

Taking part - civil society initiatives in the OSCE area

A contest on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain, initiated and financed by the Permanent Mission of Germany to the OSCE with the support of the Greek Chairmanship of the OSCE.

The Wall was brought down from the East, with courage, deliberation, responsibility, and in the truest sense of the word, with bare hands.

- Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Federal Republic of Germany, 1974-1992

From the very start of the OSCE as the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in 1975, the participating States declared their commitment to "promote and encourage the effective exercise of civil, political, economic, social, cultural and other rights and freedoms all of which derive from the inherent dignity of the human person".

In January 1989, the States affirmed their pledge to "respect the right of their citizens to contribute actively, individually or in association with others, to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms".

That year bore witness to the courage and determination of Europe's citizens, who opened the path to freedom, democracy and true participation in the development of their societies.

A part of the Iron Curtain separating Europe during the Cold War, the Berlin Wall was torn down on 9 November, an historic event that symbolized the end of the Cold War and the emergence of a Europe whole and free, calling for a new beginning. According to political scientist Vladimir Tismaneanu, "the road to 1989-1991 was prepared by the less visible, often marginal, but critically significant in the long run, workings of what we call now civil society".

Twenty years after the historic events of 1989, the OSCE continues to recognize the important role civil society plays in fostering stability, security and respect for human rights. The anniversary presents an excellent opportunity to reflect on the many achievements of civil society in all three dimensions of security - the politico-military, the economic and environmental, and the human - throughout the OSCE area.

The OSCE challenges residents of the 56 OSCE participating States, especially students, journalists and civil society members, to take part in a video contest aimed at **raising awareness about the importance of civic participation and highlighting positive examples of civil society in action.**

Winners will be invited to Vienna to take part in events commemorating the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall at the OSCE on 5 and 6 November 2009. **The deadline for submissions is 2 October.**

Contest rules

The contest is open to **all residents of the 56 OSCE participating States between the ages of 18 and 30** on 2 October 2009.

Students, journalists and civil society members are particularly encouraged to take part in the contest.

Video submissions, which can include slideshows with audio, should be no longer than three minutes. They must be in English or have English subtitles. You may only enter one video in the contest.

Entries should address the theme "Taking part - civil society initiatives in the OSCE area" and highlight examples of civil society in action in the three OSCE dimensions of security. This can include political, social and educational initiatives by non-governmental organizations or other groups and private citizens.

Participants are encouraged to submit their videos via YouTube. You will need to set up an account to do this. For more information please see: <http://www.google.com/support/youtube>.

The video link, along with a short description of the content, should be included in the [entry form](#).

Completed entry forms should be e-mailed to takingpart-2009@osce.org.

If you cannot submit the video via YouTube you may send your submission on a USB stick or other standard storage medium to the following address:

Taking part - contest
OSCE Press and Public Information Section
Wallnerstrasse 6
1010 Vienna, Austria

The deadline for submissions is **2 October 2009**. Submissions and completed entry forms must be received by this date.

All eligible entries will be judged by an international jury whose decisions are final and binding in all respects and not subject to appeal. Submitted entries will be evaluated according to relevance to the contest theme and OSCE values, originality, creativity, quality of production and message.

Finalists' videos will be published on the OSCE website, YouTube channel and Facebook sites. Entries submitted via post may be uploaded to these sites by the OSCE.

The winners will be announced in mid-October. The winners will be invited to Vienna to take part in events commemorating the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the rise of the Iron Curtain at the OSCE on 5 and 6 November, where the winning videos will be shown in a special exhibition. They will also attend a ceremony with addresses by former German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Greek

Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis, and Austrian Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger. The prize includes roundtrip airfare and accommodation.

Submissions must not contain material that violates or infringes another's rights, including but not limited to privacy, publicity or intellectual property rights, or that constitutes copyright or license infringement. Submissions must not contain material that is inappropriate, indecent, obscene, hateful, defamatory, slanderous or libellous; or that promotes bigotry, racism, hatred or harm against any group or individual or promotes discrimination based on race, sex, religion, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or age; or that is unlawful, in violation of or contrary to laws or regulations.

If any persons appearing in any film are under the age of majority in their state of residence or in the state the film was produced, the signature of a parent or legal guardian is required.

Any necessary clearances should be submitted along with the entry form.

Roundtrip airfare denotes airfare to and from a major airport near the winner's residence. Winners must travel on dates specified by the organizer. No assignment or transfer of prize will be permitted, except at the organizer's sole discretion. The prizes may not be exchanged for cash.

By entering the contest, you agree to the following:

- I acknowledge that I myself produced the video I am entering and that I am the sole owner of the submitted video.
- The video was taken in one of the 56 OSCE participating States since the year 2007.
- I understand that the OSCE will only consider videos submitted by residents of an OSCE participating State who are between the ages of 18 and 30.
- I am not an OSCE official.
- The OSCE reserves the right to display the submissions without geographic or time limitation.
- I understand that if I am submitting my entry by mail, I hereby grant the OSCE permission to upload it to the OSCE website, YouTube channel and Facebook and other websites.
- I understand that a committee will choose the winners of this contest and all its decisions are final and not subject to appeal.
- I understand that my video will not be considered without a duly completed entry form.
- I understand that the OSCE reserves the right to disqualify any video that it believes does not fall within the entry requirements.
- To the best of my knowledge, no other party can claim or enforce any right or raise any objections in connection with the submitted video.

Incomplete entry forms will lead to disqualification.

Questions regarding the contest or submission process can be sent to takingpart-2009@osce.org.