permanent Conference of Organized Crime Prosecutors and the operational meetings of regional task forces against human smuggling. At the local level, it helped monitor the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and initiated a juvenile crime prevention project.

MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM

To ensure implementation of Serbia's 2020 Media Strategy and Action Plan, the Mission remained the key partner of the government and the media in developing relevant legislative amendments. The Mission facilitated discussions with academia and youth on the impact of digital technologies on media freedom, professionalism and ethics. The sustainability of local media outlets, including outlets operating in minority languages, featured during debates with the media, local governments and national minority councils. The safety of journalists remained a priority for the Mission-supported Permanent Working Group on Safety of Journalists, which is working to amend the Criminal Code to better protect journalists.

BOOSTING PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH FROM MINORITY AND UNDER-DEVELOPED AREAS



Anita Mahmutović, Belgrade, 20 October 2020. (OSCE/Milan Obradović)

Anita Mahmutović, a geographer from the Bosniak-majority municipality of Sjenica, Serbia, was thrilled to learn about the Mission to Serbia's Professional Practice Programme, which enables young professionals from national minority-populated and underdeveloped areas to spend six months working with state institutions. Participants gain experience while supporting the implementation of the rule of law and Serbia's reform agenda.

"I saw it as an opportunity to gain knowledge and new skills," says Anita. "I dedicated myself completely during those six months." She worked closely with her mentor and other senior colleagues at the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue to get acquainted with the Ministry's procedures and to build her expertise. She also developed a range of professional skills, including problem-solving, prioritizing and negotiating, as well as working both independently and in a team.

Implemented in partnership with the Serbian Government since 2019, the Mission's Professional Practice Programme has so far placed 21 young professionals from the Albanian, Bosniak and Serb communities at nine ministries and agencies. They include, among others, the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government; the Agency for Prevention of Corruption; the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology; the Office of the

Commissioner for Protection of Equality; and the Co-ordination Body for Preševu, Bujanovac and Medveđa. Many participants have continued their employment with state institutions since completing the Programme.

Anita is one of them. After completing her professional practice in the Programme's 2020–2021 cycle, she was hired for a post in the Sector for Co-operation with Civil Society at the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue. Now she is putting her newly developed skills and expertise to use by managing documentation in support of the Ministry's joint projects with civil society organizations and as the Ministry's focal point for communicating with them. It is a responsible task, as this newly created ministry places dialogue with various social groups at the forefront of its work.

Anita is convinced that the Professional Practice Programme is an important investment in young people from smaller communities, giving them opportunities for the professional development of their choice. The Programme not only opens up new pathways of opportunity, but it also enables young women and men from these communities to contribute to their country's progress. This is inclusive youth participation in action. One of the Programme's most important lessons, Anita says, is that "through commitment and hard work we can achieve great things".

Mission to Skopje

Head of Mission: **Ambassador Clemens Koja**

Budget **€6,506,100** (Unified Budget),
€1,110,700 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff **38** international, 116 local

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Head of Mission: Clemens Koja (@KojaClemens) | Twitter

In 2021, the OSCE Mission to Skopje continued to support reforms contributing to judicial independence, media freedom, community rights, democratization and police professionalization, while also working to strengthen Parliament and improve electoral processes. The Mission assisted further implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement and followed security-related developments in the country.

BRINGING POLICE CLOSER TO PEOPLE

In 2021, the OSCE Mission to Skopje continued to support reforms contributing to judicial independence, media freedom, community rights, democratization and police professionalization, while also working to strengthen Parliament, improve electoral processes and address transnational threats. The Mission assisted further implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement and followed security-related developments in the country.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, police communication with local communities has been limited since the start of the pandemic. To address this gap, the Mission helped to revitalize Local Prevention Councils, which consist of mayors, police officers and citizens and address specific local

security concerns. The police officers in charge of councils were trained in community dialogue and delivery of joint preventive actions involving multiple actors such as local community representatives, municipalities, police and other institutions responsible for community services. The Mission also raised awareness of the police prevention function through open days, where citizens were invited to tour police stations throughout North Macedonia.

The Mission organized a workshop for police with women from remote areas, who shared their security concerns and suggested possible solutions to safety threats affecting their communities. The Mission also supported artistic workshops, sports activities and other crime prevention events for youth in several regions of the country.



Meeting for alumni of the Mentoring Programme for Women in Police held on 30 November and 1 December 2021 in Skopje. (OSCE/Naser Nagavci)



Dialogue between citizens and the Regional Police Sector of Kumanovo, North Macedonia, on Police Prevention Day, 9 December 2021. (OSCE/Naser Nagavci)

SUPPORTING WOMEN IN THE POLICE

To support women police officers and enhance female representation in the male-dominated police, in 2021 the Mission completed a multi-year mentoring initiative to help young female police officers to recognize and overcome professional obstacles and to identify and pursue opportunities to advance their careers. Since 2017, 106 women have participated in this programme; so far, two have been promoted to higher commanding positions, and several others have moved from administration to police service.

The police leadership has recognized the programme's success and supports its institutionalization. In 2020, the Mission conducted a self-evaluation of the programme involving 87 police officials, including nine men. To ensure continuity and a successful transfer to local ownership, in 2021 the Mission delivered a series of workshops for the core team who will be in charge of implementing the programme within the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

STRENGTHENING INCLUSIVE AND RESPONSIBLE JOURNALISM

The media have an important responsibility to reflect the whole population in all of its diversity. To increase inclusiveness in media reporting and help build a journalistic workforce that reflects media audiences and their interests, the Mission supported a course on the importance of promoting and respecting fundamental rights, intercultural dialogue and anti-discriminatory practices to prevent harmful stereotypes in media reporting for journalists working in various news media throughout the country.

Male Engagement for Gender Equality

In 2021, the Mission promoted male engagement for gender equality throughout the OSCE with an online discussion about how men can help advance gender equality in the workplace and how a more diverse and inclusive workforce benefits both women and men. Some 65 staff from across the Organization as well as 49 representatives from the delegations of OSCE participating States, local embassies and national and international partner organizations took part in the discussion, which provided a how-to for men and women, including organizational leaders, who want to be intentional and inclusive allies in working for gender equality.

The Mission helped the Council of Media Ethics to develop and promote its Ethical Guidelines for Online Media, which complement the Code of Journalists and serve as guidelines for self-regulating internet-based news media and enhancing independent and professional reporting in the online domain.

To recognize and honour professional journalism, the Mission co-organized a competition to award the writers of the best journalistic stories on the experiences of vulnerable and marginalized groups during the coronavirus pandemic. Through this initiative, the Mission and the Council of Media Ethics encouraged and inspired consistent and high-quality journalism that fairly represents and includes viewpoints and perspectives of diverse groups in society.

“MY MISSION IS TO CHANGE THE WAY THINGS ARE DONE”



Commander Maja Stojanovska in her office at the Kisela Voda Police Station in Skopje. (OSCE/Naser Nagavci)

Since graduating from the Police Training Center in 2003, Maja Stojanovska has worked her way up through the ranks, and she now serves as Commander of the Kisela Voda Police Station in Skopje. In a profession traditionally considered to be for men, Maja had to overcome many challenges along her career path, including gender bias and stereotyping. That is a big part of the reason that she is an enthusiastic participant in the Mission to Skopje's Mentoring Programme for Women in Police, which was launched in 2017 to help young women navigate the male-dominated working environment of the police, overcome obstacles, and make the most of opportunities for professional advancement.

"I feel that I carry a burden on my back", Maja says. "Many eyes are on me. I have paved the way for other colleagues to resist gender bias in the future."

Maja is one of 106 women who have so far participated in the Programme, which builds self-confidence and professional skills for both mentees and mentors.

As a mentor, Maja is happy to share her own experience to help her mentee learn to manage her everyday tasks efficiently and establish and maintain work-life balance in a very demanding profession. Maja is in constant contact with her mentee, always ready to listen when she faces difficulties and needs support.

Participating in the Mentoring Programme has strengthened Maja's sense of female solidarity. "I will fight for gender equality", she says with determination. "My mission is to change the way things are done."

Maja is not just talking about changing attitudes toward women in the police so that they have equal opportunities to succeed and advance, though that is certainly a key part of her goal. However, she also wants to promote positive effects in the communities where female officers work.

"I try to encourage my female colleagues to be more visible in their communities", Maja says, particularly since female officers are often able to ease communication and interaction between the public and the police. But that's not all. "Citizens demand that the police respect the law and conclude their cases without gender bias or prejudice", Maja states. "Our citizens expect quick results and equal treatment of victims of domestic violence and other types of crime."

Police units with mentors and mentees have seen positive changes in their climate, with improved teamwork, greater cohesiveness, greater awareness of gender-related issues and empowerment of young female officers. The police leadership has recognized the Mentoring Programme's positive impact, and in 2021, the OSCE Mission and the Ministry of Internal Affairs began the process of institutionalizing the Programme in the human resource system of the police.

Maja offers a final word of encouragement to young female officers: "Be brave, be self-confident, take on the challenge, be consistent and never give up!"

Centre in Ashgabat

Head of Centre: **Ambassador John MacGregor**

Budget **€1,661,200** (Unified Budget),
€119,954 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff **6** international, **23** local

www.osce.org/centre-in-ashgabat

Head of Centre:
John S MacGregor (@Amb_MacGregor) | Twitter

Despite the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic, the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat expanded its efforts to combat transnational threats and strengthen border management, foster economic connectivity and good environmental practices, and promote respect for human rights, gender equality and media development. Some of its most innovative projects addressed cyber/ICT security, women's economic empowerment and smart cities. The Centre also stepped up its assistance to tackling challenges caused by the global pandemic.

ADVANCING CYBER/ICT SECURITY

The Centre's co-operation with the Turkmenistan Institute of Telecommunications and Informatics yielded its first significant result in 2021: the establishment of a Centre of Excellence on Cybersecurity. With state-of-the-art facilities, the Centre of Excellence provides a platform for sharing international good practices in countering cyberthreats and strengthens Turkmenistan's educational and methodological basis in the field of information security and communication technologies. It will build the capacities of teachers, increase students' knowledge and provide advanced training for both public and private sector cyber specialists.

"We are very pleased that this initiative is progressing so well," said John MacGregor, Head of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat. "It will contribute to the Government of Turkmenistan's efforts to meet a major emerging security challenge and strengthen the country's cyber/ICT security in an era of rapidly developing digital technologies."

UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF RENEWABLE ENERGY

Promoting energy security and renewable energy and supporting Turkmenistan in fulfilling its commitments to



Participants in a training course on new trends and challenges in combating trafficking in illicit drugs and precursors take part in a practical exercise, Ashgabat, 12 July 2021. (OSCE)



Students at the Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan taking part in a lecture series for future diplomats on inclusive security, effective negotiations and the role of women in diplomacy organized by the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat, 9 December 2021. (courtesy of the Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan)

reduce carbon dioxide emissions and introduce green technologies are among the Centre's priorities in the economic and environmental dimension of security. As part of the Centre's support for implementation of the State Programme for Energy Saving 2018–2024, hydro-meteorological stations will be installed in all five regions of Turkmenistan. These digital technologies will identify wind and solar energy resources in various locations in Turkmenistan and transmit relevant data to a central database. The data will be analysed and used for measuring wind and solar energy potential.

"The collected data will serve as a base for the development of a solar and wind cadastre, a compilation of renewable energy sources that offer an ecological solution to climate change and potential security risks stemming from it," said Esger Atayev, Senior Scientific Researcher at the Renewable Energy Research and Production Centre of the Turkmen State Energy Institute. "Outfitting our Research and Production Centre with modern hydro-meteorological stations is a large-scale project of national importance, the implementation of which is a sustainable and highly relevant contribution of the OSCE Centre to the development of the renewable energy sector of Turkmenistan."

PROMOTING THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN FOSTERING PEACE AND TRUST

As part of its efforts to promote gender equality, the Centre organized a Central Asia Forum in co-operation with the Government of Turkmenistan and with the support of the OSCE Secretariat's Gender Issues Programme and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to facilitate inclusive dialogue on women's contributions to promoting security and trust.

Participants from the five Central Asian countries and Afghanistan discussed women's participation in political and public life and in the security sector and their role in fostering economic prosperity and protecting human rights.

"The Forum offers an excellent platform for discussions, which will facilitate the development of unified approaches to addressing gender-related issues and will contribute to the strengthening of peace and security by ensuring gender equality," said Gulshat Mammedova, Chairperson of the Mejlis (lower chamber) of the Milli Gengesh (parliament) of Turkmenistan.

The Forum also supported implementation of Turkmenistan's National Action Plan on Gender Equality 2021–2025 and activities organized as part of the International Year of Peace and Trust declared by the United Nations at Turkmenistan's initiative.

PROGRAMME OFFICE IN BISHKEK

Head of Office: **Ambassador Alexey Rogov**

Budget **€6,811,000** (Unified Budget),
€901,641 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure,
including the OSCE Academy in Bishkek)

Staff **13** international, **110** local

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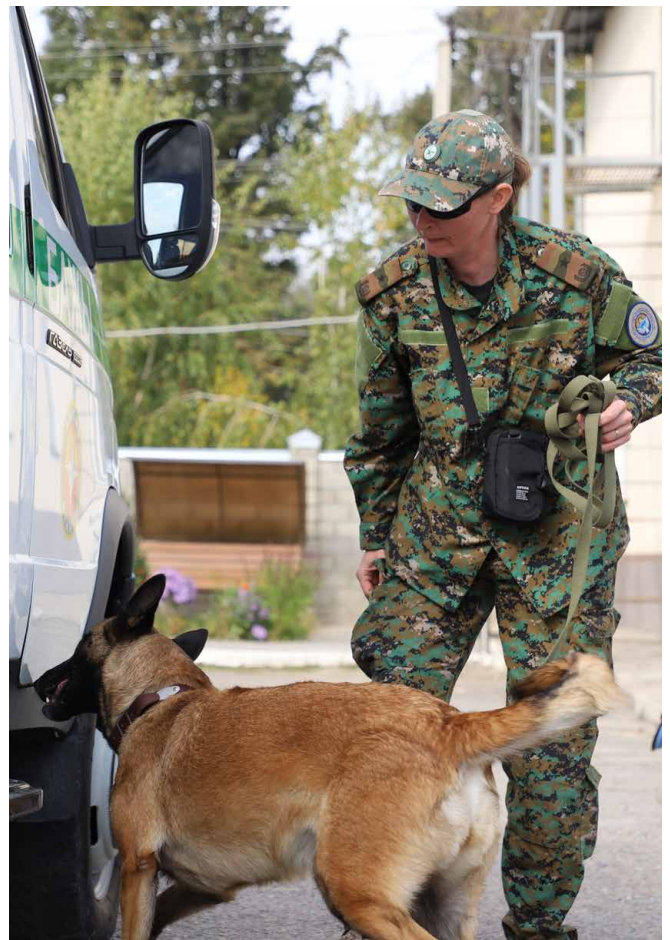
In 2021, the Programme Office in Bishkek implemented programmatic activities in accordance with its mandate and planned within the framework of an annual consultative mechanism in response to Kyrgyzstan's priorities and in co-operation with state institutions, international organizations and civil society. The Programme Office supported Kyrgyzstan in advancing security sector governance, fostering economic development of the country's regions, combating corruption and promoting digitalization, facilitating justice and electoral reforms, addressing climate change, countering transnational threats and promoting gender equality.

SUPPORTING WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

In its effort to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, the Programme Office puts special focus on supporting implementation of a 2019 law requiring a minimum 30 per cent quota for women in Kyrgyzstan's local councils, which was adopted with the Programme Office's multi-year comprehensive support. In 2020–2021, the Programme Office provided training for 242 women on the fight against gender stereotypes in politics, public speaking, political leadership and electoral legislation. In April 2021, 73 per cent of these women ran in local council elections, and 60 per cent of those who ran won a seat. Women now account for 39 per cent of local council members nationwide, an increase from 10 per cent in 2016.

