



## **Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting**

# **THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF TOLERANCE AND NON-DISCRIMINATION**

**26-27 June 2023  
Vienna**

## **FINAL REPORT**



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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The third Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting (SHDM) of 2023, organized by the OSCE 2023 Chairpersonship of North Macedonia with the support of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), was dedicated to “The Role of Civil Society in the Promotion and Protection of Tolerance and Non-Discrimination.” The meeting provided an opportunity for OSCE participating States (pSs), OSCE institutions and executive structures, international organizations, civil society and other stakeholders to exchange views and develop recommendations.

Participants focused on three key areas. In the first session, participants discussed how civil society organizations (CSOs) can use public educational initiatives to teach young people about the importance of respect for diversity. They also discussed how to address intolerance and hate in the online space. The second session explored the ways in which CSOs can contribute to countering intolerance and discrimination against communities who are often the target of hatred, such as Roma and Sinti as well as migrants and refugees. During the third working session, participants considered the role of collaboration between CSOs and state authorities in improving the situation across the OSCE region.

249 individuals registered to participate in the meeting. The event brought together 191 attendees (74 men, 115 women), including 101 representatives of 48 pSs, 14 representatives of 7 international organizations, 43 representatives of 35 CSOs, as well as 33 participants from OSCE institutions and field missions, National Human Rights Institutions and other participants.

## 2. SYNOPSIS OF THE SESSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### OPENING SESSION

*Opening remarks:*

**H.E. Ambassador Igor Djundev**, Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council and Permanent Representative of the Republic of North Macedonia to the OSCE:

**Mr. Matteo Mecacci**, Director, OSCE/ODIHR

*Introductory addresses:*

**Rabbi Andrew Baker**, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism

**Associate Professor Dr. Regina Polak**, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, also focusing on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions

**Mr. Kyriakos Hadjiyianni**, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Special Representative on Civil Society Engagement

*Keynote address:*

**Mr. Michael O'Flaherty**, Director, EU Agency for Fundamental Rights

In the opening session, speakers focused on the vital work of civil society in promoting tolerance and non-discrimination and building inclusive societies founded on respect for human rights and democratic principles. They summarized the key challenges facing CSOs today, including the shrinking space and the multiple and overlapping crises of the COVID-19 pandemic, the military attack on Ukraine, and economic hardship. They also recalled occasions when CSOs played a key role in placing tolerance and non-discrimination issues higher on the OSCE's agenda, while highlighting future opportunities for meaningful engagement and collaboration with CSOs in the OSCE context.

The Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council detailed the political challenges facing CSOs, including arrests, lawsuits and restrictions on funding, while highlighting their resourcefulness and resilience in adapting to change. He called on OSCE participating States to give CSOs access to capacity-building programmes to further strengthen their resilience and ensure they can continue their vital work to support at-risk communities.

Building on these comments, the ODIHR Director noted that addressing intolerance and hatred is a collective effort, and achieving this goal requires co-operation between State institutions and CSOs, in line with the OSCE commitments. He underscored ODIHR's support in building the capacity of and strengthening partnerships among CSOs in the areas of countering hate crime, advocating for the rights of Roma and Sinti, and developing long-term approaches to manage forced migration. He called for broad-based and inclusive coalitions on different strands of the work to advance tolerance and non-discrimination and identified opportunities to deepen co-operation with CSOs, such as on addressing the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on the online space.

The two Personal Representatives (PR) of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on tolerance issues recalled the positive role of CSOs in promoting TND issues and safeguarding the specific protections for vulnerable groups. Dr. Regina Polak, PR on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination also focusing on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions, detailed the contribution of women working in the civil society sector, and highlighted how their contribution is impacted by gender and other inequalities. She called on the OSCE to ensure that men and women have equal opportunities to engage in such work, and to guarantee political and legal protection to CSOs and human rights defenders. Rabbi Andrew Baker, PR on Combating Anti-Semitism, recalled how critical the involvement of CSOs was in convening the first ever OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism.

