

Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting
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DECISION No. 8/17
PROMOTING ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION IN THE OSCE AREA

The Ministerial Council,

Recalling the relevance of, and our full respect for all OSCE norms, principles and commitments related to our co-operation in the economic and environmental dimension, and bearing in mind the comprehensive approach of the OSCE to security,

Reaffirming the commitments related to aspects of economic participation contained in the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension adopted at the Maastricht Meeting of the Ministerial Council in 2003, the Ministerial Council Decision on promoting equal opportunity for women in the economic sphere adopted in Vilnius in 2011, the Ministerial Council Declaration on Strengthening Good Governance and Combating Corruption, Money-Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism adopted in Dublin in 2012, the Ministerial Council Decision on the prevention of corruption adopted in Basel in 2014, the Ministerial Council Declaration on Youth adopted in Basel in 2014 and the Ministerial Council Decision on strengthening good governance and promoting connectivity adopted in Hamburg in 2016,

Highlighting that promoting economic participation implies job creation, better access to education, vocational training and the labour market, as well as improvement of conditions for employment and entrepreneurship,

Reaffirming that peace, good international relations, the security and stability of the State and the security and safety of the individual within the State, based on the rule of law and respect for human rights, including internationally recognized workers' rights, are crucial for the creation of a climate of confidence which is essential to ensure positive economic and social development and to promote economic participation,

Recognizing that economic participation, social inclusion and sustainable growth are interdependent and contribute to prosperity, trust, stability, security and co-operation in the OSCE area,

Acknowledging that co-operation on economic activities can strengthen sustainable economic, social and environmental development, thereby promoting social cohesion, stability and security and positively contributing to the prevention of terrorism and the fight against organized crime,

Reaffirming that good governance at all levels implies a clear, transparent and predictable framework of economic policies, institutions and legislation in which business can thrive and the confidence of investors can grow, thereby enabling States to reduce poverty and inequality, and to increase social integration and opportunities for all,

Recognizing that more effective prevention of corruption and the promotion of good governance reinforce trust in public institutions, improve corporate social responsibility and thereby promote economic participation and enhance economic growth,

Acknowledging the importance of the active participation of the private sector, including small and medium-sized enterprises, trade unions, civil society and media, in preventing and combating corruption, enhancing good governance, fostering integrity and promoting a sound business and investment climate, thereby contributing to social inclusion and broader economic participation,

Recognizing that regional and subregional integration or co-operation processes and agreements can give an important impulse to trade and sustainable development in the OSCE area and the OSCE participating States,

Recalling the need for economic and social policies aimed at promoting social justice and improving living and working conditions,

Acknowledging the potential of young people to contribute to economic, political and social development, and recognizing the importance of facilitating the integration of young people into professional life, thereby promoting economic participation,

Recognizing that women's participation in the economic sphere contributes significantly towards economic development, sustainable growth and the promotion of cohesive societies,

Welcoming the substantial discussions held in the framework of the 25th Economic and Environmental Forum on "Greening the economy and building partnerships for security in the OSCE region" and of the thematic Economic and Environmental Committee meetings held in 2017,

1. Calls upon participating States to:
 - Strengthen co-operation on economic activities, where appropriate, thereby promoting sustainable economic, social and environmental development and contributing to confidence and trust, stability, security, the prevention of terrorism and the fight against organized crime;
 - Continue their efforts to improve social conditions, provide adequate and effective safety nets, promote education and vocational training, strengthen health-care services and increase employment opportunities;
 - Promote good governance and strengthen the legal and institutional frameworks conducive to a positive investment climate and the development of businesses,

including small and medium-sized enterprises, thereby promoting social inclusion and economic participation;

- Further strengthen the co-operation of labour market institutions, including local employment services and training institutions, trade unions and employers' organizations as social partners, business community, higher education institutions and other relevant stakeholders to improve labour market transparency, access and conditions for employment and entrepreneurship;
 - Continue their efforts to promote economic participation of and employment opportunities for young people by, *inter alia*, ensuring the necessary conditions for the education and vocational training of youth, and through programmes facilitating youth access to the labour market;
 - Strengthen measures that enable the development of women's entrepreneurial and other work-related skills, and promote and protect equal opportunity for participation of women in the labour market;
2. Encourages participating States to make use of the OSCE to foster the exchange of best practices and to promote capacity-building initiatives in line with the provisions of this decision;
 3. Tasks relevant OSCE executive structures, including field operations, within their mandates, to assist participating States, upon their request, in implementing the provisions of this decision;
 4. Encourages the OSCE Partners for Co-operation to voluntarily implement the provisions of this decision.