STRENGTHENING BORDER MANAGEMENT AND PROMOTING BORDER SECURITY

The Programme Office provides comprehensive support for implementation of the Advance Passenger Information / Passenger Name Record (API/PNR) system, which is designed to prevent the movement of foreign terrorist fighters and ensure effective border management and security. In 2021, following its successful implementation of the API/PNR system, Kyrgyzstan was appointed Chair of the first OSCE Eastern European Informal Working Group on Passenger Data. The Working Group provides a forum for passenger information



A customs officer trains a dog at Kyrgyzstan's newly accredited World Customs Organization Regional Dog Training Centre, which was supported by the OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek. (OSCE/Chyngyz Zhanybekov)

units and policymakers to support implementation of **OSCE Ministerial Council Decision 6/16** on enhancing the use of API (2016) and relevant UN Security Council resolutions on threats to international peace and security.

In November 2021, thanks to the Programme Office’s multi-year efforts to facilitate regional cross-border and customs co-operation, the Training Centre of the State Customs Service of the Kyrgyz Republic was accredited as a World Customs Organization Regional Dog Training Centre. Canine training unit staff from customs services across the region now can acquire skills in line with international standards, thus strengthening regional cross-border customs co-operation.

SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In 2021, the Programme Office launched Kyrgyzstan’s first full-fledged online mini Master of Business Administration course. The course equips entrepreneurs, particularly those in remote areas, with business planning and management skills, thus helping to develop small and medium-sized enterprises. This is especially important in light of the negative economic impact of COVID-19.

The Programme Office also continued to implement its women’s economic empowerment programme, which enables women to launch their own businesses and become financially independent. In 2021, 40 women from Batken and Issyk-Kul provinces were coached by experts from Programme Office-supported Entrepreneurship Support Centres in preparing business plans, and 30 of the women received in-kind support from the Programme Office to launch businesses, thus creating jobs and contributing to sustainable economic development across these provinces.



Participants in Kyrgyzstan’s first inclusive youth conference on the future economy, Bishkek, 29 October 2021. (OSCE/Ranat Rysbek kyzy)



Sadyr Japarov, President of Kyrgyzstan, and Alexey Rogov, Head of the OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek, shake hands at an official meeting, 2 August 2021. (Press Services of the Presidential Administration of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan)

PROMOTING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The Programme Office co-organized Kyrgyzstan’s first inclusive youth conference on the future economy – “green”, “creative” and “digital” – with 1,290 young people and persons with disabilities from across the country participating. The event included an upcycling fair, where local designers, some of whom employ persons with disabilities, presented repurposed and eco-products. The Programme Office also conducted capacity-building events on environmental protection for 3,013 schoolchildren and university students throughout the country and supported train-the-trainer courses for 90 schoolteachers who will deliver classes on environmental issues in schools across the country.

OSCE ACADEMY IN BISHKEK

www.osce-academy.net

The OSCE Academy in Bishkek is the OSCE’s flagship higher education and research institution, providing high-quality postgraduate education to young people from Central Asia, Afghanistan, Mongolia and beyond. With two master’s programmes, professional training and research projects promoting peace and stability, the Academy strengthens connectivity in the region. It also hosts a summer school, specialized seminars and visits by guest lecturers. Since its founding in 2002, the OSCE Academy has graduated 554 master’s students.

[OSCE Academy | Facebook](#)

[OSCE Academy \(@OSCE_Academy\) / Twitter](#)

[OSCE Academy \(@osceacademy\) | Instagram](#)

[OSCE Academy in Bishkek: Overview | LinkedIn](#)

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP – A FORCE FOR CHANGE



Ainura Omorova, Chairperson of the Saruu Village Council, discussing the 30 per cent quota at a press café organized by the Programme Office in Bishkek, November 2019. (OSCE/Chyngyz Zhanybekov)

Winter mornings are late, and it's still dark when Ainura Omorova leaves for work in the village of Saruu in Kyrgyzstan, where she heads the district hospital's infectious diseases department. Her day starts early, and she apologizes when she wakes her patients to examine them.

Last year, COVID-19 was a game changer. The sudden influx of patients, a shortage of hospital beds, sick doctors, exhausted nurses, shortages of drugs and medical equipment, and no idea of when the situation would improve – all of this tested Ainura's limits, but she fought for her patients every day.

Maybe because she's a fighter, maybe because of her dedication to helping people, or maybe because of her late husband's support, Ainura decided to participate in the September 2019 local council elections. She was elected, and not for the first time, but it was the first time she was elected through the minimum 30 per cent gender quota for local council elections adopted and signed into law one month earlier, thanks in part to years of comprehensive support by the OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek. Ainura and eight other women won nine, or 43 per cent, of the council's 21 seats.

In April 2021, thousands of other women won seats in some 420 local councils across Kyrgyzstan. Thanks to the gender quota, today women occupy 39 per cent of seats across 452 local councils, and 43 of them, including Ainura, chair councils.

"Women are very responsible and meticulous, which is especially helpful during council sessions when we try to ensure gender-sensitive budgeting," Ainura told the Grodno Forum of Women Leaders organized by ODIHR in 2019.

Ainura shared her inspiring story with women from Kyrgyzstan participating in Leadership Schools organized by the Programme Office in 2020 and 2021, urging them to rid themselves of doubts, to stay focused and to work hard for their communities.

This is exactly what Ainura has been doing as chair of her village council. Under her leadership, the council completely renovated classrooms and repaired the wiring and fencing at one school, which had not been done since Soviet times; installed new boilers in another school so that children can stay warm during class; widened and paved Saruu's narrow streets; and installed 110 new streetlights to keep them illuminated and safe.

"We have KGS 4 million [c. EUR 42,000] left that we plan to spend on construction of a new small hydroelectric power plant, and also to build a facility that creates small artificial glaciers by the riverside up in the mountains that would create extra water flow during the dry summer months," says Ainura, aiming to fully disburse the council's funds by year-end.

At 9:00 p.m. Ainura finishes her hospital work and drives to a council session, which will run until midnight. On her way, a nurse phones: one of Ainura's patients' blood tests are not good. Ainura says she will swing by again in the morning.

Programme Office in Dushanbe

Head of Office: **Ambassador Valeriu Chiveri**

Budget	€7,311,600 (Unified Budget), €2,920,221 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff	26 international, 156 local (including 40 under extrabudgetary projects)

OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe | Facebook
Head of Programme Office: Valeriu Chiveri | LinkedIn

www.osce.org/programme-office-in-dushanbe

In 2021, the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe continued its efforts to respond to the challenging circumstances caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic and to carry out planned programmatic activities in various formats. The Programme Office supported Tajikistan in responding to the emerging threats emanating from neighbouring Afghanistan, promoting economic opportunities for women and youth, and ensuring the rights of vulnerable groups. It also paved the way for a new phase of the joint OSCE-EU initiative aimed at building the capacity of border troops.

BORDER SECURITY AND TRANSNATIONAL THREATS

The Programme Office responded to the volatile security environment along the border with Afghanistan by implementing a comprehensive training programme for Tajikistan's Border Troops. Some 945 border officers benefited from training in operational and tactical planning, command and control, patrolling, first aid in combat operations, mountaineering techniques and canine detection services. To ensure progress towards gender equality and implementation of human rights commitments, gender awareness and respect for human rights were mainstreamed in all training exercises. "The Tajik Border Troops highly appreciate the contribution

of the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe to border stabilization and security," said Colonel-General Rajabali Rahmonali, Commander of the Border Troops of Tajikistan. "Its project to support the stabilization of Tajikistan's southern border region with Afghanistan is highly valued and timely support in the current challenging situation."

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND YOUTH

The participation of women and youth in economic life makes an important contribution to a sustainable economy. Yet, they often face barriers to capital, markets, property



Tajik border officers at the graduation ceremony for a training course on operational planning, Khujand, 13 May 2021. (OSCE/Farhod Nabiulloev)

ownership and inheritance rights, and they may be barred from some types of employment or face employment discrimination. To address these challenges, as well as the post-pandemic recovery, the Programme Office promoted the participation of women and youth in initiatives to increase employment opportunities and build accountability and transparency in economic development. In partnership with government and civil society, the Programme Office provided training in tourism development, business and digital skills and financial literacy for 100 women and 135 men in 2021. “This training gave us the necessary knowledge and expertise to open our own homestay business,” said Furugh Shakarmamadova, a business development training participant. The Programme Office also held workshops and training sessions for 60 women and 40 men on how youth and women can help combat corruption.



Inna Zdanovič (left) from Lithuania, Sirarpi Ohanyan from Armenia and Anastasiia Marchuk from Ukraine with their diplomas from the BMSC's one-year postgraduate course in border security and management for senior leaders, Dushanbe, 19 November 2021. (OSCE/Nozim Kalandarov)

PROMOTING THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Since Tajikistan signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2018, the Programme Office has supported the country's efforts to advance its ratification. The Office assisted government and civil society stakeholders with the drafting of a road map for ratification, and has raised awareness about the Convention and the rights of persons with disabilities throughout Tajikistan. In 2021, the Programme Office convened, together with the Ministry of Health and the Union of People with Disabilities, nationwide round tables involving local authorities and disability rights organizations to discuss implementation of the State Programme on an Accessible Environment 2021–2025. The Programme was adopted in February 2021 with the Office's support as part of Tajikistan's road map towards ratification of the Convention. One outcome of the round-table debates was an assessment of the accessibility of various public places for persons with disabilities.

BORDER MANAGEMENT STAFF COLLEGE

www.oscebmsc.org

A flagship OSCE regional initiative, the Border Management Staff College (BMSC) has been providing specialized training, intensive one-month courses and one-year postgraduate diploma courses on border security for senior and mid-level professionals since 1999. Over the years, 1,839 border security management officials – including 805 women – from 48 OSCE participating States, 11 Partners for Co-operation and 8 non-OSCE countries have taken part in BMSC courses. In 2021, despite pandemic conditions, the Staff College delivered its programmes in full using online, hybrid and face-to-face modalities. Lola Ramonova, a graduate of a one-month staff course held in March 2021, said that she especially enjoyed the efforts of the experts and organizers to bring together all participants in practical exercises, group research work, round-table discussions and field study trips.



Participants in an OSCE-supported course to train women to become mountain guides trekking in Tajikistan's Gaznok Mountains, 26 June 2021. (OSCE/Violeta Velkoska)

Programme Office in Nur-Sultan

Head of Office: **Dr. Volker Frobarth**

Budget **€2,232,700** (Unified Budget),
€161,666 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff **6** international, **22** local

Head of Programme Office: Volker Frobarth | [LinkedIn](#)

www.osce.org/programme-office-in-nur-sultan

In 2021, the OSCE Programme Office in Nur-Sultan built upon lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and fostered closer ties with government, civil society, academia, the private sector and the international community. An overarching focus of its engagement with the host country was supporting the presidential reform agenda across all three security dimensions. The Programme Office also continued its extrabudgetary project on police reform and launched a new multi-year extrabudgetary project to support reforms in the justice sector.

TACKLING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

“Unconventional” and “practical” are the most common terms participants used to describe the second national live simulation exercise on combating human trafficking along migration routes. The Office organized this week-long training for some 30 professionals from law enforcement agencies,

labour inspectorates, migration authorities, prosecutorial offices, NGOs and public social services in co-operation with the Almaty Police Academy and the Office of the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Countering Trafficking in Human Beings. The exercise offered front-line responders the opportunity to simulate real-life anti-trafficking responses, using actors to create scenarios of human trafficking for labour and sexual exploitation.



Members of the prosecutors' team co-ordinating oversight activities in the second national live simulation exercise on combating human trafficking along migration routes, Almaty, 15 October 2021. (OSCE/Kunsulu Demeuova)



The signing of an agreement to donate UAVs to Altyn-Emel National Park, Baschi village, Almaty province, 18 September 2021. (OSCE/Aziz Nurbekov)

“After the role play, police and prosecution can better relate to the difficulties social workers face. It also promotes the importance of information-sharing and mutual support,” said one of the participants. Five video modules and 36 video lessons aimed to strengthen the criminal justice response and build the capacity of law enforcement. These materials will be used as part of the education curricula for distance learning of the Law Enforcement Agencies Academy under the Prosecutor General’s Office.

PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE AND SAVING ENDANGERED WILDLIFE

As part of its multi-year efforts to promote good governance by focusing on combating wildlife poaching, the Office donated specialized unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to the Environmental Ministry’s East Kazakhstan territorial inspectorate and the Altyn-Emel National Park. These UAVs are capable of performing a variety of tasks – from tracking poachers in remote areas and monitoring wildlife species, to controlling forest fires. Training in use of the UAVs has also been provided.

This donated equipment is being used for a range of monitoring activities, greatly improving the ability of the authorities to combat poachers in difficult terrain and

in areas with poor roads. The poachers are often better equipped than park rangers, and these UAVs tip the technological edge in favour of the rangers. This co-operation will reduce poaching of rare and endangered animals in Kazakhstan.

SUPPORTING LOCAL SELF-GOVERNANCE

As part of its efforts to support the presidential reform agenda to promote good governance and democratic development in Kazakhstan, the Office, in co-operation with the Ministry for Information and Social Development as well as other partners, conducted a series of seminars to help strengthen the role and capacity of *maslikhats* (local self-governance bodies). Targeting some 800 mostly newly elected deputies from all 14 of Kazakhstan’s provinces and its three major cities – Almaty, Nur-Sultan and Shymkent – the seminars offered sessions on the main competencies of deputies and their rights, duties and responsibilities in exercising their powers in accordance with the relevant legislation. They also examined best practices for civic engagement in decision-making processes at the local level and highlighted the importance of ensuring the accessibility of budget information and promoting opportunities to introduce open budget data in the country’s regions.

YOUTH LEADING THE WAY TOWARDS A GREEN ECONOMY



Saule Agatayeva addresses the eighth session of the Central Asian Leadership Programme, Almaty, 13 September 2017. (CAREC)

“For me, ‘green economy’ is a lifestyle, mindfulness in consumption and a step towards shaping an agenda for sustainable development,” says Saule Agatayeva. In 2017, Saule participated in the eighth session of the Central Asian Leadership Programme (CALP) for young environmentalists from Central Asia and Afghanistan, and since 2019, she has been a member of the organizing committee of its alumni/ae network in Kazakhstan.

Participation in CALP increased Saule’s knowledge about green economies and sustainable development, water resource management and the nexus of water, food, energy and ecosystems. She also developed leadership skills. Saule believes her new expertise will enable her to increase youth’s role in regional co-operation in promoting environmentalism and sustainable development. She is committed to organizing regular outdoor activities and public talks to foster eco-friendly behaviours and build environmental knowledge and capacities among Central Asian youth leaders.

In 2021, 38 participants from government agencies, green businesses, civil society organizations and academia in Central Asia and Afghanistan took part in the 12th annual CALP session, which was organized by the OSCE Programme Office in Nur-Sultan in partnership with the

Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia, the UN Environment Programme, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, the World Bank and the European Union. The focus was on sustainable consumption and production and their relation to food supply and security. Participants heard from experts on green economies, the transition towards low-carbon development, sustainable water management and biodiversity conservation.

Saule sees great potential in the CALP alumni/ae network. After 12 years, “there is a huge group of CALP graduates and professional expertise.” What’s more, “we are one family, and we have similar values.” She wants to get these young leaders from across the region involved in joint projects and communication campaigns – to promote environmentally friendly attitudes, the principles of sustainable development and environmentally friendly purchases such as locally produced eco-products or organic food – to build a green community.

“Sometimes when I reflect and assess the work that’s been done, how programmes and projects positively influence people, the environment and communities, then I understand that it’s not in vain,” says Saule, “and for a minute or two I feel part of a global movement.”

Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan

Project Co-ordinator: **Ambassador Pierre von Arx**

Budget **€2,499,200** (Unified Budget),
€3 29,773 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff **4** international, **36** local

OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan | Facebook
OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan (@OSCE_PCUZ) | Twitter
Project Co-ordinator: Pierre von Arx | LinkedIn

www.osce.org/project-coordinator-in-uzbekistan

In 2021, the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan supported the host country's efforts to promote cyber/ICT security, rehabilitate and reintegrate families of foreign terrorist fighters, increase women's employment and entrepreneurship, and advance the rights of persons with disabilities among its wide range of activities in all three security dimensions.

PROMOTING CYBER/ICT SECURITY

The effectiveness of measures to address threats posed by the criminal use of cyberspace and rapidly developing ICT technologies depends on collaboration among government, civil society, business, academia and citizens. In 2021, the Office of the Project Co-ordinator, together with the NGO Softline Education and with the support of Uzbekistan's Ministry for Development of Information Technologies and Communications, launched the Cybersecurity Competence Centre. The Centre offers training seminars to build the capacity of IT specialists from government and the private sector on the technical and legal aspects of ICT security, including OSCE confidence-building measures to reduce the risk of conflict stemming from the use of ICTs. Participation

in these activities "enabled our colleagues to improve their skills in cybersecurity and acquire new information and knowledge," said a Ministry of Defence official. "We believe this project is timely and useful for technical specialists responsible for ensuring information security of enterprises and agencies."

REHABILITATING AND REINTEGRATING FAMILIES OF FOREIGN TERRORIST FIGHTERS

The Project Co-ordinator promotes whole-of-society and whole-of-government approaches to the challenges of rehabilitating and reintegrating the families of foreign



Training on social integration and rehabilitation of families of foreign terrorist fighters returning from Syria and Iraq, with the participation of local authorities, law enforcement agencies and local communities. Nurafshan, 13 September 2021. (OSCE/Anna Antipina)



Coozin baking workshop in Samarkand, 27–28 November 2021. (OSCE/Murod Khusanov)

terrorist fighters returning to Uzbekistan. In 2021, the Project Co-ordinator convened a series of capacity-building seminars in 11 of Uzbekistan's regions to improve co-operation among state and non-state actors responsible for rehabilitating and reintegrating returnees from Syria and Iraq. With over 500 participants, the seminars facilitated dialogue and the sharing of experiences in preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization that can lead to terrorism. "Based on our experience, I would like to assure those who are sceptical about the return of their citizens that the results achieved through rehabilitation processes are convincing," said Oliya Ilmuradova, director of the NGO Barkaror Hayot. However, "rehabilitation processes are very fragile. They require constant daily attention by dozens of specialists. In some cases," she stressed, "it may take us several years to fully reintegrate people into society. We should be ready to accompany them on this difficult path."

SUPPORTING WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the challenges women face in participating in the economy, yet it has also triggered the development of new digital technologies for use in everyday life that could play a role in economic development and job creation in the post-pandemic recovery. The Project Co-ordinator has been supporting women's self-employment through the use of digital tools. For example, the winner of a national contest to accelerate women's start-up initiatives, a digital platform called Coozin that enables women with zero investments to become entrepreneurs in the homemade-food delivery business, received support to develop its concept. Coozin quickly transformed from an idea into an active platform with mobile applications for cooks, customers

and delivery couriers. By August 2021, more than 60 women were using the platform to earn an income. "Thanks to the Coozin project, I gained the chance to realize my culinary potential, make my pastry dreams come true and delight customers with new and delicious dishes," says Elvira. "Plus, now I have an additional source of income."

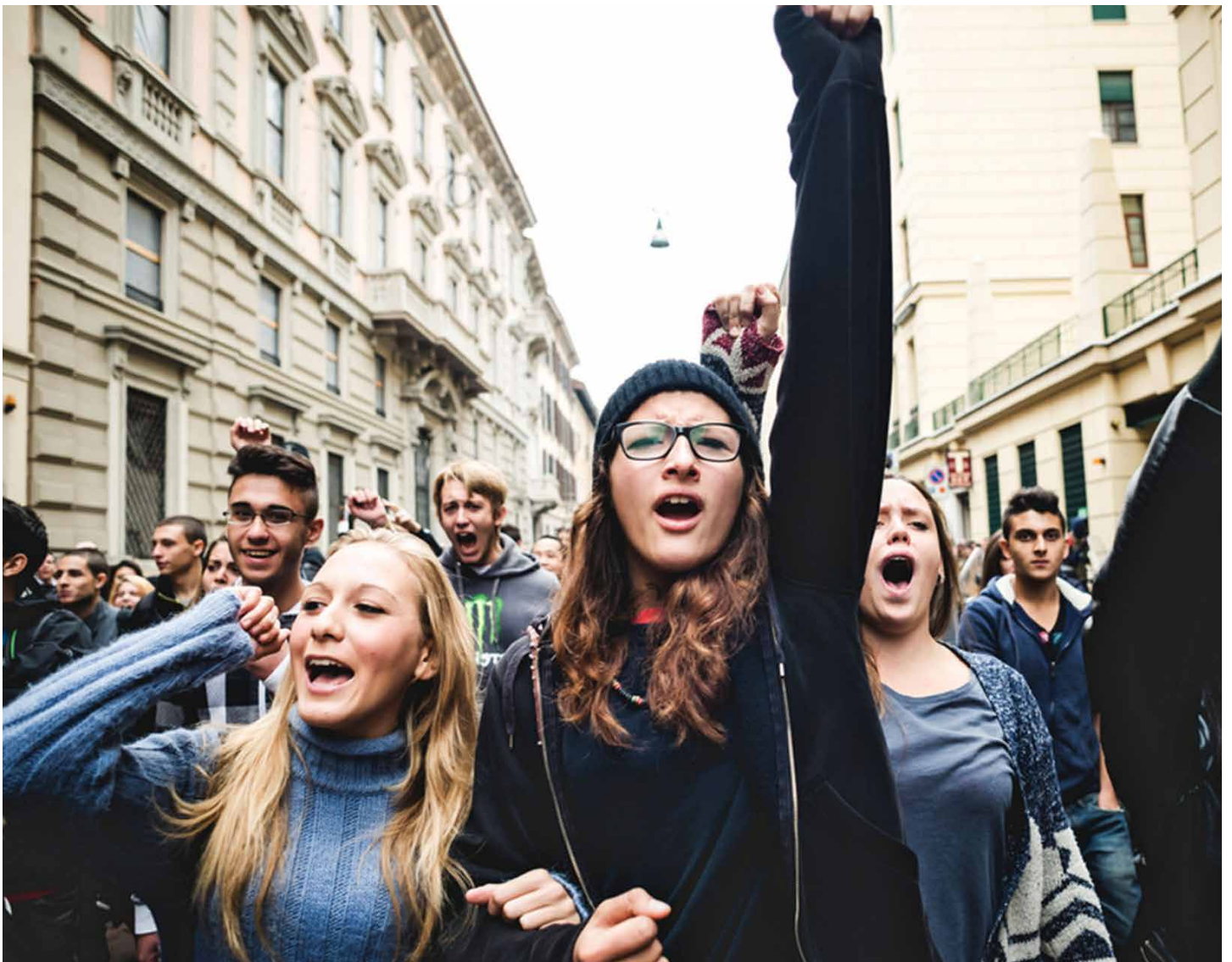
SUPPORTING THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Since 2019, the Project Co-ordinator has been supporting the rights of persons with disabilities and working to improve their conditions and opportunities. In 2021, when Uzbekistan ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Project Co-ordinator launched a podcast series to promote awareness of persons with disabilities and organizations that support them. The Project Co-ordinator also provided training for monitoring the physical accessibility of courts and other public buildings, and teamed up with a local disability rights organization to provide employment consultants for persons with disabilities and inclusive employers.

The Project Co-ordinator also supports the political participation of persons with disabilities, translating ODIHR materials into Uzbek to help raise awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities, providing training on political participation, and fostering dialogue and co-operation between political parties and organizations supporting persons with disabilities. After participating in OSCE training, Ulugbek Mamatxonov joined the Liberal Democratic Party, which is known as a movement for entrepreneurs, as its first blind member. He plans to advocate for employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector.

INSTITUTIONS

The OSCE includes three institutions dedicated to specialized areas of work: the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights promotes democratic development and human rights; the High Commissioner on National Minorities uses quiet diplomacy and early action to seek resolution of ethnic tensions that might endanger peace and security; and the Representative on Freedom of the Media monitors media developments and provides early warning on violations of freedom of expression and media freedom.



The OSCE and its institutions promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedoms of expression and assembly. (Shutterstock/Eugenio Marongiu)

Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

Director: **Matteo Mecacci**

Budget	€16,394,000 (Unified Budget), €4,277,417 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff	85 international, 68 local (including 27 under extrabudgetary projects)

OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) | Facebook

OSCE/ODIHR (@osce_odihr) | Twitter

OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR): Overview | LinkedIn

Director: Matteo Mecacci (@MatteoMecacci) | Twitter
Matteo Mecacci | LinkedIn

Matteo Mecacci (@matteomecacci) | Instagram

As the OSCE's main human dimension institution, the Warsaw-based Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) provides support, assistance and expertise to governments and civil society in OSCE participating States to promote democracy, the rule of law, human rights, tolerance and non-discrimination, as well as attention to the rights of Roma and Sinti.

"The year 2021 was a special one for ODIHR. We celebrated the 30th anniversary since the Office was set up to strengthen democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights in the OSCE region. We also marked the milestone of 400 election observations, and our hate crime data set was published for the 15th year running. Our ongoing assistance to OSCE

states from Canada to Mongolia covering the gamut of ODIHR's mandate, from rule of law to countering discrimination, meant that our efforts made real impact in people's lives across the region."

ODIHR Director Matteo Mecacci



Participants in ODIHR's 30th-anniversary conference. Warsaw, 15 October 2021. (OSCE/Piotr Markovski)



A voter's fingerprint is scanned in a polling station during North Macedonia's local elections. Skopje, 17 October 2021. (OSCE/Ulvi Akhundlu)

HELPING PARLIAMENTS BECOME GENDER-SENSITIVE INSTITUTIONS

Malta's parliament invited ODIHR to conduct a gender audit following a 2020 reform designed to increase women's parliamentary representation. The parliament designated a specific committee responsible for the implementation of the gender audit recommendations, which aimed to make the parliament better at mainstreaming gender in all its lawmaking and oversight processes, and at promoting a gender-sensitive working culture overall.

ODIHR conducted a gender assessment of the North Macedonian parliament together with the OSCE Mission to Skopje, and subsequently supported a workshop in which MPs and parliamentary staff discussed gender-sensitive lawmaking, how to engage men and civil society in this process and changes to the rules of procedure needed in this area. ODIHR also assisted the parliament in preparing its Gender Action Plan for 2022–2023.

Based on its 2021 survey of all parliaments in the OSCE area, ODIHR developed a step-by-step [guide on gender-sensitive parliaments](#) to assist countries in carrying out further hands-on work across the OSCE region.

ELECTION OBSERVATION IN CHALLENGING CIRCUMSTANCES

Despite the difficulties presented by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, ODIHR continued its election activities, deploying observers to 19 elections in 16 participating States in 2021 to support democratic rights and freedoms through credible election observation. Through collaborative dialogue between ODIHR and OSCE participating States about protecting the health and safety of observers and host country citizens, in June the Office resumed the

2021 elections with ODIHR observation activities

Early Presidential Election,

10 January 2021, Kyrgyzstan, LEOM

Parliamentary Elections,

10 January 2021, Kazakhstan, LEOM

Presidential Election,

24 January 2021, Portugal, EET

Parliamentary Elections,

17 March 2021, Netherlands, EET

Parliamentary Elections,

4 April 2021, Bulgaria, LEOM

Parliamentary Elections,

25 April 2021, Albania, LEOM

Parliamentary Elections,

30 May 2021, Cyprus, EET

Presidential Election,

9 June 2021, Mongolia, SEAM

Early Parliamentary Elections,

20 June 2021, Armenia, EOM

Early Parliamentary Elections,

11 July 2021, Bulgaria, LEOM

Early Parliamentary Elections,

11 July 2021, Moldova, EOM

Early Federal Elections,

20 September 2021, Canada, EET

Parliamentary Elections,

26 September 2021, Germany, EET

Parliamentary Elections,

8–9 October 2021, Czech Republic, EET

Local Elections,

2 and 30 October 2021, Georgia, EOM

Presidential Election,

24 October 2021, Uzbekistan, EOM

Local Elections,

17 and 31 October 2021, North Macedonia, EOM

Presidential and Early Parliamentary Elections,

14 November 2021, Bulgaria, EAM

Parliamentary Elections,

28 November 2021, Kyrgyzstan, EOM

LEOM – limited election observation mission

EOM – election observation mission

EET – election expert team

SEAM – special election assessment mission

EAM – election assessment mission

INTERNATIONAL SURVIVORS OF TRAFFICKING ADVISORY COUNCIL

In January 2021, ODIHR launched the International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council, the first international advisory body of leaders within the survivors community. The Council, which is composed of 16 women and 5 men from 14 OSCE participating States, provides advice and guidance to ODIHR, and through ODIHR to the OSCE participating States, on effectively combating trafficking in human beings.

deployment of short-term observers to gather systematic and comprehensive observation data on election days. All told, ODIHR facilitated the deployment of over 1,200 short-term observers to six participating States in 2021. The presidential election in Uzbekistan on 24 October 2021 marked ODIHR's 400th election observation since the Office's establishment 30 years ago.

Over the year, the Office published 59 election-related reports that comprehensively assessed electoral processes in the OSCE area, including 23 final reports with recommendations to participating States on means of improving their election processes. The Office also supported six participating States in their efforts to address ODIHR's electoral recommendations.

A NEW PLATFORM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Within its broad programme to strengthen human rights, in 2021 ODIHR launched FreedomLab, a safe, interactive

platform for human rights defenders. The platform features a specially designed training centre on topics related to human rights monitoring, safety and security, and trial monitoring, as well as a collection of tools specifically developed to support human rights professionals in conducting human rights monitoring activities. More than 3,300 users have already visited FreedomLab, and 170 users have enrolled in the training centre. Throughout the development of the platform, ODIHR involved the human rights community to ensure that FreedomLab addresses the requirements of human rights defenders, ensures geographical balance and takes into account gender-specific needs. Its sustainability rests on its usefulness to a wide human rights audience.

ADDRESSING ANTI-ASIAN XENOPHOBIA

ODIHR's latest hate crime data, reported in November 2021, showed there were numerous instances of intolerant discourse and hate-motivated attacks against Asians and people of Asian descent across the OSCE region following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Anti-Asian racism and discrimination often remain unchallenged and have included intolerant remarks by politicians and other public figures. This is a major obstacle to efforts to eradicate systemic racism and discrimination across the OSCE region, and also limits the capacity of Asians and people of Asian descent to fully exercise their rights as citizens.

ODIHR convened a public online event for civil society activists, academics and public officials of Asian descent from Central Asia, Europe and North America to discuss key concerns, trends and developments in anti-Asian racism and xenophobia in the OSCE region. The discussion included an exchange of promising experiences that could be adapted for use in other places and to address other types of intolerance. This was an



Working with Roma has been a core part of ODIHR's activities since 2003. The Nicolae Gheorghe Roma Leadership Academy builds the leadership and advocacy skills of Roma and Sinti from across the OSCE region. (OSCE)

“MY MISSION: A JUST AND INCLUSIVE WORLD”



Roxanna-Lorraine Witt speaking at an event in Duisburg, Germany, on the continued persecution of Roma and Sinti communities, July 2021. (Courtesy of *save space* e.V. and *Solidarische Gesellschaft der Vielen* e.V.)

“My grandmother, who was a Holocaust survivor, taught me that it is always crucial to help people in need, to share what you have and to protect those who are most vulnerable,” says Roxanna-Lorraine Witt, a young Sinti human rights activist from Germany. Growing up in an environment shaped by poverty and trauma, Roxanna developed a strong sense of social justice and equality and became socially and politically active early on.

The first in her family to study at university, Roxanna headed the education department at the Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma. She went

on to found the international human rights organization *save space*, which focuses on gaining justice for groups who often find themselves marginalized, including Roma and Sinti as well as other minority communities. Roxanna leads the empowerment section, developing digital strategies and video games for human rights training.