The introductory address by the Special Representative of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly focused on the contribution of CSOs in building and sustaining democratic institutions, and in particular parliaments. He called on parliaments to engage CSOs in legislative work to improve transparency and gender mainstreaming, and to strengthen the successful implementation of laws and policies. He noted that legislation should be updated or drafted to address the challenges facing CSOs, including with regard to funding and legal status, and observed that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is well-placed to propose solutions and identify good practices for national policymaking towards enhancing the role of CSOs in addressing intolerance and discrimination.

Rounding off the discussion, the keynote address delivered by the Director of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) underscored that CSOs are an indispensable element of a healthy democracy and play a vital role in protecting human rights. He summarized FRA's findings on the worrying levels of threat, intimidation and harassment facing CSOs, and called on States to prohibit strategic litigation against public participation. He urged states to support

CSOs through funding that goes beyond service provision to include core costs and advocacy, and suggested the use of humanitarian visas for CSO representatives fleeing persecution in third countries.



*Mr. Michael O'Flaherty, Director, EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, delivering the keynote address during the SHDM Opening Session on 26 June 2023.*

## **SESSION I: CIVIL SOCIETY EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS IN PROMOTING TOLERANCE AND NON-DISCRIMINATION**

*Introducers:*

**Ms. Emina Frljak**, Programme Coordinator, Youth for Peace

**Ms. Melissa Mott**, Director, Echoes & Reflections

*Moderator:* Mr. Mikołaj Wrzeczionkowski, Adviser on Combating Anti-Semitism, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department, OSCE/ODIHR

The first session highlighted the good practices that CSOs deploy to promote tolerance and non-discrimination through public education and informal initiatives. It showcased effective methods to foster respect for diversity and address intolerance and hatred in the online space, particularly among young people. A special focus of the session were the opportunities and risks posed by generative AI, and considered civil society efforts to respond to negative developments through educational interventions and partnerships with the technology industry.

The first introducer, Ms. Emina Frljak, highlighted the methods and approaches taken by her organization to facilitate dialogue among young people in South Eastern Europe. She emphasized the need for practitioners to engage in co-operative problem solving and provide spaces for “safe and brave” interactions in which opposing parties can explore their prejudices with openness and honesty.

Ms. Frljak called on CSOs to develop initiatives that are programmatic, sustainable and systematic, and not oriented around a single project. She pointed out that, to be truly effective, such work requires a multi-stakeholder approach, in which CSOs’ work is co-ordinated with educational, academic, religious and government institutions. Participating States, OSCE institutions, and executive structures can strengthen co-ordination among civil society actors, while better assisting CSOs through advocacy, sustainable funding opportunities, and networking support.

The second introducer, Ms. Melissa Mott focused on civil society interventions to counter online hatred, including anti-Semitism, and build resistance to “extremist” ideologies among young people. In particular, she underscored the need for a proactive approach to disrupting exposure to online hate, including values-based interventions that cultivate empathy with targeted groups. At the same time, she pointed out that young people should be given the tools to understand how hate groups are introducing them to “extremist” ideologies. She noted that CSOs are well-placed to work with educational initiatives to build young people’s real-world experiences centred on acceptance, respect for diversity, and tolerance.

Mott highlighted initiatives that civil society have undertaken to respond to online hatred, such as building partnerships with social media and technology companies aimed at training content moderators to recognize online hatred and understand its impact. She called on technology companies to include the perspective of targeted communities when developing digital tools designed to detect online hatred to ensure their effectiveness.

During the ensuing discussion, several CSOs reported facing specific challenges in exercising the right to freedom of assembly, as well as examples of intolerance and discrimination. A number of pSs underscored the importance of education in combating intolerance and hatred, and one delegate highlighted the need for educational programmes to strengthen media literacy and critical thinking.

