



Germany 2016

CIRCULAR NOTE No. 6

The Federal Foreign Office has the pleasure to invite the representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to follow the proceedings of the 23rd Meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), which will be held in Hamburg on 8 and 9 December 2016.

1. VENUE

The 23rd Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council will be held in the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg on 8 and 9 December 2016. The venue will be Hamburg Messe (*Hamburg exhibition halls*), located at Messeplatz 1, 20357 Hamburg. The official website of Hamburg Messe is <http://hamburg-messe.de/>.

NGO representatives will be able to follow the proceedings of the Ministerial Council meeting according to the provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE, IV.2 (B) paragraph 6 (MC.DOC/1/06 of 1 November 2006): “Only the opening and closing sessions shall be open to the press and the public, unless the meeting decides to make other sessions open. Unless otherwise decided, all sessions, except for those taking up agenda items which are subject to discussion and possible decision, shall be broadcast live in all the working languages to the media centre and NGO centre by closed-circuit television.”

Not more than 20 NGO representatives may be present in the Main Plenary Hall during the opening and closing sessions.

The live broadcast by closed-circuit television will be provided at the media centre of the venue.

2. FACILITIES FOR NGOS

NGO representatives will have full use of the media centre (Hall A3). It will include a dedicated NGO working area, with wireless Internet access and a limited number of workplaces.

The media centre will open on Wednesday, 7 December, at 12 noon, and it will remain open non-stop until Friday, 9 December, at 6 p.m.

The entire venue will be a secure area, and access will require an accreditation badge.

3. REGISTRATION AND ACCREDITATION

Accreditation for NGO representatives is mandatory. To complete the registration process, all NGO representatives are requested to provide the following data:

Title, last name, first name, date of birth, place of birth, nationality, organization, function, country affiliation of the organization, e-mail address, filename of photograph.

A photograph can be taken at the event venue, but it is strongly recommended to send a photo in advance, together with the accreditation information.



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All requested data together with a passport-size photograph (.jpg) should be sent by e-mail to events-osce2016@diplo.de by Monday, 21 November 2016.

The applicants' personal data will be examined by the German security authorities before accreditation is issued. All personal data sent to the organizer of the event will be treated in accordance with the highest security requirements and national and international data protection standards.

Accredited NGO representatives will receive their badges at the accreditation centre located at Entrance West of Hamburg Messe. Please note that as of 3 December 2016 access to the accreditation centre will only be possible via the underpass from metro/urban railway station "Sternschanze". The operating hours of the accreditation centre are as follows:

- 17-27 November 2016: from 10.00 a.m. until 4.00 p.m.
- From 28 November 2016, 10.00 a.m., until 9 December 2016: open 24 hours

The issuing of accreditation badges will be possible only upon presentation of a corresponding identity document. To gain entry to Hamburg Messe and when inside the building, a valid badge must be worn visibly at all times.

4. TRANSPORT

From Wednesday, 7 December, to Friday, 9 December, accredited NGO representatives can use public transport in Hamburg free of charge. Upon arrival at the accreditation centre they will receive the necessary passes.

4.1. ARRIVAL BY PLANE

There are daily regular flights to Hamburg from a large number of European cities (www.hamburg-airport.de/en/). An OSCE Ministerial Council information desk will be provided at Hamburg Airport.

4.2. ARRIVAL BY TRAIN

There are hourly regular trains from Berlin Central Station to Hamburg Central Station (journey time approx. two hours), as well as regular trains from all other major German cities, running at least every two hours. Trains may pass through major cities and/or capitals in northern Europe on their way to Hamburg. Travel arrangements can be made with Deutsche Bahn (www.bahn.de).

While Hamburg Central Station is directly in Hamburg's city centre, Hamburg Dammtor station is within walking distance of the venue.

5. VISA REGULATIONS

Visa requirements must be met before arrival in Germany. Please refer to the website of the competent German Embassy or Consulate General for further information. Although visa applications will be processed in a timely manner, it is strongly recommended to begin the application process as soon as possible.

Overview of visa requirements for entry into the Federal Republic of Germany: http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/StaatenlisteVisumpflicht_node.html



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6. GENERAL INFORMATION

6.1. CURRENCY

The official German currency is the euro. One euro = 100 cents, the smallest coin in use is 1 cent.

The euro exchange rate can be found at:

<https://www.ecb.europa.eu/stats/exchange/eurofxref/html/index.en.html>

It is recommended to have a small amount of cash (50 euros) on hand upon arrival, or to exchange money at the airport or railway station for immediate expenses.

6.2. BUSINESS HOURS

Shops are generally open from Monday to Saturday from 8.30 a.m. to 8.00 p.m., although times may vary. On Sundays most shops are closed.

6.3. BANKS AND CREDIT CARDS

Most banks are open from Monday to Friday, from 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. Almost all banks have automated teller machines (ATMs) that accept overseas bank cards and are accessible from the street (look for “Geldautomat”). Please check with your local bank prior to departure whether your bank card is valid in Germany. Major credit cards, such as American Express, MasterCard and Visa, are generally accepted in Germany, although not all shops and restaurants accept credit or debit cards.

6.4. ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

The electric current used throughout Germany is 230 volts AC, 50 Hz (continental European standard). Wall outlets are compatible with other continental European plugs.

6.5. CLIMATE

In December, the average minimum temperature in Hamburg is 0°C and the average maximum temperature is 5°C.

6.6. TIME

UTC/GMT +1 hour