Roxanna’s greatest concern is that Roma and Sinti voices are not being heard, and as a result their needs and interests are not taken into consideration by policymakers or society at large. She is determined to change that. “Sharing experiences and knowledge with peers and mentors has helped me build and strengthen the expertise that I need to help create a society where the capabilities and value of Romani leaders – particularly female leaders – become visible in the fight to protect human rights. This benefits everyone in society.”

Participating in ODIHR’s Human Rights Defenders Training for Roma and Sinti human rights activists taught Roxanna how to objectively monitor and document the human rights violations she regularly encounters in her work, and how to use data collection and analysis as tools to successfully advocate for change. She is also an alumna of ODIHR’s annual Nicolae Gheorghe Roma Leadership Academy, which aims to build the leadership and advocacy skills of Roma and Sinti and to increase their influence on policy- and decision-making. The Academy enabled Roxanna to network with Roma and Sinti advocates from across the OSCE region, who continue to empower and motivate her to pursue her goals.

“Thanks to the training and support I received from ODIHR, I have been able to connect with others who share my vision for a more inclusive, just and equitable world for everyone,” Roxanna says. “By working together, I know we can realize this vision, and inspire others to pursue it too.”

impactful, public example of ODIHR’s 2021 work to counter intolerance and hate crime throughout the OSCE region.

EMPOWERING ROMA AND SINTI COMMUNITIES TO ADDRESS RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

Continuing manifestations of racism and discrimination against Roma and Sinti across the OSCE region remain a major obstacle to their capacity to exercise their rights and participate fully in public and political life.

In 2021, ODIHR organized a number of capacity-building programmes to empower Roma and Sinti activists and civil

society. The Human Rights Monitoring and Reporting Training for Roma Human Rights Defenders and subsequent coaching and support improved participants’ skills in conducting human rights work and strengthened their ability to communicate with target audiences and advocate on key human rights concerns.

A capacity-building training course on participation in public and political life for Roma civil society organizations in North Macedonia and Serbia resulted in local plans of action, several of which were supported by ODIHR. These included awareness-raising activities on affirmative action policies for Roma in higher education and working with grassroots groups on capacity-building around issues related to education. Participants also organized Roma Citizens Forums and worked on establishing a Roma youth club.

High Commissioner on National Minorities

High Commissioner: **Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov**

Budget **€3,504,000** (Unified Budget),
€546,915 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff **20** international, **17** local (including 5 under
extrabudgetary projects)

OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities
(@oscehcnm) | [Twitter](#)

OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities:
[Overview](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

www.osce.org/hcnm

Using quiet diplomacy and a multi-year programmatic approach, the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) continued to offer advice and support to governments and countries in 2021 on developing and implementing inclusive policies and initiatives that protect the interests of national minorities. Education and policing in diverse societies remained in the spotlight with two anniversary events marking the publication of the HCNM's *Recommendations on Policing in Multi-Ethnic Societies* (2006) and *The Hague Recommendations regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities* (1996).

BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN COMMUNITIES

Throughout 2021, the High Commissioner promoted multilingual education as a tool to strengthen social cohesion and build bridges between communities. This included setting up and supporting additional multilingual higher education outlets in South-Eastern Europe, such

as the Bujanovac Department of the Subotica Faculty of Economics of the University of Novi Sad. Now in its tenth year, this pioneering department provides quality, high-level education in Serbian and Albanian to students from all backgrounds in the multi-ethnic context of southern Serbia, demonstrating what can be achieved when international and local actors work together to encourage respect for diversity.



A meeting of the Stakeholders Committee of the Bujanovac Department of the Subotica Faculty of Economics at the University of Novi Sad, co-chaired by High Commissioner Kairat Abdrakhmanov and Ambassador Jan Braathu, Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia. (OSCE/Milan Obradović)

For the first time since 1999, teaching Serbian was reintroduced at the University of Pristina in 2021, thanks to the reaccreditation of the Balkanistics Study Programme, which the office of the HCNM promoted and supported in co-operation with the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and others. Besides its educational mission, the Balkanistics Study Programme helps to meet the legal obligations to provide higher education in official languages, including Serbian. Its graduates help to bridge the language divide and strengthen understanding between communities, and improve translation and interpretation in the public sector.

Multilingual education also enables minority children, especially girls, to gain confidence, improve academically and enter higher education. The Central Asia Education Programme, which started in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, proved this, inspiring Mongolia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan to introduce similar education programmes in 2021 and join the HCNM's new multi-country programme starting in 2022.

ENHANCING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Change can happen only if everyone has a seat at the table. The High Commissioner encourages national minority representatives in the OSCE region, especially women and young people, to engage in politics. In 2021 in Georgia, online seminars for national minority community representatives and Spring Schools for minority youth focused on domestic and foreign policy, the media, lobbying and advocacy. Former political party interns also participated in Georgia's 2021 election as national minority candidates, election observers and election administrators.

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Civil service institutions are a key interface between national minorities and the State and, as such, are often the places where conflicts either emerge or play out. Diversity management training provides the perfect tool to improve inter-ethnic relations by enhancing civil servants' understanding and awareness. The High Commissioner is working with local stakeholders to make the accredited course on diversity management given in Ukraine in 2021 more widely available in Russian and English through train-the-trainer sessions in Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe. International exchanges and study visits enabled institutions specializing in inter-ethnic issues to share experiences on strategies, tools and working methods for social cohesion and integration with their counterparts in other countries.

PROMOTING INCLUSIVE POLICIES

Over the years, the HCNM has published *guidelines and recommendations* for policymakers on nine different themes affecting national minorities. In 2021, the High Commissioner held anniversary conferences for *The Hague Recommendations regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities* (1996) and the *Recommendations on Policing in Multi-Ethnic Societies* (2006). Panel discussions at the United Nations in Geneva and in New York highlighted the link between peace and stability and the need to include national minorities in public and economic life, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, thematic research continued on the participation of national minorities in socio-economic life and the intersectionality of gender and national minorities in the OSCE area. In November, the 2020 Max van der Stoel Award was presented to the Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre at the Peace Palace for their outstanding advocacy work for the Traveller and Roma communities in Ireland.



Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre Chairperson Anastasia Crickley and Director Martin Collins accept the 2020 Max van der Stoel Award for their Dublin-based organization. In attendance: Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands Ben Knapen; OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Kairat Abdrakhmanov; former High Commissioners Astrid Thors, Lamberto Zannier, Rolf Ekeus and Knut Vollebæk; and family members of Max van der Stoel. The Hague, 19 November 2021. (OSCE/Arnaud Roelofs)

Representative on Freedom of the Media

Representative: **Teresa Ribeiro**

Budget	€1,608,800 (Unified Budget), €390,979 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff	17

OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media | Facebook

OSCE media freedom (@OSCE_RFoM) | Twitter

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media | YouTube

www.osce.org/representative-on-freedom-of-media

The Representative on Freedom of the Media observes media developments in the participating States, advocates and promotes full compliance with the Organization's principles and commitments in respect of freedom of expression and free media, and responds to serious non-compliance therewith. In 2021, the Representative resumed in-person meetings and country visits, while focusing further on online challenges to media freedom.

Since the work of the Representative on Freedom of the Media revolves around building relationships and direct engagement with relevant stakeholders, including authorities, journalists and media organizations, the cautious resumption of in-person visits and meetings in 2021 was a welcome development. The Representative visited a variety of interlocutors in countries in all parts of the OSCE region,

including Albania, Germany, Kazakhstan, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United States of America and Uzbekistan. During these visits, the Representative addressed a wide range of issues, from increasing polarization and growing anti-media sentiments to laws on surveillance and intelligence and other regulations that impact freedom of expression and media freedom; and from the increasing violence against the media,



OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media Teresa Ribeiro addressing the press during the 23rd OSCE Central Asia Media Conference on promoting public value of the media in Central Asia. Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 9 September 2021. (OSCE/Umar Isaev)



Journalists' work during public gatherings has become ever more dangerous in the OSCE region. (Shutterstock/imageBROKER/Jochen Tack)

including during public gatherings, to the importance of independent public service broadcasting.

Aside from these visits, the Representative organized several virtual, hybrid and in-person conferences and round tables to bring together different media organizations, officials and others with the aim of building effective networks and coalitions. These meetings constitute an important platform to discuss issues that might otherwise never be brought to the table, enabling a frank and open exchange between civil society and state authorities on challenges to media freedom on the ground. The Representative (co-)organized conferences and round tables in Albania, Austria, Sweden and Uzbekistan, as well as an online event for Central Asia, connecting participants from all over the OSCE region.

ONLINE CHALLENGES TO MEDIA FREEDOM

In 2021, the Representative also launched a series of activities on disinformation, an issue that can cause great public harm, including by undermining public trust in the media. As some forms of disinformation and propaganda may incite violence, discrimination or hostility against identifiable groups in society, often with the aim of undermining the cohesion of societies, the Representative decided to place increased focus on the threats of harmful disinformation by hosting a series of round tables on this topic. These round tables

discussed ways to limit the harmful effects of disinformation while safeguarding freedom of expression, mechanisms to preserve journalistic standards through voluntary self-regulation, the mandates and practices of relevant national regulatory authorities, and the impact of artificial intelligence and disinformation as a multilateral policy challenge.

Meanwhile, as part of its #SAIFE project, the Office of the Representative continued to shine a spotlight on the impact that artificial intelligence (AI) can have on freedom of expression. Following a call for proposals in autumn 2020, several innovative initiatives – such as a visual guide on AI tracking techniques, podcasts on the intersection between hate speech and AI, or the impact of algorithmic content curation on freedom of opinion – were used to facilitate dialogue among the OSCE participating States and experts. Close collaboration with renowned artistic experts led to the co-production of the interactive storytelling website and documentary *Made to Measure*.

Furthermore, the Office of the Representative addressed the issue of online safety of journalists, including through its renowned Safety of Female Journalists (#SOFJO) project. The work on this topic built on the Office's comprehensive [#SOFJO resource guide](#) published in 2020, which has been translated into many languages, by furthering the guide's 40 proposed actions in co-operation with key actors and their networks, as well as putting these actions in regional contexts.

SECRETARIAT

The Vienna-based Secretariat assists the OSCE Chairmanship, carries out programmatic work in support of OSCE commitments, supports OSCE field activities, maintains relations with international and non-governmental organizations, and provides conference, language, administrative, financial, personnel and information technology services.



Sign at the entrance to the OSCE Secretariat, Vienna. (OSCE)

Office of the Secretary General and central services

Director: **Ambassador Luca Fratini**

Budget **€11,446,200** (Unified Budget),
€626,422 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff **102** (including 2 under extrabudgetary projects)

*Director: Luca Fratini (@LfratiniOSCE) | Twitter
Luca Fratini | LinkedIn*

www.osce.org/secretariat

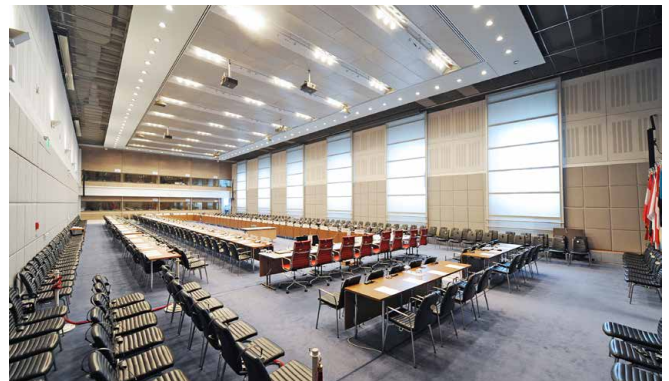
The Office of the Secretary General is a provider of central services across executive structures, a manager of programmes and a policy advisory function for the OSCE Chair and the Secretary General, including in the latter's role as the OSCE's Chief Administrative Officer. The Office supports co-ordination and collaboration across the Organization.

CENTRAL SERVICES

Conference and Language Services continued to provide the highest level of meeting and language support to delegations, the Chair and executive structures, ensuring that the day-to-day business of OSCE delegates could continue in a safe and effective way. Conference and Language Services facilitated events in blended, in-person and fully virtual formats, adapting to the different phases of the pandemic. This included events with interpretation into all six official OSCE languages, as well as an increased number of Permanent Council meetings.

Security Management provided security support to all executive structures within the OSCE Security Management System. A significant increase in security compliance was noted throughout the OSCE in 2021, as executive structures further aligned their policies with the newly introduced Security Instructions, while almost 2,500 staff members have now completed security training. Security Management continues to perform a key role in gathering, analysing and reporting on current or potential threats to the security and safety of OSCE personnel, including COVID-related information to key stakeholders throughout the Organization.

The Office of Legal Affairs continued to deliver centralized advice to the Chair and all executive structures on the full range of legal issues that affect the Organization. These include interpretation of the regulatory framework across all executive structures, administrative appeals and complaints, privileges and immunities issues, dispute settlement, tenders and negotiations of complex contracts, and the development of administrative policies.



Conference and Language Services ensure that the Permanent Council, the Forum for Security Co-operation and other OSCE meetings are well equipped and well supported. (OSCE/Mickey Kröll)

The Documentation Centre in Prague, with newly acquired records management services, focused on the establishment of practices and tools to retain knowledge and improve collaboration. It handled hundreds of requests for information and documents, including from OSCE staff, participating States and Partners for Co-operation, international organizations, judicial bodies, civil society organizations and academia. The Centre also hosted 10 researchers.

POLICY ADVICE AND PROGRAMMATIC SUPPORT

Executive Management serves as a Cabinet to the Secretary General and in this capacity provides both policy and practical support. The team facilitates communication between departments and the Secretary General and serves

as the main contact point between the Secretariat and the Chairmanship.

In co-ordination with other Secretariat departments and executive structures, Executive Management supported the Secretary General with policy advice, preparation of meetings and visits, and timely follow-up aligned with her guidance. During 2021, the Secretary General participated in over 160 events, spoke with over 40 presidents and ministers, visited 16 participating States (including seven OSCE field operations) and met with staff from all OSCE institutions. Executive Management also provided routine advice to the Chair, including to support visits of the Chairperson-in-Office.

As part of its strategic planning and resource mobilization work, Executive Management led co-ordination across executive structures of a prospective OSCE response to the implications of the situation in Afghanistan for the OSCE region, which was considered by ministers at the Stockholm Ministerial Council.

The Strategic Policy Support Unit continued research and outreach, including with experts in the think tank and academic community and representatives of governments and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, notably on proposals to increase the OSCE's effectiveness in light of the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act. The Unit also developed and delivered induction training for the incoming Chair.

Executive Management also continued to promote the inclusion and participation of youth in OSCE activities and projects, including through advice to participating States, in particular to the Chair's Special Representative on Youth and Security and the co-chairs of the OSCE Group of Friends of Youth and Security. The Perspectives 2030 Initiative and newly launched Online Academy sought to give youth a voice in OSCE security debates, with 30 young

professionals developing policy papers for participating States' consideration.

In addition to providing strategic communications advice and support to the executive structures, Communications and Media Relations made a concerted effort in 2021 to improve the Organization's visibility by focusing on the impact that OSCE programmes and activities have on people across the OSCE region. Practically, this has meant much greater use of social media with a particular focus on human impact stories and a shift towards materials such as photos and videos that are more appealing for the audience, leading to greater engagement.

The External Co-operation Section supported a wide range of interactions with international and regional organizations to leverage the comparative advantages of institutional partners towards the fulfilment of OSCE commitments. The Section defined areas for common engagement and intensified joint activities and both high-level and expert-level thematic meetings, including on post-pandemic recovery, environmental sustainability, transnational organized crime and economic development. It also worked to deepen relations with the Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

The Secretariat's Ethics function provided in-person and online consultation and advisory services to staff and managers to ensure ethical behaviours and decision-making, as well as training and awareness-raising on ethical issues and the work of the Ethics function. The Ethics function was also engaged in enhancements to the OSCE's ethical framework in collaboration with key stakeholders.