Participants also highlighted the importance of leadership and accountability in tackling intolerant discourse in public life, as well as the need for sustainable funding and co-ordination to strengthen the impact of civil society’s work in this area. A CSO speaker noted the challenges that many young people face in accessing formal spaces, such as OSCE human dimension meetings, in which tolerance and non-discrimination and related issues are discussed.

#### ***Recommendations for the OSCE pSs:***

- To meet their OSCE commitments and other international standards in the area of tolerance and non-discrimination in full.
- To support CSOs through co-ordinated partnerships, advocacy, sustainable funding and networking.
- To develop state-funded programmes to promote tolerance and non-discrimination, including through public education.
- To prioritize measures to combat racism and intolerance against migrants and refugees, including through structural changes, such as strengthening the representation of former asylum seekers in law enforcement bodies.

- To hold politicians accountable for “hate speech” promoting racism and intolerance.
- To ensure that civil society can work freely to protect the rights of minority languages and cultures.
- To allocate funds for youth-led initiatives and organizations working to build peace and advance tolerance and non-discrimination.

***Recommendations for the OSCE institutions and field operations:***

- To include young people in high-level meetings, such as the SHDM.
- To streamline its activities on preventing hate crime and genocide commemoration.

## **SESSION II: TOWARDS TOLERANCE AND NON-DISCRIMINATION AND ADDRESSING HATE CRIME FOR COMMUNITIES AT RISK**

*Introducers:*

**Dr. Anton Drobovych**, Head of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance

**Mr. Roland Ferkovic**, Co-Manager and Project Officer of the Roma Civil Monitor, Democracy Institute, Central European University

**Ms. Agnieszka Kosowicz**, President of the Board of the Polish Migration Forum Foundation

*Moderator:* Mr. Cristi Mihalache, Senior Adviser on Roma and Sinti Issues, Chief of the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, OSCE/ODIHR

The second session discussed the efforts of civil society directed towards countering intolerance, hate crime and bias against communities at risk, including Roma and Sinti, migrants and refugees. It examined the challenges faced by civil society in documenting and monitoring the human rights violations as regards these groups, including their gendered aspects. The session also provided venue for sharing positive measures implemented with a view of combating stereotyping and prejudice in the media and promoting tolerance and non-discrimination amongst all stakeholders.

The first introducer emphasised that mutual respect between communities, notably in conflict climates such in Ukraine, should be fostered while supremacist attitudes strongly condemned. Dr. Drobovych added that it is crucial that the world community respects the principles embodied in the international law which prohibits discrimination against any group, including on nationality account.

The second introducer pointed out that anti-Roma sentiments, discrimination in access to socio-economic rights, and anti-Roma hate crime, including from law enforcement are among persisting issues that preclude the sustainable inclusion of Roma and Sinti in the society. Mr. Ferkovic noted widespread anti-Roma rhetoric in public space, in particular by politicians and elected representatives. Hate crimes remain under-reported mainly due to lack of trust in state institutions. Civil society actors play a crucial role in addressing these issues while more support and co-operation with national authorities is needed.

The third introducer shifted the attention on joint efforts of civil society, local authorities, business, churches, and volunteer groups to meet the urgent humanitarian needs of arriving refugees from Ukraine to Poland. Ms. Kosowicz highlighted the critical role of citizens and voluntary groups in the initial response phase and their contribution as a driving force in the

humanitarian action to support the refugees. At the same time, it was noted potential risks for heightened intolerance that have to be mitigated through communication, dialogue and cross-sectoral co-operation engaging all relevant stakeholders. This has proven to be a good practice in Poland which resulted in more targeted and well-co-ordinated actions.

Civil society representatives raised concerns about existing racial discriminatory practices, hate speech and hate crime, and other forms of intolerance against communities at risk, including Roma and Sinti, migrants, refugees, minority and religious groups. Some participants raised attention over the discriminatory treatment and limited humanitarian aid as regards Ukrainian Roma refugees in some participating States. Members of civil society groups stressed the need for more effective protection for these groups as well as determined action by pSs to tackle discrimination and intolerance.

