



OSCE MISSION TO SERBIA

osce Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Mission to Serbia

The Mission's mandate stipulates that the Mission to Serbia should assist and advise the country in strengthening independent, accountable and effective democratic institutions, particularly in the fields of rule of law, human rights, media and law enforcement.

Our objective is also to assist and advise on the implementation of legislation; monitor the functioning of democratic institutions; foster policy dialogue at the national and regional levels related to refugees and internally displaced persons; and promote economic security and sustainable development in Serbia. We also aim to support civil society and foster regional co-operation and reconciliation, contributing to a sustainable, secure and stable society for all citizens of Serbia.

Following the invitation of the Government of the then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the OSCE Permanent Council established a Mission in the country on 11 January 2001. With the dissolution of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro in 2006, the Mission became the Mission to Serbia, but continues to operate on the basis of the mandate adopted in 2001.

The OSCE Mission to Serbia is led by the Head of Mission, who sets policies and gives overall guidance. The current Head of Mission is Ambassador Peter Burkhard from Switzerland.

The Mission's activities focus on four programme areas derived from the mandate and agreed with the Government of Serbia:

- Rule of law/human rights
- Law enforcement
- Democratization
- Media development

In addition to the Mission's headquarters in Belgrade, it also has a presence in Bujanovac, southern Serbia, and a training centre in Novi Pazar, southwestern Serbia.

In the multi-ethnic regions of Serbia, the Mission assists and advises local authorities, community and civil society leaders and its other partners on a variety of activities aiming to strengthen democratic institutions, police and legal reforms, good governance practices and increased media professionalism.

The Mission also supports the efforts of the authorities to strengthen integration of minorities into State institutions, particularly into the police and judiciary. It advocates for multi-ethnic local governments and contributes to reconciliation and stability in the regions.

The Mission co-ordinates its training and capacity building activities with other Field Operations and seeks opportunities to enhance regional dialogue.





Rule of Law/Human Rights

Supporting our host country in strengthening the rule of law and upholding human rights standards and catalyzing its reform efforts in this area is a central objective to the OSCE Mission to Serbia.

The Mission advises Serbian authorities on drafting and implementation of legislation and reform strategies and action plans to ensure that the rule of law is enforced, and that laws are transparent, appropriately implemented, and consistent with international standards and the domestic legislative framework. Concretely, the Mission:

- Assists Serbia in advancing its criminal justice system and supports the drafting and implementation of criminal legislation, ranging from laws regulating asset seizure, the criminal code, laws on international legal co-operation in criminal matters as well as laws regulating enforcement of criminal sanctions. A particular focus of the Mission's work is its support to the reform of the criminal procedure code and furthering the implementation of the newly introduced prosecutor-led investigation through comprehensive and sustainable training programmes implemented with its local and international partners.
- Supports Serbia's efforts to effectively combat serious crime with various capacity building activities for the organized crime and war crimes prosecutors. An important aspect of the Mission's work with the organized crime prosecutor's office is the provision of assistance through systematizing data collection and the information sharing system. The Mission also promotes cross-boarder co-operation with particular focus on strengthening ties amongst prosecution offices in the region to work together to effectively combat serious crimes.
- Works towards raising public awareness on the fight against organized crime, war crimes and corruption.
- Helps build the capacities of financial regulators, oversight authorities, private sector reporting entities and the judiciary to combat financial crime. The Mission trains oversight bodies within the Ministry of Finance, and private sector reporting entities to improve the quality of suspicious transaction reports which can lead to an increased number

of corruption cases reported and processed in the judicial system.

- Contributes to preventing corruption by supporting the work of Serbia's anti-corruption institutions, including the Public Procurement Office, the State Audit Office and the Anti-Corruption Agency. It also builds capacities of civil society at the central and local level to serve as a watchdog of public accountability.
- Supports Serbia's judicial reform process in partnership with the Ministry of Justice, the High Judicial Council, the State Prosecutors' Council and professional associations with the aim of enhancing the independence, accountability and efficiency of the judiciary. In particular, the Mission works on the establishment of a disciplinary and evaluation system for judges and prosecutors. The Mission helped establish the Judicial Training Academy and continues to support it.
- Supports the Ombudsman institutions, in particular in their role as National Preventive Mechanism, ensuring that the rights of persons deprived of liberty are upheld in accordance with international torture prevention standards.
- Supports the reform of the prison system in order to bring it in line with international and European human rights standards. It also promotes development of the alternative sentencing system throughout Serbia in order to contribute to the reduction of progressive overcrowding in prisons as well as to help offenders to re-integrate into society.

Law enforcement

Sustainable reform of the police service is crucial to Serbia's transition to democracy. As the Ministry of Interior's main partner in implementation of the police reform agenda, the OSCE Mission assists the Serbian police in becoming a more modern, representative and accountable police service that embraces principles of democratic policing.