Strengthening the OSCE's approach to early resolution of workplace disputes is a priority of the Secretary General. In line with this, the Ethics Co-ordinator has focused on building an Informal Resolution function that will operate independently and report administratively to the Ethics Co-ordinator.



The OSCE Documentation Centre in Prague. (OSCE)

Conflict prevention

Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre: **Ambassador Tuula Yrjölä**

Budget	€5,239,700 (Unified Budget), €3,372,168 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff	75 (including 13 under extrabudgetary projects)

www.osce.org/secretariat/conflict-prevention

The Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) is the main point of contact on matters concerning OSCE field operations. It addresses all phases of the conflict cycle by providing policy and operational guidance and advice, including through early warning and support for the OSCE's response in crisis situations and through efforts to find lasting political settlements for existing conflicts. The CPC is a core structure for OSCE work in the politico-military dimension, assisting participating States in the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs), and it also provides Organization-wide support for project management.

SUPPORTING CONFLICT RESOLUTION, OSCE FIELD ACTIVITIES AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The CPC continued its role in co-ordinating the OSCE response to the crisis in and around Ukraine, including by supporting efforts to stabilize the security situation and foster implementation of the Minsk agreements. It assisted the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine in carrying out its mandated tasks, focusing on reporting and duty of care for mission members during the pandemic. The CPC also assisted the Trilateral Contact Group in its mediation and conflict resolution efforts, the work of the OSCE Project Co-

ordinator in Ukraine and the Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk, including during the discontinuation of the Observer Mission following the expiry of its mandate on 30 September 2021.

In the South Caucasus, the CPC supported existing mechanisms and efforts to advance sustainable peace: the Minsk Group Co-Chairs, the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference and the High-Level Planning Group. Particular attention was paid to supporting the efforts of the Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Organization's ongoing involvement in the Incident



On 15 June 2021, the IPRM marked its 100th meeting in the presence of OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid and the Director of Security and Defence Policy at the European External Action Service, Joanneke Balfourt. (EU Monitoring Mission/Sophie Guesne)

HELPING CONFLICT-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN GEORGIA

In conflict-affected areas, the local population suffers most. The IPRM in Ergneti helps to address humanitarian and security concerns on both sides of the administrative boundary line. Co-facilitated by the OSCE and the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia, the mechanism and its associated hotline help to address real-world issues, from resolving detention cases to facilitating agreements on the supply of irrigation water. The IPRM is a conduit for regular information exchange on issues of common concern, including the COVID-19 pandemic, and contributes to early warning and conflict prevention, de-escalation of tensions and confidence-building.

Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) in Ergneti, as well as the Geneva International Discussions dealing with the consequences of the 2008 war in Georgia. The CPC also backed efforts by the OSCE Mission to Moldova and the Special Representative for the Transdniestrian Settlement Process, including preparatory work for a possible 5+2 meeting.

Throughout the year, the CPC provided advice to the Chair, the Secretary General and field operations, thus strengthening cross-dimensional approaches and co-ordination. In Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe, the annual regional meetings of heads of field operations once again proved an essential platform for discussions on regional dynamics, including with international partners. This year's Central Asia meeting put special focus on the implications of developments in Afghanistan. The CPC supported the Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe and the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, OSCE flagship initiatives that offer significant opportunities for synergy and joint action in a regional and OSCE-wide context. In South-Eastern Europe, the CPC-supported Regional Housing Programme has so far delivered almost 9,000 housing solutions for vulnerable refugee / internally displaced families out of the total goal of 11,800 housing units envisioned in the project.

In 2021, the CPC provided programme and project management support to the Secretariat and field operations, overseeing an extrabudgetary portfolio of 233 active extrabudgetary projects worth €293.5 million as of 31 October 2021.



Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid attends the inauguration of a new drinking water system supplying 144 conflict-affected households in the village of Tsitsagiaantkari, implemented by the Gori Municipality with support from the OSCE, USAID and Italy, 14 June 2021. (Mirian Meladze)

TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF *MINISTERIAL COUNCIL DECISION NO. 3/11* ON ELEMENTS OF THE CONFLICT CYCLE

Since this landmark decision was adopted in Vilnius ten years ago, the CPC has been working to strengthen the OSCE's conflict cycle toolbox.

The OSCE Network of Early Warning Focal Points draws on the expertise of all OSCE executive structures and the Parliamentary Assembly. Almost half the focal points are women, and early-warning indicators are gender-mainstreamed. The Network is a key asset for analysing crisis dynamics and identifying entry points for long-term structural conflict prevention. Using open sources, the CPC's Situation/Communications Room monitors developments affecting the OSCE area on a 24/7 basis.

To enhance the OSCE's capacities for early action, the Secretariat developed an operational framework for crisis response to strengthen coherence, a virtual pool of equipment to quickly identify critical assets such as armoured vehicles and a rapid deployment roster to reassign staff resources in times of urgent need. All three proved critical in the planning and rapid deployment of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) in March 2014.

Keeping abreast of changing operational realities also proved an extraordinary learning experience. The SMM and the Secretariat drew up numerous standard operating procedures that could be useful in future contexts. The Mission's unprecedented use of new technologies, including unmanned aerial vehicles and satellite imagery,

introduced a new quality of expertise that the OSCE will continue to develop.

The CPC's Mediation Support Team provides advice to OSCE Special Representatives, their teams and other participants in negotiation and conflict management formats, as well as gender-sensitive capacity-building on dialogue facilitation for OSCE staff.

Providing regular guidance on the conflict cycle to bridge the gap between theory and practice, the CPC updated the publication *OSCE Security Sector Governance and Reform: Guidelines for OSCE Staff* to reflect growing attention to security sector governance and reform as a nationally owned and demand-driven tool to foster resilience, structural prevention and long-term security. In 2021, CPC activities to assist interested participating States in this area focused on parliamentary oversight and inclusive multi-stakeholder policy dialogue.

Discussions in the two Conflict Cycle Seminars organized by the Swedish OSCE Chair and the CPC focused on inclusivity, in particular the meaningful inclusion of women and civil society. At the Stockholm Ministerial Council, a side event showcased OSCE progress in operationalizing MC Decision No. 3/11. In 2021, the CPC organized the first-ever OSCE peace-building course to build in-house OSCE staff capacity on conflict cycle issues. Further initiatives are sure to follow.

SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF POLITICO-MILITARY COMMITMENTS

The FSC Support and the Communications and Technology Units support participating States in implementing confidence- and security-building measures. These include the Vienna Document, addressing military force postures and activities; documents on small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA); the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security; and the principles of non-proliferation.

The CPC facilitates the secure exchange of military and cyber-related information through the OSCE Communications Network and reports on implementation of CSBMs, thus supporting analysis of military data exchanged by participating States. As a secure conduit for diplomatic traffic,

the Network is monitored 24/7 by all 57 participating States, enabling them to react quickly to requests, such as for a military verification mission or clarification of unusual military activity. The CPC continues developing its new Information Management and Reporting System (iMARS) to improve access to and the availability of military information.

This year, some 150 young professionals, mostly women, participated in the annual OSCE Scholarship for Peace and Security training programme, which aims to increase the participation of youth in the security sector and decision-making at all levels. Participants learned about conflict prevention and resolution through arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

In 2021, the CPC expanded OSCE e-learning modules covering FSC-related topics to include a course on conventional arms control and CSBMs. It also developed an electronic repository of SALW- and SCA-related OSCE assistance projects, as well as official OSCE-generated documents and reports.

In 2021, OSCE participating States adopted a guide on national procedures for the destruction of SALW and continued their review of existing guidelines. Twenty current SALW- and SCA-related assistance projects amounting to over €40 million addressed a wide range of security and safety risks stemming from conventional ammunition, explosive material and toxic rocket fuel components; degraded physical infrastructure and poor stockpile management; the presence

of explosive remnants of war and landmines; and illicit trafficking in SALW.

In 2021, the OSCE removed the last of the rocket fuel component *mélange* remaining in Kyrgyzstan. For more than two decades, this toxic and highly combustible substance had been stored in deteriorated reservoirs at a military installation near Bishkek, posing a serious threat to the environment and the safety of more than 21,000 people living nearby. Some 150 tonnes were shipped by rail to the Russian Federation, where the *mélange* was reprocessed into products for civilian use. For more than 20 years, the OSCE has worked on similar projects in Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Montenegro and Ukraine.



Removal of the last batch of *mélange* from the Novopavlovka area, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 2 November 2021. (OSCE)

Transnational threats

Co-ordinator of Activities to Address Transnational Threats:

Ambassador Alena Kupchyna

Budget **€2,769,600** (Unified Budget),
€1,878,139 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff **51** (including 20 under extrabudgetary projects)

*Co-ordinator:
Alena Kupchyna (@AlenaKupchyna) | Twitter*

www.osce.org/secretariat/cyber-ict-security
www.osce.org/secretariat/terrorism
www.osce.org/secretariat/policing
www.osce.org/secretariat/borders

The Transnational Threats Department supports OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation in their efforts to address transnational threats, with a particular focus on combating terrorism, enhancing border security and border management, strengthening police capacities to deal with transnational threats and addressing cyber/ICT security. In 2021, the Department provided assistance to participating States in fulfilling political commitments by convening expert meetings, sharing information and best practices, and delivering capacity-building projects.

PROMOTING OSCE CYBER CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES

As the importance of cyberspace and information and communication technologies (ICT) continues to grow, increased awareness about its threats and challenges to personal, national and international security is needed. In

2021, the Department launched an interactive e-learning course in English and Russian on how the OSCE's pioneering cyber/ICT security confidence-building measures (CBMs) strengthen international cybersecurity. Over 500 people across the OSCE region have already benefited from this cyber capacity-building.



Participants in a LIVE training session for women leaders in Sarob, Tajikistan. (OSCE)

During Cybersecurity Awareness Month in October, the Department organized a series of online activities to promote personal accountability and effective cyber hygiene, highlighting key issues such as threat awareness and the meaningful participation of women and youth in cyberspace.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO VIOLENT EXTREMISM

In co-operation with OSCE field operations in Central Asia, the Department organized two nine-week regional train-the-trainers seminars for local facilitators of training courses on preventing violent extremism and radicalization for youth, women and community leaders; 32 of the 39 participants were women. These courses were part of the Department's flagship civil society capacity-building initiative, Leaders against Intolerance and Violent Extremism (LIVE). "LIVE is the best that the international community can offer in terms of training on this topic," said a participant from Uzbekistan.

Paving the way towards a lasting community of practice, capstone online seminars brought together over 50 certified LIVE facilitators in South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia for cross-regional peer exchange and a deeper focus on shared themes of interest such as gender-responsive programming and the "do no harm" approach. "The programme was very

important for gaining new knowledge and skills that I can directly put into practice," said a facilitator of a LIVE course for women leaders. The #UnitedCVE campaign continued to highlight the important work of practitioners preventing and countering violent extremism at the community level.

TRANSFORMING PROPERTY CONFISCATED FROM ORGANIZED CRIME INTO A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Reusing assets confiscated from criminal groups for the benefit of communities is an important element of a comprehensive approach to fighting organized crime. It can create new business opportunities and generates employment, while deterring crime and enhancing trust in the rule of law. Together with the Office of the Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities, the Transnational Threats Department has been working closely with government representatives and civil society in South-Eastern Europe to raise awareness of best practices in social reuse and to build implementation capacity. In 2021, these departments jointly supported a social reuse project in Elbasan, Albania, in co-operation with the Albanian Agency for the Administration of Seized and Confiscated Assets and ENGIM, a civil society organization with expertise in social reuse of confiscated assets. Over the years, Elbasan came



Employees of My Craft Tradition practise traditional weaving in a building in Elbasan, Albania, that was confiscated from organized crime. (Courtesy of the Joscelyn Foundation)

to be known as a hub for organized crime where powerful criminal groups fought to control the illicit drug industry. A building that used to belong to organized crime was converted into a social enterprise that trains and employs women from different social and economic backgrounds to produce artisanal products. According to the programme director of the non-governmental organization managing the enterprise, “projects such as this one contribute to transforming this negative image of Elbasan and shift attention to its rich artisanal culture and talented citizens”.

ADDRESSING ILLICIT TRAFFICKING IN CULTURAL PROPERTY

With close links to transnational organized crime, terrorist networks, international money laundering and corruption networks, illicit trafficking in cultural property is a serious transnational security threat. Building on its long experience helping participating States to prevent cross-border trafficking in arts and antiquities, the Department launched a pioneering new programme in 2021 that assembled a team of experts from international partner organizations, national border and law enforcement agencies, academia and museums to tackle this global security threat. The Department also organized a specialized training course on cultural property protection in co-operation with the Hellenic

Multinational Peace Support Operations Training Centre. The hands-on training, including fieldwork, brought together 30 law enforcement, border security and defence officials from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Greece, North Macedonia, Serbia, the United Kingdom and Egypt. Terrorists and criminals view fragile archaeological sites and museums for the safekeeping of priceless treasures as, in the words of one participant, “nothing more than millennia-long savings accounts that they can draw upon at will to finance their nefarious activities – wantonly and recklessly obliterating our common human history in the process”. The OSCE’s new programme will help participating States and Partners for Co-operation to prevent this destruction of humanity’s shared heritage.



Participants in a training course on the protection of cultural property organized by the OSCE and the Hellenic Multinational Peace Support Operations Training Centre, 30 August – 3 September 2021. (OSCE/Florian Krejsa)

Economic and environmental activities

Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities:
Ambassador Igli Hasani

Budget	€2,235,700 (Unified Budget), €1,431,365 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff	25

*Co-ordinator: Igli Hasani (@IgliHasani) | Twitter
 Igli Hasani | LinkedIn*

www.osce.org/oceea

The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) addresses economic and environmental issues with an impact on security. Its work includes promoting good economic and environmental governance; preventing and combating corruption; fostering digitalization and trade and transport connectivity; tackling socio-economic disparities, including economic empowerment of women; and promoting transboundary water co-operation and water diplomacy, disaster risk reduction, hazardous waste management and energy security. The adoption of a Ministerial Council decision on climate change in 2021 will bring new momentum to the OSCE's work in this area.

PROMOTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT INTEGRITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN UKRAINE

In 2021, with support from the OCEEA, the Ukrainian city of Ternopil launched an online platform where citizens can participate in allocating the municipal budget, initiate and vote for new projects to improve city infrastructure, oversee public spending and interact with authorities and fellow citizens. Ternopil is one of three cities that benefited from the OCEEA's multi-year efforts to strengthen integrity and transparency in municipal governance in Ukraine. Since 2018, the OCEEA has been providing technical advice and support, capacity-building and recommendations, enabling participating cities to introduce new measures to increase the transparency, integrity and accessibility of their public services. To take another example, the city of Drohobych expanded its e-services, providing detailed financial information on its operations to the public and enabling citizens to report unethical behaviour on the part of public servants as well as situations where they perceive conflicts of interest.

The OCEEA's continuous support helped both Ternopil and Drohobych get to the top of the ranking of the most transparent cities in Ukraine in 2019 and 2020. Looking ahead, the OCEEA will continue supporting Ukrainian municipal administrations in improving the quality of local governance through a follow-up project, which will focus on the use of digital tools and data-driven decision-making.



Members of the Mentoring Programme met in person at the Central Asian Sub-regional Preparatory Conference for the ninth World Water Forum, 19 October 2021. From left: Shohida Tulieva from Tajikistan; Sogol Jafarzadeh, OSCE Environmental Affairs Adviser; Lyazzat Syrlybayeva from Kazakhstan. (OSCE)



Protecting nature in the Shar/Šara Mountains (pictured) and the Korab Massif emerged as a priority for co-operation in South-Eastern Europe. (Anela Stavrevska Panajotova)

SUPPORTING WOMEN WATER PROFESSIONALS

The OCEEA has a long history of engagement with the water community in Central Asia and Afghanistan. One objective is to support women water professionals in the region to advance their careers and reach senior management positions in the water sector. In 2021, the OCEEA launched a mentoring and career development programme for women water professionals, in partnership with the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia and the Stockholm International Water Institute. Each month, over 20 women from Central Asia and Afghanistan meet online with experts and mentors to discuss challenges facing women in the water sector and take part in capacity-building activities.