Delegations and intergovernmental entities also expressed concerns over acts of bias-motivated incidents directed towards communities at risk. They called for greater efforts to ensure inclusion of these groups in participation processes and more support for refugees, including by intergovernmental agencies. Delegations stressed the paramount importance of fostering tolerance and non-discrimination within the OSCE region.

#### ***Recommendations for the OSCE pSs:***

- To co-operate with the civil society to ensure that they are included in relevant decision-making processes and provided with sustainable support to that end.
- To develop and put in place long-term strategies on how to address the existing and emerging issues of refugees and migrants conducive of effective social cohesion.
- To tackle intolerance and discrimination against communities at risk, including Roma and Sinti, migrants and refugees while ensuring no impunity for perpetrators, justice for the victims, and sustainable partnership with civil society.
- To invest more efforts in ensuring inclusion of these communities in participation processes and in providing necessary support in their endeavours.

#### ***Recommendations for the OSCE institutions and field operations:***

- To maintain its efforts on fostering tolerance and non-discrimination in the OSCE region.

## **SESSION III: CIVIL SOCIETY ADVANCING TOLERANCE AND NON-DISCRIMINATION THROUGH COLLABORATION, COALITIONS AND DIALOGUE**

### *Introducers:*

**Ms. Marine Kapanadze**, Director of the Civil and Political Rights Program, Georgian Democracy Initiative

**Dr. Maureen Sier**, Director, Interfaith Scotland

*Moderator:* Dr. Kishan Manocha, Head, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department, OSCE/ODIHR

The third working session focused on the nature, role and effectiveness of collaborative action involving civil society actors, among themselves and with state authorities, to advance



tolerance and non-discrimination in the OSCE region. The introducers discussed factors conducive to effective and sustainable civil society coalitions, in light of their experience of working with civil society coalitions for tolerance and non-discrimination and in the area of interfaith and interreligious dialogue and partnerships.

The first introducer, Ms. Marine Kapanadze, identified key challenges faced by civil society actors in co-operating with national authorities in advancing tolerance and non-discrimination, particularly in supporting a comprehensive approach to addressing hate crime. She described the increasing prevalence of autocratic tendencies in the OSCE region, as well as rising populism and discriminatory rhetoric towards migrants and members of the LBGTQ+ community as significant challenges to civil society efforts to counter intolerance, discrimination, and hate crime. She observed that civil society actors must develop innovative approaches to prevent and respond to discrimination, including through forming coalitions citing No to Phobia!, the Coalition for Equality and the Coalition for Independent and Transparent Judiciary as notable examples of successful coalitions. She described the united and coherent approach of civil society in Georgia to oppose the introduction of so-called Foreign Agent Laws as an effective approach that can be replicated in other situations.

The second introducer, Dr. Maureen Sier, stated that effective interfaith and interreligious partnerships do not emerge in a vacuum. Drawing on the experience of Scotland, she highlighted the essential elements for advancing tolerance and non-discrimination, including strengthened religious literacy and education, engaging religious or belief communities in civic and political processes, an effective legal and justice system, and support for gender equality and freedom of religion or belief. Dr. Sier stressed the importance of sustainable human and resource management for successful interfaith and interreligious coalitions and partnerships, particularly in the face of challenges such as the changing geopolitical landscape and the diversion of funds from community cohesion work due to financial constraints.

During the discussion, several organizations shared their experience of forming coalitions and partnerships to advance tolerance and non-discrimination, including through interfaith and interreligious partnerships and other forms of cooperation. Speakers highlighted the importance of collaboration between civil society actors and national authorities underpinned by the values of inclusive governance and equality, as well as the need for states to strengthen the protection and promotion of civic space. Speakers also identified the need for united and coherent efforts through strong multi-stakeholder approaches to countering discrimination, especially in the face of new challenges due to the rise of online hate and discrimination.