The Mission's main activities relating to police reform are designed to:

- Encourage the Ministry of Interior in the process of becoming fully transparent and accountable to its citizens.





- Facilitate dialogue between police and local communities across the country. The Mission continues to assist in expanding police – public partnerships, as well as in strengthening relations between police and the media.
- Further support the Ministry of Interior in developing specialized and advanced training systems, which will sustainably improve the police service in Serbia.
- Promote a regional approach and help improve the capacity of the police to comprehensively address the threat of organized crime.
- Strengthen the capacity of the police service to fight cyber crime as well as economic crime and corruption.
- Support the process of suppression of transnational organized crime and assist the Ministry of Interior by enhancing its capacities to fight drug production and trafficking.
- Help the Ministry of Interior in enhancing internal and external communication in order to sustain police reform.
- Assist the Ministry of Interior in improving its capacity to investigate allegations of crime, corruption and inappropriate behavior among police officers.
- Support State institutions to meet human rights commitments; assist in the policy and strategy development aimed at harmonization of legislation and adjustment of relevant practice with provisions of international human rights law; support active participation of civil society in the human rights related policy-making process.
- Strengthen the implementation of legislation to combat discrimination and hate crimes through support to State institutions and the development of mechanisms to protect against discrimination and respond to hate crimes.
- Support entities providing legal aid to marginalized groups.
- Support State and local mechanisms to improve gender equality through the development of strategic plans and implementation of the Law on Gender Equality.
- Support development and implementation of policies that promote equality and tolerance at both local and national levels; provide support to youth institutions as they seek to develop and implement programmes to that end.
- Assist the State to harmonize and advance its policies with regard to national minorities with emphasis on programmes of integration of national minorities in State institutions; build the capacities of the National Minority Councils on issues related to their mandate.
- Support the process of inclusion of Roma, contributing to social cohesion and the acceptance of diversity; put in practice effective measures to protect and promote the rights of Roma women within their communities and wider society.
- Strengthen the political and legal framework to ensure respect for the rights of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) and support sustainable solutions for their needs, help improve the capacity of civil society networks to protect individual rights of refugees and IDPs and to advocate for an adequate redress.
- Promote environmental security by reinforcing the skills of the police to implement environmental legislation; foster regional and cross-border co-operation in addressing environmental threats; promote public access to environmental information and public participation in decision-making processes on environmental matters.

Democratization

The Mission promotes and supports democratic practices throughout Serbia. It closely co-operates with all relevant national and local governmental institutions, national minority representatives and citizens' associations to:

- Strengthen the legislative, oversight and representative roles of Parliament through support to parliamentary committees; support to regional parliamentary co-operation and increased citizens' access to parliament.
- Help improve democratic civilian oversight, transparency, accountability, and respect for the rule of law and democratic principles in the security sector.
- Assist central and local authorities to implement necessary reforms; promote efficiency and accountability of local self government, apply principles of administrative justice and support the civil sector in effective monitoring of the work of local self-government.





Media Development

The OSCE Mission to Serbia supports the development of professional media that can objectively and accurately report on news of public importance to all citizens of Serbia. To fulfil this mandate, the Mission:

- Offers legal counsel and assists the authorities in drafting and amending the Media Strategy and media laws in line with international and European standards, while monitoring the implementation of key media legislation, in close co-operation with the EU Delegation to Serbia.
- Provides a forum for public consultations on pressing issues in the field of media legislation, such as transparency of media ownership, state aid to the media and the transition to digital broadcasting.
- Hosts consultations for the media and judiciary and in co-operation with the Judicial Academy co-organises seminars on media legislation and freedom of expression.
- Supports the strengthening of professional, accountable and independent regulatory bodies for electronic media.
- Promotes the proper implementation of international standards by strengthening media associations and by advocating for independent and unbiased media; encouraging the development of self-regulatory mechanisms.
- Co-operates with the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection to improve

transparency of local authorities towards journalists and citizens.

- Researches and documents cases where the rights and freedom of the media have been violated.
- Conducts activities to raise awareness on the importance of the freedom of expression on the internet and advantages that online media provide in the field of investigative journalism.
- Supports the development of public service broadcasters into modern and professional media.
- Provides print, broadcast and online media professionals with tailor-made training courses in order to improve their skills and knowledge on issues of good governance, judiciary, economy, politics and human rights
- Works on improving communication channels between the media and authorities by organising seminars for local civil servants and National Minority Council members.

Facts and figures

Budget: € 6,909,500 (2013).

In addition to its core budget, the Mission administers extra-budgetary funds provided by the OSCE participating States for specific projects. Currently, 32 internationals from 17 countries work side by side with 135 national staff members.



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