“The mentoring programme allows us to share experiences and knowledge and provides a platform where we can improve not only our professional skills but also personal qualities such as public speaking, communication and self-branding,” says Aigerim Karibay, a participant from Kazakhstan, who works at the Bartogay Reservoir water management complex. “Such programmes are very necessary and useful for broadening horizons and reaching new peaks for women professionals.”

Shohida Tulieva, a participant from Tajikistan, exemplifies how the programme has helped women develop their careers: “As a result of being part of this network, I was invited recently to be a guest lecturer, and now I am looking to apply for a PhD course on water management and gender aspects,” she says.

In the coming year, the mentoring programme will enable members of the Central Asia–Afghanistan Network to exchange experience with international experts, including from other women’s networks. The OCEEA will also support members to showcase their work at regional and international water events.

CO-OPERATING ON CLIMATE CHANGE TO STRENGTHEN SECURITY

Heatwaves, wildfires, floods, droughts, rising sea levels and melting glaciers – as climate change increases the frequency and intensity of these phenomena, they can jeopardize security, especially if they converge with economic, social or political challenges. However, co-operation in tackling climate change can enhance security by strengthening good neighbourly relations and building mutual confidence and trust.

For more than a decade, the OCEEA has been working with OSCE field operations to identify opportunities for regional co-operation on climate change and security. The **2021 OSCE Ministerial Council decision on strengthening co-operation to address the challenges caused by climate change** gives new momentum to this work.

In 2021, a regional consultation process in South-Eastern Europe led by the OCEEA in partnership with adelphi concluded its assessment of the security implications of climate change in the region. Over 80 regional stakeholders identified and mapped seven hotspots; enhancing climate resilience and protecting nature in the Shar/Šara Mountains and the Korab Massif emerged as a priority for co-operation.

Also in 2021, in the South Caucasus, 70 regional stakeholders identified opportunities for co-operation in addressing security implications of climate change and strengthening climate resilience, with wildfire management emerging as the top priority.

These processes are part of an ongoing OCEEA project to strengthen responses to security risks from climate change in South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Central Asia. Looking ahead, the project will continue to promote regional co-operation and support the development and implementation of joint adaptation measures in all four regions.

INTERVIEW WITH THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND PHYSICAL PLANNING OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA, NASER NUREDINI



The Minister of Environment and Physical Planning of the Republic of North Macedonia, Naser Nuredini. (Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning of the Republic of North Macedonia)

What are the impacts of climate change in North Macedonia and the South-Eastern Europe region, and what is at stake?

Our region has been identified as one of the planet's "warming hot spots," and we are already witnessing the adverse impacts of climate change: over the past two decades, average temperatures have increased by 1.2°C; heatwaves, floods, wildfires are happening more frequently

and intensively. This presents risks to the health and livelihoods of our people, shared ecosystems, food, water and energy security. It affects our economies, which is relevant for regional security and stability.

What role do you see for the OSCE in addressing these challenges in the region?

Since early 2020, North Macedonia has been part of the OSCE's regional project on climate change and security, which has initiated a conversation in my country among different sectors, but also with other regional stakeholders, on the ways we can address these

challenges together. I find this conversation very valuable because it reinforces our individual efforts and enhances the combined impact of various initiatives for climate action. It provides new avenues to strengthen regional co-operation, complements initiatives such as the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, and thus contributes to security and stability in our region.

What are the main findings of the OSCE's climate change and security project in South-Eastern Europe, and what do they mean for North Macedonia?

I participated in the regional consultation process on climate change and security, and I am impressed with what has been achieved with the risk assessment study. It provides a comprehensive overview of the risks that climate change poses to security in the region, and they are reflected on a map. The Shar/Šara Mountains and Korab Massif area is one of the seven shared hotspots identified. In its next phase, the project will address challenges at the nature reserve level and will explore joint measures among the local stakeholders to address the identified risks in this area. This complements the conservation efforts of my country, as after many years of work, we have recently created the Shar/Šara Mountains National Park. Co-operation is essential for the protection of its rich biodiversity while fostering climate adaptation and resilience. These efforts will bring significant environmental, economic and social improvements and contribute to increased security and stability in North Macedonia and in the region.



Minister Nuredini talking with an owner of a local farm in the Shar/Šara Mountains. (GEF/UNEP STAR 5 project)

Combating trafficking in human beings

Special Representative and Co-ordinator: **Valiant Richey**

Budget	€1,073,700 (Unified Budget), €401,337 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff	15 (including 2 under extrabudgetary projects)

OSCE Anti-Trafficking (@osce_cthb) | Twitter
Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings: Valiant Richey | LinkedIn

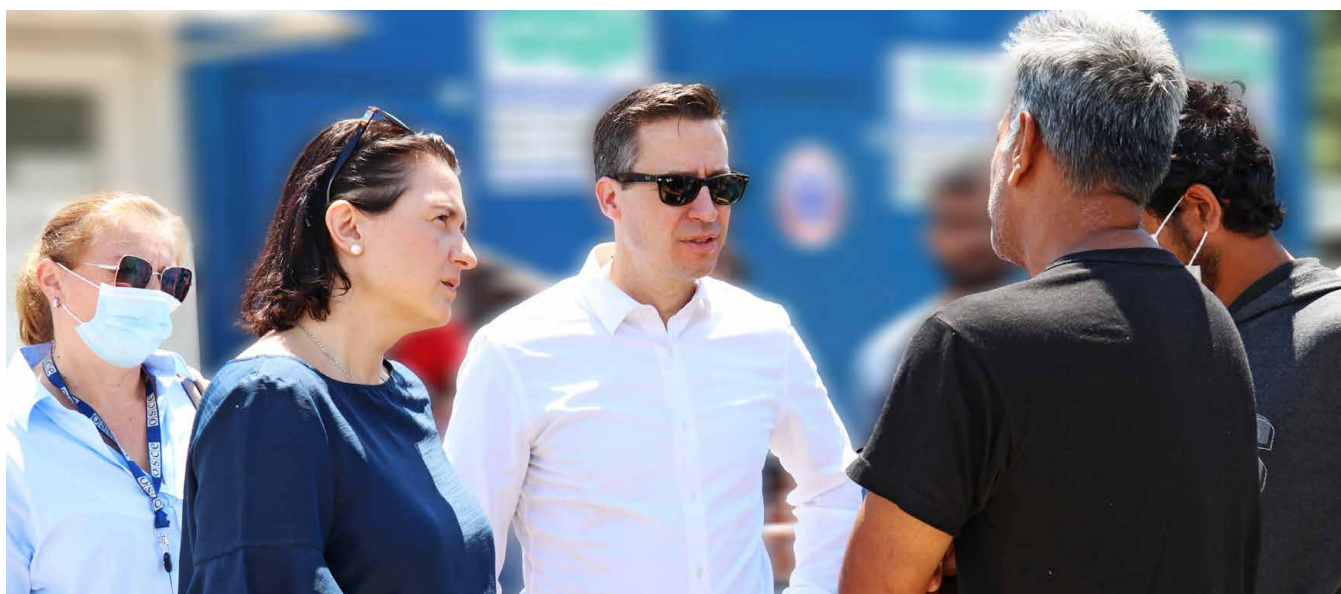
www.osce.org/cthb

The Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings assists the OSCE participating States in their efforts to prevent human trafficking, investigate and prosecute perpetrators and protect victims. In 2021, after a forced hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office resumed simulation-based anti-trafficking training exercises. Amid the resurgence of a large mixed migration flow, the Special Representative visited Bosnia and Herzegovina to assess the risks of human trafficking and offer support to the country's anti-trafficking efforts.

EXAMINING ANTI-TRAFFICKING RESPONSES IN MIXED MIGRATION FLOWS

In early 2021, an increasing flow of migrants was reported along the so-called Balkan route, with around 8,000 people passing through Bosnia and Herzegovina. Understanding that large and unregulated migration flows are a breeding ground for human trafficking, the Office decided to assess the situation and offer support.

After a series of virtual meetings with the authorities, an in-person visit was organized in mid-July. The Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and the Vice-Chair of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Migration led the OSCE delegation. Supported by colleagues from the OSCE Mission throughout the visit, they headed towards the country's western border, where they visited two transit reception centres. The first, in Bihać, provided assistance to migrant families and unaccompanied children. The services were well tailored to the needs of



OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Valiant Richey and Vice-Chair of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Ad Hoc Committee on Migration Gudrun Kugler visit the Borići Temporary Reception Centre, Bosnia and Herzegovina, July 2021. (OSCE/Sanin Muftić)

residents, including safe housing, robust programmes for children and materials in the languages of the migrants.

The second centre, in Lipa, was more rugged and consisted of tent accommodations. The presence of the OSCE delegation quickly drew attention: in minutes, a hundred or so migrants – primarily young men – surrounded the delegation, sharing their frustrations about the lack of food and unsanitary conditions. Their desperation was palpable. Some of them said they had paid a lot of money to smugglers to get there and that going home was not an option. They showed bruises from beatings suffered on their journey.

This mission provided an opportunity to review OSCE policy recommendations in practice. The visit revealed a microcosm of the migrant situation in Europe, where people on the move could experience very different circumstances, threats or challenges within a few kilometres of one another.

The delegation was struck by how fragile the migrants' situation was and how vulnerable they were to exploitation, as well as by the commitment of the men and women who staffed the centres. The circumstances demonstrated the need to correctly interview migrants to understand if they have been exploited, to offer education opportunities to children as a prevention tactic, and to establish a multi-agency, victim-centred approach to addressing human trafficking risks.

Perhaps most importantly, the delegation saw how this work is challenged by the scale of the problem: while case-by-case approaches can be a crucial lifeline for victims, long-term success requires strong investment in prevention.

COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING ALONG MIGRATION ROUTES: SIMULATED ACTION FOR REAL-LIFE IMPACT

These are hard times for the populations of Leaveland and Rootland. Endless wars force many Rootlanders to flee, seeking asylum elsewhere. Meanwhile, confronted with famine and unemployment, many Leavelanders are ready to do anything to leave their country. Profiting from the situation, a transnational criminal organization runs a trafficking ring across the neighbouring countries.

This was the opening scene of the international simulation-based training exercise organized in September within the Office's project on *combating human trafficking along*

Mediterranean migration routes. The training, organized at the Center of Excellence for Stability Police Units in Vicenza, Italy, promotes an innovative approach to capacity-building. Anti-trafficking practitioners engage in live-action, simulated scenarios to identify and investigate cases of human trafficking in mixed migration flows while ensuring a victim-centred and human rights-based approach.

Over one week, multi-agency teams from six OSCE participating States worked together, under the guidance of international experts, to tackle online sexual exploitation, which spiked during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants were encouraged through the storylines to promote better judicial co-operation, timely victim referral, assistance and cross-agency partnerships. The simulation culminated with a raid on the suspected traffickers and the rescue of the victims.

In 2021, the Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings also supported national simulation-based training exercises in Albania, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Ukraine.



Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid observes a trainee conducting an interview using a human rights and trauma-informed approach at the 2021 OSCE international simulation exercise in Vicenza, Italy. (OSCE/Evan Karr)

Gender equality

Senior Advisor on Gender Issues: **Amarsanaa Darisuren**

Budget	€437,100 (Unified Budget), €661,160 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff	11 (including 3 under an extrabudgetary project)

www.osce.org/secretariat/gender

Gender equality is an important cross-dimensional component of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. The Organization has intensified its efforts to build internal capacities for mainstreaming gender perspectives in all its programmes, activities and initiatives. It also provides vital support to participating States in key areas such as implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda; combating violence against women and girls; and promoting women's economic empowerment.

STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS

The meaningful participation of women in peace processes at all levels is a prerequisite for comprehensive security and part of the comprehensive and cross-dimensional approach to the OSCE's work. Involving women from civil society organizations in conflict prevention, mediation and other forums and processes is critical.

In partnership with the Women's Information and Consultative Center in Ukraine, the Secretariat's Gender Issues Programme organized three online capacity-building workshops for 26 Ukrainian women civil society actors

working in peacebuilding across 14 regions. Participants included internally displaced persons; representatives of organizations supporting implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda; and women active in peacebuilding at the community level. This initiative was part of the large-scale, multi-year WIN project – Women and Men Innovating and Networking for Gender Equality – that aims to strengthen the role and capacity of women peacebuilders across the OSCE region.

The workshops have "given us a possibility to understand how the WPS agenda can be implemented in our communities," said one of the participants. "Although I worked in this area for four years, I obtained a broader



An OSCE capacity-building event for women's civil society organizations in Ukraine. (Olena Suslova)

understanding and new knowledge.” The workshops included training on communication and advocacy skills, mediation techniques and inclusive peace process design. Interpretation in Ukrainian sign language was provided, a first for the OSCE in this context.

“I am happy that the focus on women peacebuilders has emerged,” said another workshop participant. “We should prioritize it on the national agenda.”

Co-ordination and networking between women’s civil society organizations and national and local authorities were seen as critical to a unified approach to implementing the National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325, and to the significant role of women in sustaining peace.

Workshop participants created a networking platform for sharing experiences and practices among women peacebuilders throughout Ukraine and in other countries in the OSCE region. “I understood that I am not alone with my problems,” one of them said. Networking is also an effective instrument for influencing discussions and decisions in relevant processes.

NETWORKING PLATFORM FOR WOMEN LEADERS, INCLUDING PEACEBUILDERS AND MEDIATORS

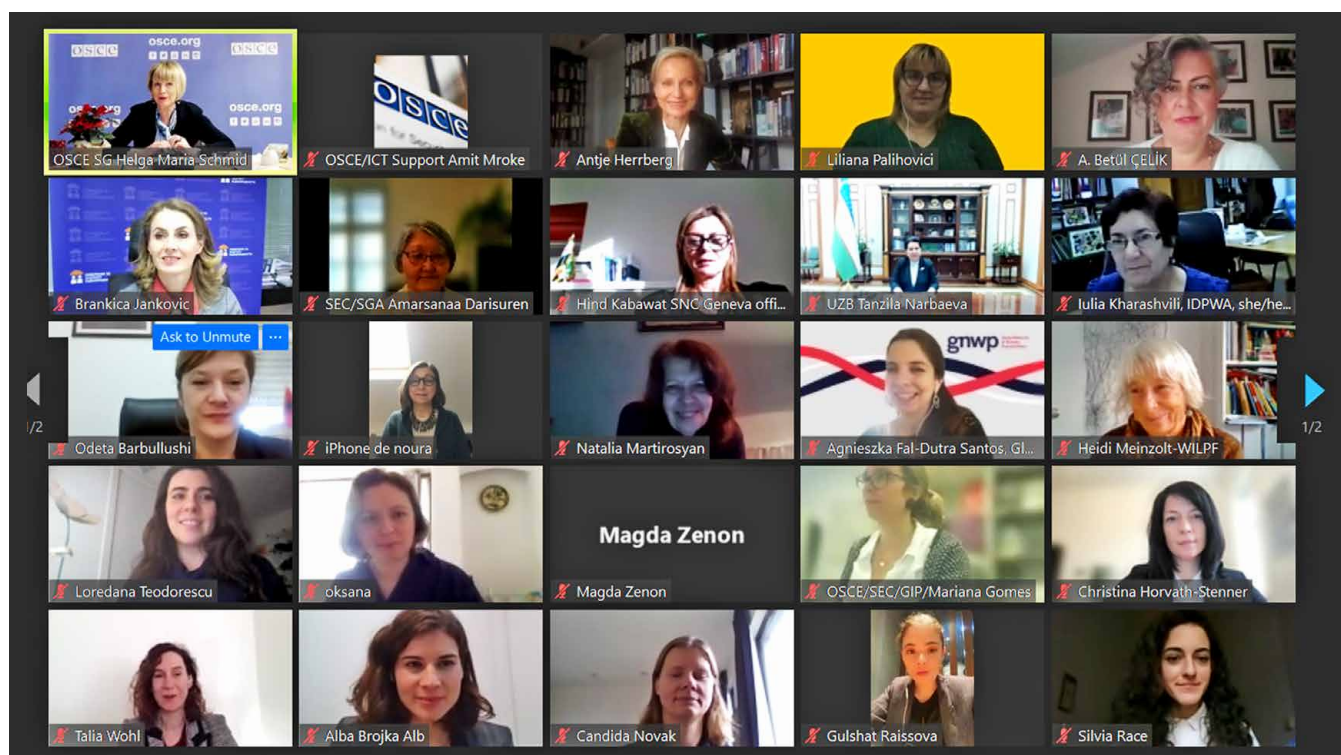
“A leading role for women at the peacebuilding table is not a benefit; it is a necessity. They are half the population, and peace processes cannot be successful without them,” said OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid at the December launch of the Networking Platform for Women Leaders,

including Peacebuilders and Mediators. “That is why, as an International Gender Champion, I pledged my support to strengthening the meaningful participation of women in peace processes and will continue doing everything I can to support women peacebuilders, mediators and in leadership positions in and around the OSCE area.”