### ***Recommendations for the OSCE pSs:***

- To ensure open dialogue with and support for civil society actors in advancing tolerance and non-discrimination in the OSCE region.
- To respect all OSCE commitments, including those relating to the rights of minorities and vulnerable groups.
- To ensure that vulnerable and minority groups can live as equals and without fear of stigmatization.
- To strengthen religious literacy and education across the OSCE region.
- To collaborate with civil society actors to combat new and increased challenges such as the rise of online hate.

### ***Recommendations for the OSCE institutions and field operations:***

- To play a key role in strengthening CSOs by providing resources, expertise and leadership to create joint strategies and proactive engagement to counter discrimination throughout the OSCE region.
- To ensure equal and full representation in OSCE events and to ensure that all voices are heard equally.

## **CLOSING SESSION**

### *Reports from the working sessions*

#### *Closing remarks*

**Ms. Kateryna Ryabiko**, First Deputy Director, OSCE/ODIHR

**Mr. Andreja Stojkovski**, Special Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on Civil Society

The rapporteurs summed up the interventions that took place during the working sessions. The first rapporteur briefed on positive practices carried out by civil society actors in promoting tolerance and non-discrimination through public educational initiatives. The second rapporteur talked through about the contribution of civil society in countering intolerance, hate crime and discrimination against communities at risk, including Roma and Sinti, migrants and refugees. The third rapporteur presented a summary on discussions around the role of collaborative action involving civil society groups to cultivate a climate where principles of tolerance and non-discrimination are respected across the OSCE pSs.

Delegations emphasised the need to enhance co-operation with civil society actors with a view of maintaining the mutual respect towards all groups of population, including those at risk, and addressing all forms of discrimination and differential treatment. Some delegates noted that it is crucial to strengthen the existing mechanisms of reporting hate crime.

Ms. Ryabiko stressed that the dialogue between civil society, including youth and minority organizations and pSs is essential in order to unfold the challenges and ensure venue for opportunities. The speaker added that education and monitoring programmes are essential in nurturing empathy, building solidarity and respectively documenting acts of hate crime and discrimination. Moreover, pSs have to sustain such efforts, including legal support for victims, while taking into consideration the intersectional lenses. The speaker also called on more integration measures for refugees and migrants. Effective collaboration and partnerships can help advance non-discrimination and tolerance.

Mr. Stojkovski highlighted the critical role that civil society groups play in combating racism and intolerance that makes them drivers of social changes. The speaker stressed that raising awareness activities advance diversity in the society and strategic litigation along with advocacy efforts by civil society contribute to better policy outcomes. Coalitions and alliances help to amplify the voice of those affected by racism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance.



**Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting**

**on The Role of Civil Society in the Promotion and Protection of  
Tolerance and Non-Discrimination**

**Vienna, 26-27 June 2023  
AGENDA**

**Day 1**

13.00 – 14.00 **OPENING SESSION**

*Opening remarks*

**H.E. Ambassador Igor Djundev**, Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council and Permanent Representative of the Republic of North Macedonia to the OSCE

**Mr. Matteo Mecacci**, Director, OSCE/ODIHR

*Introductory addresses*

**Rabbi Andrew Baker**, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism

**Professor Dr. 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

**Mr. Kyriakos Hadjiyianni**, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Special Representative on Civil Society Engagement

*Keynote address*

**Mr. Michael O’Flaherty**, Director, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

14.00 – 16.00 **SESSION I: Civil Society Educational Efforts in Promoting Tolerance and Non-Discrimination**

*Introducers*

**Ms. Emina Frljak**, Programme Coordinator, Youth for Peace

**Ms. Melissa Mott**, Director, Echoes & Reflections

*Moderator:* Mr. Mikolaj Wrzeczionkowski, Adviser on Combating Anti-Semitism, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department, OSCE/ODIHR

[16.30 – 17.30 – side events]

## **Day 2**

[9.00 – 10.00 – side events]

