



DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS ASSISTANCE

Human Rights Monitoring Programme (1300611)

**FUNDED THROUGH
EXTRABUDGETARY CONTRIBUTIONS**

Warsaw, September 2012

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Current budget: EUR 1,044,000¹

1. Background

ODIHR provides assistance to participating States in the implementation of human dimension commitments by practical support and tailor-made assistance programmes in the area of human rights and democratic governance. In this context, ODIHR is tasked with assisting the monitoring of implementation of human dimension commitments (Helsinki 1992) and serves as a point of contact for information provided by participating States in accordance with OSCE commitments (Rome 1993). Through its monitoring functions, ODIHR contributes to the early warning and conflict prevention functions of the OSCE.

ODIHR has experience in carrying out human rights monitoring activities, including in the areas of trial monitoring, assembly monitoring, and on broader human rights issues in a number of participating States across the OSCE area. ODIHR reports are recognized as meeting high standards of accuracy, impartiality and objectivity. They have been useful sources of information for ODIHR, the OSCE and other actors, and have been used to devise targeted programmes of assistance.

To strengthen and improve the effectiveness of this exercise, ODIHR will continue to carry out human rights monitoring activities, including in developing and crisis situations and in thematic areas such as torture/ill-treatment, freedoms of assembly and association, trial monitoring and others. Such activities may require the deployment of human rights monitors to document and report on a particular human rights situation, and recommend possible strategies for State compliance with OSCE commitments.

2. Approach

The programme's objectives are to collect information on the human rights situation in the participating States, in particular those at risk of instability or where gross non-compliance with OSCE commitments may arise, to ensure longer-term thematic monitoring across the OSCE region in order to identify areas of concern and related solutions, and to produce background briefings and specific recommendations relating to pressing human rights issues. Expected results include improved preparedness by ODIHR to monitor, document and respond to imminent or unfolding crises; better engagement by ODIHR and other OSCE structures, including the field missions, with OSCE participating States on specific human rights issues after gaps in law, policy and practice have been identified and solutions proposed; and identification and exchange of good practice promoted among OSCE participating States, all leading to a better implementation of OSCE human dimension commitments by participating States.

2.1 *Planned activities for 2011-2014*

ODIHR will scan the situation in participating States to gather information about developing situations and emerging patterns relevant for the human dimension. A combination of desk research and field visits will be employed. Specific focuses, thematic or geographical, will be developed depending on relevant circumstances. The situation in participating States where there

¹ For the period 1 October 2011 to 31 December 2014.

is a high risk of immediate instability, or where serious deterioration in the implementation of OSCE commitments has recently occurred, will warrant closer monitoring with a view to advising on policy response and preparations for *ad hoc* activities to address the situation. Outputs will include policy briefs or background briefings and specific recommendations to ODIHR and other relevant OSCE structures, including for follow-up activities. Types of monitoring will include full human rights assessments, as well as thematic reports including the results of assembly monitoring, trial monitoring, detention monitoring or other human rights monitoring.

2.2 *Indicators and sources of verification*

- Reliable and timely information on risk of crisis and relevant human rights issues in key OSCE participating states delivered to other ODIHR programmes and other OSCE stakeholders;
- Number and quality of policy briefs and reports.

2.3 *Strategy/methodology*

The programme builds on ongoing and previous work by ODIHR in monitoring and crisis response. The focus of specific monitoring activities will be determined on the basis of such criteria as: the assessed risk of/ongoing crisis or serious deterioration in the implementation of OSCE commitments; expected level of engagement in follow-up activities; themes where ODIHR has developed or is developing specific expertise (freedom of assembly and association, trial monitoring, etc.); and assessment of ODIHR's potential added value in relation to other international actors. The programme will continue and further develop such monitoring activities, including by maintaining rosters of human rights experts who may take part in monitoring exercises. In line with ODIHR practice, reports will be based on first-hand information gathered by ODIHR monitors. This data will be complemented by information obtained through contacts with authorities, meetings and other secondary sources, adhering to the principles of transparency, accuracy and impartiality.

2.4 *Assumptions and risks*

The success of the programme will depend on the willingness of the authorities of participating States to facilitate access for ODIHR monitors, and adequate security on the ground to enable the deployment of monitors. These risks will be mitigated by adopting a transparent approach to monitoring activities, and engaging in fruitful communication and discussion with relevant authorities and specialized OSCE/ODIHR staff to clarify any matters of concern, as well as careful consideration of security issues and adequate risk assessment.

2.5 *Quality factors*

The programme will build on the extensive experience of ODIHR in producing timely, reliable and quality reports such as human rights assessment reports, trial monitoring reports and election observation reports. ODIHR will continue to nurture sound relationships with the relevant stakeholders, including OSCE structures, government authorities in participating States and civil society. ODIHR's added value is its monitoring expertise as well as the ability to engage in dialogue with relevant interlocutors at all levels of government and civil society.