

Stronger Democratic Institutions in Eastern Partnership Countries



An ODIHR project supported and funded by the EU

Supporting and strengthening democratic institutions and processes is the objective of ODIHR's project Stronger Democratic Institutions in Eastern Partnership Countries: an ODIHR project supported and funded by the EU. The project aims to increase public trust in democratic institutions and foster more inclusive, accountable and transparent governance, with respect for human rights and the rule of law. Stronger democratic institutions contribute to more effective responses to current crises while building resilience to future challenges.

Democratic governance is vital to the principles on which the OSCE is based, ensuring that public institutions promote core principles and function through democratic processes, including political pluralism, institutional accountability and responsiveness, an active civil society, respect for human rights and the rule of law, and democratic elections.

Bringing together state representatives and civil society from across the OSCE, ODIHR will draw on its unique expertise in these fields. The Office has a comprehensive set of tools, including in-depth training, which support states in improving their systems of democratic governance and in making their institutions more representative and their political and decision-making processes more inclusive and participatory.

ODIHR's recommendations, as set out in published legal opinions, legislative assessments, monitoring and election observation reports and thematic guidelines, serve as benchmarks to assess and encourage progress.

ODIHR will also leverage its broad range of established partnerships including with international, regional and national organizations throughout this project to ensure joint ownership.

Major project activities include:

- Supporting states to improve parliamentary, civil society and judicial oversight;
- Working to increase the transparency and integrity of democratic institutions;
- Helping parliaments to strengthen collaboration with civil society;
- Supporting greater political participation by under-represented groups;
- Supporting discussions between national authorities and civil society on the steps needed to implement ODIHR election recommendations;
- Offering training for state oversight agencies as well as civil society; and
- Providing a broader platform for dialogue.

This initiative should enable the project beneficiaries to implement more effective and efficient policies, evaluate progress towards accountable and inclusive democratic institutions, build stronger public integrity systems and human rights-compliant legal frameworks, implement ODIHR election recommendations, and improve political party regulation, as well as increase the participation of historically under-represented groups in political life and decision-making.

Project Duration: 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2027

Project Budget: approximately 6 million EUR funded from the European Union with support from France, Italy, Norway and Switzerland.

Geographical Scope: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

Project Beneficiaries: Democratic institutions of the European Union's Eastern Partnership countries.

ODIHR's tools include:

- ***Guidelines on Democratic Lawmaking for Better Laws***
- ***Recommendations on Judicial Independence and Accountability (Warsaw Recommendations), 2023***
- ***Handbook on the Follow-up of Electoral Recommendations***
- ***Parliamentary Integrity: A Resource for Reformers***
- ***ODIHR Public Ethics and Integrity Toolkit: Guidelines for Parliaments***
- ***Guidelines on Promoting the Political Participation of Persons with Disabilities***
- ***Gender-responsive Governance Toolkit***
- **Legal opinions and comments**



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In line with ODIHR's mandate and in synergy with EU priorities in the region, this project offers assistance to select OSCE participating States that are also countries included by the European Union under its Eastern Neighbourhood Region. In the implementation of activities, it will be taken into consideration that the EU has stopped engaging with official representatives of Belarus public bodies and state-owned enterprises further to the Council Conclusions of 12 October 2020 and the European Council Conclusions of February 2022.

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