10.30 – 12.30     **SESSION II: Towards Tolerance and Non-discrimination and Addressing Hate Crime for Communities at Risk**

*Introducers*

**Dr. Anton Drobovych**, Head of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance

**Mr. Roland Ferkovic**, Co-Manager and Project Officer of the Roma Civil Monitor, Democracy Institute, Central European University

**Ms. Agnieszka Kosowicz**, President of the Board of the Polish Migration Forum Foundation

*Moderator:* Mr. Cristi Mihalache, Senior Adviser on Roma and Sinti Issues, Chief of the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, OSCE/ODIHR

[13.15 – 14.15 – side events]

14.30 – 16.30     **SESSION III: Civil Society Advancing Tolerance and Non-Discrimination through Collaboration, Coalitions and Dialogue**

*Introducers*

**Ms. Marine Kapanadze**, Director of the Civil and Political Rights Program, Georgian Democracy Initiative

**Dr. Maureen Sier**, Director, Interfaith Scotland

*Moderator:* Dr. Kishan Manocha, Head, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department, OSCE/ODIHR

16.30 – 17.30     **CLOSING SESSION**

*Reports from the working sessions*

*Comments from the floor*

*Closing remarks*

**Ms. Kateryna Ryabiko**, First Deputy Director, OSCE/ODIHR

**Mr. Andreja Stojkovski**, Special Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on Civil Society

17.30                    Closing of the meeting

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## **ANNEX II: LIST OF SIDE EVENTS: Topics and Conveners**

### **Faith-Based Approaches to Combatting Discrimination and Promoting Inclusion**

Convened by: Church of Scientology Public Affairs and Human Rights Office

### **The words of the soul: religious leaders against hate speech**

Convened by: KAICIID International Dialogue Centre

### **Financial discrimination - from a corporate to social currency**

Convened by: Pantarey Foundation

### **Addressing Online Hate**

Convened by: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

### **Defenders of Mariupol: Prisoners of War in the Russian Captivity**

Convened by: Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna

### **Role of Civil Society in Struggle against Discrimination on Russia-occupied Territories of Ukraine**

Convened by: Crimean Tatar Resource Center

### **State sponsored Hate crime in the OSCE space**

Convened by : Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberté de Conscience

### **Presentation of the Kyrgyzstani experience on gender-sensitive aspects of the inter-confessional dialogue**

Convened by: PA "Social Technologies Agency"

## **ANNEX III: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION: Speakers, Introducers and Moderators**

*Opening remarks:*

### **H.E. Ambassador Igor Djundev**

**Mr. Matteo Mecacci** is Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), since December 2020. Prior to that he spent 7 years as President of the International Campaign for Tibet. He headed the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission to Georgia in 2013 and was a Member of the Italian Parliament, Foreign Affairs Committee and of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly from 2008– 2013. From 2000 to 2008 he was Representative to the United Nations in New York of “No Peace Without Justice” and the “Transnational Radical Party”. He holds a JD in International Law at the University of Florence.

*Introductory Addresses:*

**Rabbi Andrew Baker** is director of International Jewish Affairs at the American Jewish Committee (AJC), which he joined in 1979. A leading expert on anti-Semitism in Europe, he travels extensively to strengthen relations between the AJC and Jewish communities worldwide. Throughout most of the 1990s, as director of European Affairs, Rabbi Baker promoted tolerance in the emerging democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. He is active in Holocaust restitution issues and in 2003 was awarded the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit by Germany for his work on German-Jewish relations.

**Associate Professor Dr. Regina Polak** is head of the Department for Practical Theology at the Catholic-Theological Faculty at the University of Vienna. She is an expert and internationally recognized scholar and lecturer in interdisciplinary research on socio-religious transformation processes in Europe, religion in the context of migration and urbanisation and interfaith dialogue with a special focus on Jews, Christians and Muslims, including research on racism and all other forms of group-related hostility. As a practical theologian, she connects her academic work with disseminating her research results through the promotion of public and media projects on interfaith and intercultural encounters and dialogue. She is engaged in Christian-Jewish and Christian-Muslim Dialogue organisations. She is the theological advisor of the Commission on Migration of the German Bishops' Conference.