The platform connects active women mediators and peacebuilders in the OSCE region and beyond. “This networking platform will provide safe spaces where women leaders, including peacebuilders and mediators, can share experiences and feel supported,” the Secretary General said. “Given the OSCE’s geographical reach, the Organization is well placed to provide these spaces to enhance women’s participation and influence in peace processes at all levels.” One of its first activities will be a pilot mentorship programme to strengthen the capacity of women engaged in peacebuilding and mediation in the OSCE region.

At the launch event, participants from across the region discussed women’s contributions to peace processes globally and what the OSCE can do to enhance women’s meaningful inclusion in effective peacebuilding. “So much learning we can take away, especially about the importance of hope and support for women’s alliances,” said Oksana Potapova, a women’s rights and peace activist from Ukraine.

“When women join peace processes, they have the opportunity to bring women of different conflict strata together under the ‘women’s identity’ umbrella,” said Ayşe Betül Çelik, the founder and leader of the Turkey Antenna of the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network. “This can serve as a bridging factor, as an opportunity to discuss issues that divide them and find areas where they can collaborate.”



Online launch of the Networking Platform for Women Leaders, including Peacebuilders and Mediators, 7 December 2021. (OSCE)

Human resources

Director: **Paolo Bernasconi**

Budget **€4,171,600** (Unified Budget),
€63,821 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff **45** (including 1 under extrabudgetary indirect
common costs)

*Director: Paolo Bernasconi (@paolo_berna) | LinkedIn
Paolo Bernasconi (@paolo_berna) | Twitter*

www.osce.org/secretariat

The Department of Human Resources supports all executive structures in delivering their work on behalf of participating States by attracting, managing, developing and retaining a capable, diverse and committed workforce, while applying a robust HR regulatory framework.

In 2021, the Department continued to lead on people management aspects of the Organization's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, protecting health and finding creative ways to maintain uninterrupted operations in a new world of remote work. The availability of health-related services to fit the circumstances was vital; the first OSCE Chief Medical Officer, who joined the Organization in 2021, raised awareness and shared facts about the pandemic, provided advice to the Secretary General and all executive structures, and administered over 2,000 vaccinations to OSCE staff at field operations and in Vienna thanks to generous support from several participating States. Information on medical assistance, evacuation plans and COVID-19 guidelines were regularly adapted to the evolving situation and effectively communicated across executive structures.

A key aspect of an innovative and enabling workplace is leadership's ability to harness the diversity of a workforce drawn from across all participating States. The Department upheld the OSCE 2004 Gender Action Plan by continuing to apply innovative approaches to people management. The implementation of the 2019–2026 Gender Parity Strategy continued apace, with parity achieved at the Director level in the Secretariat and the Deputy Head of Mission level at field operations. Measures continued to focus on increasing the percentage of women at the P4+ and Head of Mission levels, where they continue to be underrepresented.

The necessity of hybrid working arrangements resulted in greater efficiency thanks to increased digitalization of HR processes, including recruitment, payroll, onboarding of new staff, e-learning and HR analytics. For example, a new recruitment platform rolled out in 2021 provides improved capacity to streamline hiring processes and enhance the candidate experience. An expanded offering of online facilitator-led and e-learning supported the shift to remote work, with increased digital capabilities also supporting increased collaboration across OSCE locations. In recognition of this modernization, the OSCE



OSCE Chief Medical Officer Dr. Gerald Ripberger prepares to administer COVID-19 vaccinations to staff at the OSCE Mission in Kosovo. (OSCE)

received a LinkedIn “Culture of Learning” award for public organizations.

The recruitment of the first full-time Ethics Co-ordinator enhanced the OSCE's ability to strengthen the overall harmonization, co-ordination and coherence of ethics-related standards, norms and policies for the entire Organization. Ethics outreach, learning and guidance provided across the OSCE help to prevent and address misconduct, support the Secretary General's commitment to zero tolerance for any form of harassment and ensure the highest standards of conduct and a respectful workplace.

Management and finance

Director: **Gelfiya Shchienko**

Budget	€11,445,400 (Unified Budget), €299,294 (extrabudgetary actual expenditure)
Staff	98.6

Director: *Gelfiya Shchienko (@G_Shchienko) | Twitter*
Gelfiya Shchienko | LinkedIn

www.osce.org/secretariat

The Department of Management and Finance contributes to security and co-operation in the OSCE area by supporting all OSCE executive structures in the delivery of their mandates. It does so with a goal of operational excellence, a spirit of continuous improvement and innovation, and a relentless pursuit of efficiencies through simplification and streamlining of operations, backed by strong internal control and risk management frameworks.

The Department of Management and Finance has a dual mandate to provide administrative, information technology and financial services as well as to develop and maintain the OSCE's Common Regulatory Management System. These roles are equally important in ensuring the efficient and effective delivery of the Organization's overall mandate.

In 2021, despite the challenges and constraints imposed by the global pandemic, the Department successfully provided uninterrupted service, support and advice to both internal stakeholders and the participating States.

In the budget and finance area, the Department worked closely with the executive structures on the preparation and on-time delivery of all Unified Budget-cycle documents. In 2021, the Department fully implemented a new Hyperion budgeting system on time and under budget. It also provided high-quality accounting, treasury and extrabudgetary donation management services. The Organization's 2020 financial statements were submitted on time and received an unqualified audit opinion.

The Department also supports the executive structures with the management of their material resources through the provision of client support and policy guidance on procurement, assets, logistics, travel and facilities management. For example, the procurement office administered 135 corporate and local window contracts for use by all structures. The Department also supported development of the wider OSCE procurement community through efforts aimed at combating trafficking in human

beings in OSCE supply chains. A new paperless e-travel solution was rolled out at the Secretariat and is being developed for corporate use.

The Department provides essential ICT services to the entire Organization and has ensured business continuity throughout the pandemic, enabling all stakeholders to deliver on their respective mandates. Of particular importance in 2021 was the implementation of the new Secure Microsoft Infrastructure environment and the migration of several executive structures. Keeping OSCE systems safe is an ongoing challenge, which the Department addressed in 2021 through the completion of an Information Security Enhancement programme and a new Security Incident and Event Management system.

The Department promotes the efficient and effective use of OSCE financial and material resources through second-line-of-defence measures, risk management and information security activities. In 2021, it developed a new information security risk assessment, risk treatment plans and an updated risk registry; increased infosec awareness activities; and updated a number of financial and administrative instructions, in particular on assets, travel and information security, among others.

Internal oversight

Director: **Susanne Frueh**

Budget	€1,828,900 (Unified Budget)
Staff	16

Director: [Susanne E. Frueh](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

www.osce.org/secretariat

The Office of Internal Oversight is an integral part of a three-tier oversight system that plays a key role in promoting efficient and effective management and performance of the Organization. The Office's internal work is complemented and overseen by an external, independent Audit Committee. Assurance of the accuracy of the Organization's annual financial statement is provided by External Auditors.

Covering the entirety of the OSCE's activities and executive structures, the Office of Internal Oversight delivers three core services: internal audits, independent evaluations and investigations of the Organization's operations, activities, outputs and progress towards outcomes. Its main role is to provide assurance to participating States that governance, risk management and internal control processes are well functioning and that the Organization's work is making a difference in line with the mandates set by the participating States. Another important role is to protect the Organization from fraud and corruption and to ensure that any allegations of fraud or other misconduct are swiftly addressed through professional investigations, which in turn enables management to implement a zero-tolerance policy for fraud, corruption and other kinds of misconduct. The Office's recommendations aim to improve the performance of the Organization at all levels, and the Office monitors their implementation and impact on a continuous basis.

Ensuring that its oversight mandate extends throughout the Organization, the Office conducts specialized training for field staff to build decentralized capacities. Furthermore, a vibrant evaluation network based on an approach of learning and helping one another to learn brings together staff from all executive structures and is the OSCE's main platform for strengthening the evaluation culture in the Organization. The network's ultimate goal is to enable all executive structures and the Organization at large to use evaluations to demonstrate evidence of results and added value, and to incorporate evaluation learning into new programmes and activities.

PARTNERSHIPS

Security in the OSCE region is inseparably linked to that of neighbouring regions and can be strengthened through dialogue and the sharing of commitments, resources and expertise. The OSCE maintains privileged relations with 11 Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation and continues to build on its extensive network of co-operative relationships with other international and regional organizations.



(Shutterstock/Jose Luis Carrascosa)

Asian Partners for Co-operation

Asian Partners for Co-operation: **Afghanistan, Australia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Thailand**



Chair, OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation Group: **Albania**



ASIAN PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION GROUP

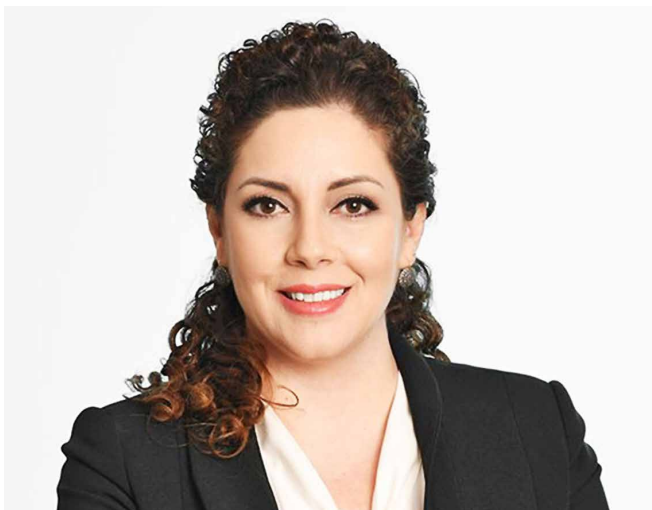
As Chair of the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation Group in 2021, Albania promoted and strengthened an open and interactive dialogue among the Asian Partners and the OSCE participating States. Albania worked to strengthen mutual relationships and build closer co-operation, aiming at an increased role for the Partners, all in compliance with the 2020 Tirana Ministerial Council Declaration on Co-operation with the Asian Partners.

Aiming to organize more meetings than usual, Albania laid out a rich calendar of events for the Co-operation Group aligned with the priorities of the Swedish OSCE Chair and the Asian Partners. This demand-driven approach promoted

The Special Meeting of the Asian Partners for Co-operation Group dedicated to the situation in Afghanistan featured reports about the situation on the ground by senior UN officials, who drew attention to the profound challenges facing the country. The OSCE Secretary General underlined the OSCE's readiness to help within its existing mandate. When the situation in Afghanistan changed significantly three weeks later, a task force was set up across OSCE executive structures to look into the implications of these developments for Central Asia and the entire OSCE area, which helped prepare the ground for ministerial consultations at the Stockholm Ministerial Council.



Don Pramudwinai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, addresses the 2021 OSCE Asian Conference. (OSCE)



(Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania)

“As our 25 years of co-operation shows, we have shared values, shared interests and shared challenges – none greater right now than the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Olta Xhaçka

Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania, addressing the 2021 OSCE Asian Conference

2021 OSCE ASIAN CONFERENCE

The 2021 OSCE Asian Conference, on common responses to emerging challenges in advancing comprehensive security, was held in a blended format (in Vienna and online) on 20 and 21 September. Organized in partnership with the Kingdom of Thailand, the conference was attended by over 200 participants from OSCE participating States, Partners for Co-operation, NGOs, civil society, and international and regional organizations, who gathered to explore ways to tackle global security challenges in the three dimensions of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. Specifically, discussions focused on countering transnational organized crime; transborder environmental risks and challenges such as environmental degradation, the unsustainable use of natural resources and climate change; and the nexus between human rights and public health in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Other Asian Partnership events in 2021 included a webinar on terrorists' use of the internet, an international online round table on combating technology-facilitated trafficking in human beings in Central Asia and in the OSCE Asian Partner countries, and the third Interregional Conference on Cyber/ ICT Security.

extensive discussions on issues of common interest, with the aim of advancing joint efforts to achieve comprehensive security both within and beyond the OSCE area. Due to a deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan, the Albanian Chair organized the first-ever Special Meeting of the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation Group, which focused on regional implications of the evolving security situation in Afghanistan.

As a result of continued restrictions on travel and meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all 2021 meetings of the Asian Partners for Co-operation Group were conducted in a blended format. Nonetheless, they provided a valuable platform for information exchange, dialogue and sharing of best practices between the OSCE participating States and the Asian Partners for Co-operation, with each meeting featuring at least one speaker from one of the Asian Partner countries, as well as presentations by experts from international organizations, diplomats, academics and representatives of civil society. The meeting discussions focused on good governance, rule of law and economic co-operation; non-traditional security challenges; empowering women leadership; and the situation on the Korean Peninsula.

Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation

Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation: **Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia**



Chair, OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation Group: **Poland**



MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION GROUP

As the 2021 Chair of the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation Group, Poland promoted an interactive and practically oriented OSCE Mediterranean Partnership with a focus on increasing security in the OSCE region, including by leveraging the full potential of closer dialogue and co-operation with the Mediterranean Partners.

Poland organized four meetings of the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation Group to promote dialogue on a range of crucial topics, including post-pandemic recovery, transnational organized crime, youth and illicit trafficking of cultural goods.

Together with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation and with the support of the OSCE Secretariat's Transnational Threats Department, the Polish Chair also worked throughout the year on an initiative on transnational organized crime and asset recovery. This endeavour resulted in a proposal for an extrabudgetary project to strengthen the partnership with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation in asset recovery. The goal of the project is to improve regional co-operation and the effectiveness of the fight against transnational organized crime in the OSCE area and the Mediterranean region. The Polish Chair laid the ground for continued discussions and successful implementation of this project in 2022 for the benefit of both the OSCE and the Mediterranean regions.

The Partnership Fund supported a number of activities in 2021, including projects addressing human trafficking in the context of Mediterranean migration movements and the challenge posed by trafficking in cultural property. The Partnership Fund continued to support activities in the field of youth engagement and women's empowerment.



OSCE/Mickey Kröll

"For Poland, the dialogue with the Mediterranean Partners is of great importance. We consider it a crucial component of the region's enduring stability and security. Only through collective effort will we be able to face the challenges of today."

Zbigniew Rau

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland

With the support of Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta and Portugal, Poland initiated a Young Political Advisors Course for young professionals from the Mediterranean region that will take place in 2022.