### **Mr. Kyriakos Hadjiyanni**

*Keynote address:*

**Mr. Michael O’Flaherty** is Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights since 2015. He is a former Professor of Human Rights at the University of Nottingham and the National University of Ireland, Galway. From 2004 to 2012 he was a member of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, latterly as Vice-Chair. O’Flaherty has held a variety of other positions at the United Nations, both at headquarters and in the field, in which connection he witnessed, reported on, and sought to mitigate human rights abuses in such places as Bosnia

and Herzegovina and Sierra Leone. He has also served as Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, as Chairperson of the Irish Penal Reform Trust, and as Vice-Chair of the Universal Rights Group. A solicitor of the Irish Courts, O’Flaherty received the Higher Doctorate of Laws from the National University of Ireland and also holds degrees in international relations, philosophy, and theology.

### *Session I*

**Ms. Emina Frljak** is a Project Coordinator at Youth for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. She is also a member of the International Youth Committee of Religions for Peace since August 2019. Her academic background is in educational sciences, interreligious studies, and peacebuilding. Her area of work and interest are peace education, interreligious dialogue, and religious literacy. Lately, her interest has also focused on using social media for educational and campaigning purposes, particularly countering hate speech.

Ms. Frljak has been a Board member of Religions for Peace Europe since January 2020. She is a fellow with the KAICIID International Fellows Program, which is focused on equipping religious leaders, civil society actors, and academics in the field of interreligious and intercultural dialogue. She is also a member of the Global Exchange on Religion in Society network (GERIS).

**Ms. Melissa Mott** is a Director of the Anti-Defamation League and Director for Echoes & Reflections, a Holocaust education program in the United States.

A former 10th grade English teacher in Newark Public Schools and Fulbright scholar in Poland, Ms Mott studies the intersection of history education, collective memory, and anti-democratic thought. She has written curriculum and programs, and trained educators on Holocaust pedagogy, antisemitism education, inquiry-learning, human rights, LGBTQIA+ history, and African American history in the U.S. and Kenya, Ghana, Israel, Poland, UK, and Germany.

Ms. Mott received her Ed.M. from Columbia University Teachers College in 2017, focusing on the link between antisemitism and anti-LGBTQ sentiment in former Soviet countries.

### *Session II*

**Dr. Anton Drobovych** graduated from the National Pedagogical Dragomanov University in 2010 with a Master’s degree in Philosophy. Four years later he defended his Ph.D. thesis and started work at the department of Cultural Studies and Philosophical Anthropology until 2019. In 2018, he finished his second education and received a Master's degree in Law.

From 2013 to 2016, he served as Assistant General Director and then Head of Department of Strategy and Development for Museum Planning at Mystetskyi Arsenal. In 2016, he worked as an advisor to the Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine. From 2017 to 2019 he worked as an expert at the think-tank Institute of Social and Economic Research. And in 2019, he directed the educational programs at Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial Center.

Since December 2019, he has held the position of the Head of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance. He is the author of more than 50 scientific publications, as well as five educational courses and programs in philosophy, cultural studies, and history of culture. He

has published a number of expert materials on social development, education, and culture for the leading Ukrainian media.

**Mr. Roland Ferkovics** joined the Democracy Institute in October 2021 as the Co-Manager and Project Officer of Roma Civil Monitor 2021-2025.

Before joining DI, Mr. Ferkovic worked at the Roma Education Fund as the Policy and Advocacy Officer being responsible for advocacy efforts in education and employment matters. He also fulfilled consultant roles in regards to Roma strategical frameworks, education, child protection and political representation issues at various international organizations such as the OSCE, ERRC and OSJI.

Roland was also a researcher in the work of Columbia University on the topic of electoral coercion as well as in the work of Penn State University on the issue of Roma political representation at local level. He is the co-author of two studies published in the Croatian Political Science Review and in the Ethnic and Racial Studies on the topic of Roma political representation and electoral behaviour.

In 2016, he was appointed by the US Embassy to Budapest to the German Marshall Fund (GMF) of the United States as a representative to the Transatlantic Inclusion Leaders Network.

Mr. Ferkovic holds an MA degree from the Central European University Department of Political Science and a BA degree in Political Science from the University of Szeged.

**Ms. Agnieszka Kosowicz** is the President of the Board and founder of the Polish Migration Forum Foundation. The Foundation is a founder of the Grupa Granica social movement which focuses on protecting the rights of the migrants and humanitarian support to refugees at the Polish-Belarusian border, and is a member of the Migration Consortium gathering key migration-focussed NGOs in Poland.

Ms. Kosowicz has been engaged in supporting and promoting migrant integration in Poland for over 20 years. She is the initiator of projects on migrant integration and intercultural dialogue, including a Migration Academy, a tool to share integration-relevant knowledge with municipalities and civil society actors across Poland.

Ms. Kosowicz has authored a monograph titled “Working Together – 15 years of UNHCR in Poland” which describes the beginnings of the development of the refugee protection system in Poland.

### *Session III*

**Ms. Marine Kapanadze** is a Human Rights Lawyer and currently works as a Civil and Political Rights Program Director at Georgian Democracy Initiative.

As a representative of a national non-governmental organization, she is actively engaged in the protection of different minority groups and represents them before state bodies and courts. For over ten years she has been monitoring cases of discrimination, hate speech, and hate crimes, litigating strategic cases, and advocating for changes in legislation and practice. Moreover, she



conducts lectures at the universities and trainings for different target groups on freedom of religion, national anti-discrimination mechanism, and the rule of law.

Ms. Kapanadze is a national consultant at the Council of Europe and the OHCHR. Additionally, she is the coordinator of the civil platform “No to Phobia!”

**Dr. Maureen Sier** was appointed as the Interfaith Development Officer for the Scottish Interfaith Council and in 2012 as the Director of Interfaith Scotland. In 2008 she spent time on secondment to the Scottish Government Equality Unit where her remit was to build the capacity of local interfaith groups throughout Scotland and work on a Government Strategy for strengthening Faith and Belief relations in Scotland.

Ms. Sier has served as a Trustee of the Coordinating Committee of the European Women of Faith Network at World Religions for Peace and as a Trustee on the Board of the Interfaith Network for the UK. She is currently a member of the Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees and the Scottish Government’s Strategic Hate Crime Partnership Group, and acts as Secretariat for Scottish Parliament’s Cross-Party Group for Freedom of Religion or Belief.

Ms. Sier graduated from Aberdeen University with a First Class Honors Degree in Cultural History, an MLitt in Cultural Anthropology and a PhD in Religious Studies. After graduation she taught sociology and history at the National University of Samoa (South Pacific) for four years. She was the first UK scholar and interfaith activist to be awarded a Fulbright US/UK International Interfaith scholarship. This scholarship led to interfaith engagement throughout the US and to Maureen setting up a Scotland Abroad Faith Exchange (SAFE) Program which has led to interfaith learning exchanges in the US, Europe and Asia Pacific.

*Closing Session:*

**Ms. Kateryna Ryabiko** is First Deputy Director, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). Previously, she served with the US Agency for International Development, Freedom House, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and other public and private entities, leading projects and teams, as well as providing technical assistance and policy advice. On top of her strong project management skills in international settings, she possesses expertise in the fields of democracy, human rights and elections. Kateryna’s work has been recognized by multiple awards, including for outstanding achievements in promoting democratic development and her leadership in guiding democracy assistance efforts. She holds an MPA from the State University of New York at Binghamton, is a Stanford University Draper Hills Fellow for Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law, and graduated from the Stanford’s University Leadership Academy for Development.

**Mr. Andreja Stojkovski**