Piotr Wawrzyk, Deputy Foreign Minister of Poland, addressing the 2021 OSCE Mediterranean Partners Conference, Vienna, 12 October 2021. (OSCE)

2021 OSCE MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE

The Mediterranean Conference, held on 12–13 October, provided a high-level political platform for advancing the Mediterranean Partnership and for discussing security developments in the OSCE and Mediterranean regions. Titled “Road to Resilience: Post-Pandemic Recovery and Security in the OSCE and Mediterranean Regions”, the conference was attended by participants from over 50 countries. The high-level political segment that opened the event addressed

security and co-operation in the Mediterranean in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and was attended by 16 ministers and deputy ministers from Partners for Co-operation and OSCE participating States, confirming the Mediterranean Conference as a ministerial-level forum for regional dialogue. Thematic sessions tackled specific aspects of post-pandemic recovery, including promoting a sustainable and green recovery, fighting pandemic-related transnational organized crime and combating human trafficking in labour markets affected by the pandemic.

Co-operation with international and regional organizations

Co-operation with international and regional organizations amplifies the OSCE's efforts to strengthen stability and security across its region and beyond. Over the years, the OSCE has developed a large network of contacts with organizations and institutions active in all three dimensions of security. Political dialogue with these organizations fosters information exchange and sharing of good practices, while operational co-operation creates synergies, enabling the OSCE to maximize the impact of its limited resources while avoiding duplication.

POLITICAL DIALOGUE AND OPERATIONAL CO-OPERATION

Despite continued pandemic conditions, the Secretariat cautiously resumed in-person meetings with key partners in 2021, including its annual high-level meeting with the European Union and numerous meetings with senior officials of UN agencies. The Secretary General also met with her counterparts in a wide range of organizations, including in-person meetings with the Secretary General of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Executive Director of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, and the Secretary General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

Other meetings took place online, such as the annual meetings of the Council of Europe–OSCE Co-ordination Group, and the webinar series on combating intolerance and discrimination against migrants and refugees, jointly organized with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, the OSCE Secretariat and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

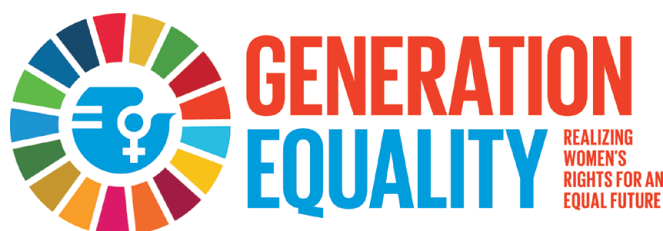
Political dialogue and operational co-operation were fostered through field visits by the Secretary General and the Chairperson-in-Office, demonstrating how the willingness to keep an open dialogue between sides or with different actors helps achieve shared goals and commitments. In addition to institutional-level dialogue, the OSCE institutions, field missions and Secretariat maintained working-level contacts with partner organizations.

High-level representatives of international and regional organizations took part in numerous OSCE in-person and online events in 2021. For example, the Annual Security Review Conference was attended by representatives of the United Nations, the Collective Security Treaty

Organization, the European Union and NATO. Regional challenges and potential joint responses were discussed by OSCE field operations and representatives of partner organizations in the annual CPC-organized regional heads of mission meetings. For example, the heads of the OSCE field operations in Central Asia met with the EU Special Representative for Central Asia, the Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the head of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

Many operational activities implemented by OSCE field operations, institutions and the Secretariat are carried out in collaboration with partner organizations. A few highlights of joint activities in 2021 are highlighted below.

OSCE JOINS GENERATION EQUALITY FORUM



The OSCE took part in the largest global gathering on gender equality since the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing, the Generation Equality Forum, which was convened by UN Women in partnership with civil society. The OSCE pledged to work to advance gender equality by taking concrete action on gender-based violence, economic justice and rights, and technology and innovation for gender equality. ODIHR made commitments on gender-based violence and feminist movements and leadership. The OSCE also became a catalytic member of the Generation Equality Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action, and will target two of the Compact's priority areas: bringing together women mediators and peacebuilders, and partnering with women's networks to advance their leadership.

COLLABORATION WITH FRONTEX

In 2021, the OSCE, Frontex and a number of international and national stakeholders published a handbook on firearms for border guards and customs officers, and finalized a handbook on minimum recommended capabilities for document checks in border control. OSCE experts



Participants in a training course on identifying foreign terrorist fighters at borders that was run by the OSCE Mobile Training Team in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1 December 2021. (OSCE/Nikola Gaon)

participated in the annual Frontex Biometrics Conference, and Frontex representatives contributed to the OSCE’s annual meeting for national focal points for border security and management and participated in the fifth Annual Passenger Data Exchange Seminar organized by the OSCE and the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism. Frontex also sent an expert on risk analysis and management to the OSCE Mobile Training Team deployment to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The OSCE co-operates with Frontex on the basis of a working arrangement jointly signed in 2019.

not only law enforcement but also trafficking in human beings, corruption and illicit trafficking of hazardous waste. OSCE’s co-operation with INTERPOL dates back to 2010.

INTERPOL contributed experts to OSCE mobile training team deployments on identification of potential foreign terrorist fighters in Serbia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and provided expertise to regional cultural property protection training course for customs, border police, military, law enforcement and political officers from 10 countries.

ICAT RECOMMENDATIONS TO PREVENT TRAFFICKING IN ORGAN REMOVAL

Thanks to close collaboration among the OSCE, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Health Organization and the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT) published a paper on trafficking in human beings for the purpose of organ removal. The paper provides practical recommendations for States and all relevant stakeholders involved in preventing and combating this crime, which is one of the least understood and least addressed forms of human trafficking globally.

ADDRESSING THE CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

The OSCE and the Union for the Mediterranean joined the Rome-based Institute of International Affairs and the New-Med Research Network in organizing an international conference on climate change and security in the Mediterranean region for governmental and academic experts from the region. The conference provided the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities with the opportunity to share information on the OSCE’s recent political commitments, programmatic experiences and best practices, as well as prospects for advancing co-operation with the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation in the field of climate change. The event was organized as follow-up to the memorandum of understanding between the Secretariats of the OSCE and the Union for the Mediterranean that was signed at the 2018 OSCE Mediterranean Conference.

COLLABORATION WITH INTERPOL

In 2021, the OSCE and INTERPOL renewed their co-operation by signing a Joint Action Plan for 2021–2023. This new Action Plan reflects a more comprehensive approach to their co-operation and expands the areas of collaboration to include

ANNEXES

OSCE staff at a glance



3,603

STAFF MEMBERS FROM

49

COUNTRIES WORKING IN

19

LOCATIONS IN THE OSCE AREA



286

INTERNATIONAL CONTRACTED STAFF

1,118

INTERNATIONAL SECONDED STAFF

2,199

LOCALLY RECRUITED STAFF

(all full-time staff, as of 31 December 2021)

Progress towards gender parity

International staff 2019

2021

SENIOR MANAGEMENT



28% women / 72% men



34% women / 66% men

CONTRACTED STAFF



42% women / 58% men



43% women / 57% men

SECONDED STAFF



27% women / 73% men



29% women / 71% men

TOTAL INTERNATIONAL STAFF



29% women / 71% men



32% women / 68% men

Senior management: S4, DHoM, HoM, P5, D, HoI, SG

Contracted staff: P1-P4

Seconded staff: S-S3

2021 OSCE Unified Budget by Executive Structure (PC.DEC/1413)*

	2021 Unified Budget	2021 Expenditure	% of total budget
THE SECRETARIAT AND INSTITUTIONS			
The Secretariat	40.873.800	40.402.849	30%
Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights	16.394.000	16.122.125	12%
High Commissioner on National Minorities	3.504.000	3.372.188	3%
Representative on Freedom of the Media	1.608.800	1.509.480	1%
TOTAL FOR THE SECRETARIAT AND INSTITUTIONS	62.380.600	61.406.641	45%
OSCE FIELD OPERATIONS			
South-Eastern Europe			
Mission in Kosovo	17.462.600	17.461.622	13%
Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina	11.682.000	11.568.547	8%
Mission to Serbia	6.258.600	6.258.229	5%
Presence in Albania	2.981.200	2.950.994	2%
Mission to Skopje	6.506.100	6.412.000	5%
Mission to Montenegro	2.152.100	1.989.615	2%
Total for South-Eastern Europe	47.042.600	46.641.007	34%
Eastern Europe			
Mission to Moldova	2.302.700	2.270.308	2%
Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine	3.618.500	3.554.940	3%
Representative to the Latvian-Russian Joint Commission on Military Pensioners	5.500	2.105	0%
Total for Eastern Europe	5.926.700	5.827.352	4%
Caucasus			
High-Level Planning Group	247.600	185.084	0%
The Minsk Process	911.200	328.423	1%
Personal Representative of the CiO on the Conflict Dealt with by the Minsk Conference	1.179.700	994.890	1%
Total for Caucasus	2.338.500	1.508.397	2%
Central Asia			
Programme Office in Nur-Sultan	2.232.700	2.179.427	2%
Centre in Ashgabat	1.661.200	1.652.350	1%
Programme Office in Bishkek	6.811.000	6.794.742	5%
Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan	2.499.200	2.470.659	2%
Programme Office in Dushanbe	7.311.600	7.242.898	5%
Total for Central Asia	20.515.700	20.340.076	15%
TOTAL FOR OSCE FIELD OPERATIONS	75.823.500	74.316.833	55%
GRAND TOTAL	138.204.100	135.723.474	100%

* The Unified budget excludes the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine and the Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk.

* The 2021 OSCE Unified budget was approved by the Permanent Council Decision (PC.DEC/1413) on 18 August 2021.

138.204.100
100%

Central Asia
20.515.700
15%

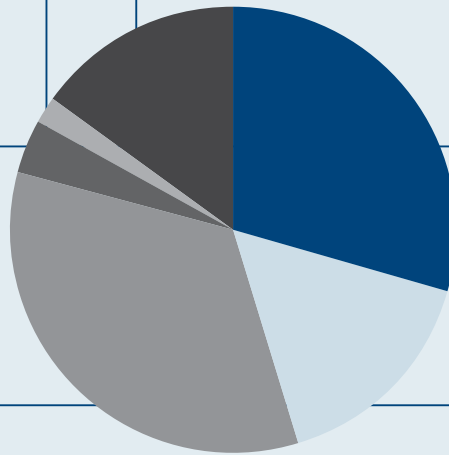
Caucasus
2.338.500
2%

Eastern Europe
5.926.700
4%

South-Eastern Europe
47.042.600
34%

The Secretariat
40.873.800
30%

Institutions
21.506.800
16%



Contributions by participating States

PARTICIPATING STATE	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS 2021 UNIFIED BUDGET (€)	% OF TOTAL
Albania	91,052.63	0.1%
Andorra	91,052.63	0.1%
Armenia	45,758.48	0.0%
Austria	3,189,241.33	2.3%
Azerbaijan	45,758.48	0.0%
Belarus	200,222.92	0.1%
Belgium	4,600,337.45	3.3%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	91,052.63	0.1%
Bulgaria	369,425.48	0.3%
Canada	7,494,844.12	5.4%
Croatia	200,338.27	0.1%
Cyprus	199,734.35	0.1%
Czech Republic	671,045.52	0.5%
Denmark	2,855,087.91	2.1%
Estonia	129,703.64	0.1%
Finland	2,646,700.80	1.9%
France	14,277,462.25	10.3%
Georgia	45,758.48	0.0%
Germany	15,030,785.84	10.9%
Greece	1,158,662.59	0.8%
Holy See	91,052.63	0.1%
Hungary	656,830.58	0.5%
Iceland	184,775.89	0.1%
Ireland	1,067,655.51	0.8%
Italy	14,241,703.37	10.3%
Kazakhstan	264,099.06	0.2%
Kyrgyzstan	45,758.48	0.0%
Latvia	133,594.24	0.1%
Liechtenstein	91,052.63	0.1%
Lithuania	133,594.24	0.1%

PARTICIPATING STATE	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS 2021 UNIFIED BUDGET (€)	% OF TOTAL
Luxembourg	478,373.09	0.3%
Malta	94,943.23	0.1%
Moldova	45,758.48	0.0%
Monaco	91,052.63	0.1%
Mongolia	45,758.48	0.0%
Montenegro	45,758.48	0.0%
Netherlands	5,403,215.09	3.9%
North Macedonia	91,052.63	0.1%
Norway	2,848,746.43	2.1%
Poland	1,632,319.65	1.2%
Portugal	1,027,590.20	0.7%
Romania	455,727.48	0.3%
Russian Federation	5,568,829.50	4.0%
San Marino	91,052.63	0.1%
Serbia	100,111.46	0.1%
Slovak Republic	285,816.01	0.2%
Slovenia	268,429.75	0.2%
Spain	6,657,417.21	4.8%
Sweden	4,596,098.46	3.3%
Switzerland	3,813,504.50	2.8%
Tajikistan	45,758.48	0.0%
Turkey	1,193,550.47	0.9%
Turkmenistan	45,758.48	0.0%
Ukraine	519,603.62	0.4%
United Kingdom	14,276,010.41	10.3%
United States of America	17,838,769.00	12.9%
Uzbekistan	250,278.65	0.2%
Gap in Scales	48,673.07	0.0%
Total	138,204,100.00	100.0%

Extrabudgetary pledges and voluntary contributions

Donor	Pledge Amount (€)
Andorra	20,000
Austria	516,300
Belgium	710,000
Bulgaria	40,000
Canada	654,617
Central European Initiative (CEI)	5,145
Cyprus	2,000
Czech Republic	218,273
European Union	21,329,649
Finland	745,378
France	836,500
Germany	9,675,431
Greece	17,000
Hungary	177,000
Ireland	170,000
Italy	307,000
Japan	675,326
Latvia	10,000
Liechtenstein	107,586
Lithuania	30,000
Luxembourg	150,000
Malta	25,000
Monaco	15,000
Netherlands	1,250,318
Norway	15,253
Poland	694,803
Portugal	90,000
Romania	10,000
Russian Federation	5,997
Slovakia	36,000
Slovenia	17,000
South Korea	84,700
Spain	171,777
Sweden	1,493,381
Switzerland	743,132
The Coca Cola Foundation	82,400
Turkey	67,628
United Kingdom	727,096
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	157,000
United States	10,967,851
Grand Total*	53,051,540

* Voluntary contributions to the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine are included.

Executive Structure	Pledge Amount (€)
Secretariat	18,745,499
Secretariat Unallocated Funds*	149,661
Office for Democratic Inst. and Human Rights	7,265,004
High Commissioner on National Minorities	390,992
Representative on Freedom of the Media	469,015
Mission in Kosovo	257,852
Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina	2,134,004
Mission to Serbia	285,373
Presence in Albania	1,194,289
Mission to Skopje	1,381,735
Mission to Montenegro	18,754
Mission to Moldova	60,000
Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine	4,586,979
Representative to the Latvian-Russian Joint Comm.on MPs	
High-Level Planning Group	
The Minsk Process	
Personal Representative of the CiO	
Programme Office in Nur-Sultan	258,000
Centre in Ashgabat	150,000
Programme Office in Bishkek	1,053,464
Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan	189,702
Programme Office in Dushanbe	6,300
Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine	14,454,917
Grand Total	53,051,540

* Unallocated extrabudgetary contributions are funds provided by donors to the OSCE without allocating contributions to a specific extrabudgetary project at the time of acceptance.

Extrabudgetary expenditures*

Executive Structure	Actual Expenditures (€)
Secretariat	8,748,935
Secretariat Unallocated Funds	-
Office for Democratic Inst. and Human Rights	4,277,417
High Commissioner on National Minorities	546,915
Representative on Freedom of the Media	390,979
Mission in Kosovo	460,470
Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina	760,518
Mission to Serbia	1,121,098
Presence in Albania	1,405,078
Mission to Skopje	1,110,700
Mission to Montenegro	227,318
Mission to Moldova	42,722
Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine	3,019,712
Representative to the Latvian-Russian Joint Comm.on MPs	
High-Level Planning Group	
The Minsk Process	
Personal Representative of the CiO	
Programme Office in Nur-Sultan	161,666
Centre in Ashgabat	119,954
Programme Office in Bishkek	901,641
Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan	329,773
Programme Office in Dushanbe	2,920,221
Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine	8,414,474
Total	34,959,592

* Actual expenditure figures do not include obligations. This applies to all actual expenditure figures throughout this document.

