

MEDIA HANDBOOK

33rd OSCE Ministerial Council

3 – 4 December 2026 Lugano

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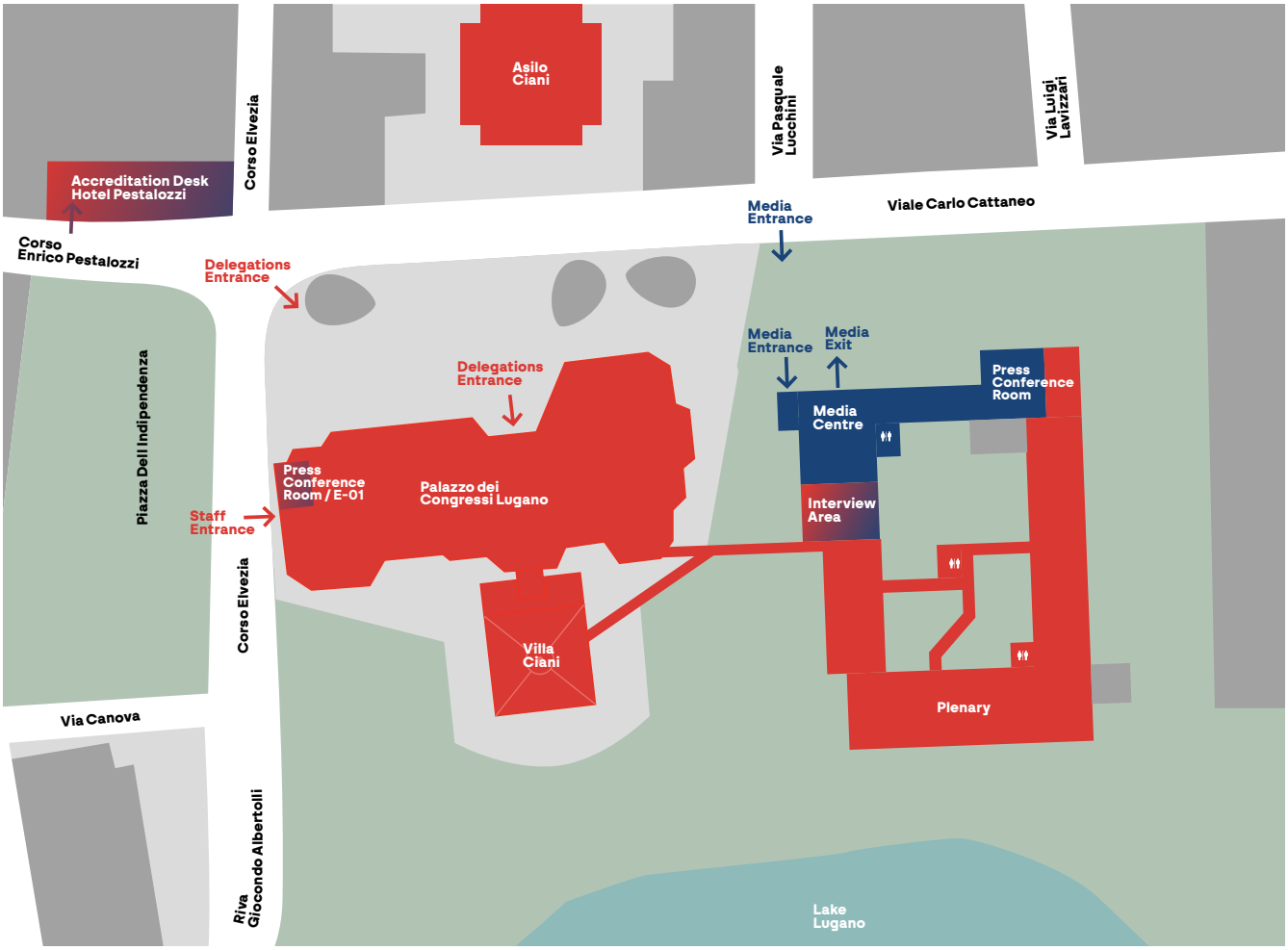
Venue

The 33rd OSCE 2026 Ministerial Council will be held on 3 and 4 December 2026 at the **Palazzo dei Congressi Convention Centre, Villa Ciani and Parco Ciani** in Lugano, Switzerland.

Palazzo dei Congressi
Piazza Indipendenza 4
6900 Lugano

www.luganoconventions.com



The Media Centre will be located within the Ministerial Council venue premises. The media entrance is left to the main entrance (Viale Carlo Cattaneo). Media representatives will have unrestricted access to all areas of the Media Centre. Access to all other areas of the Ministerial Council venue will be permitted only when accompanied by Media Centre personnel.

Registration & Accreditation

The venue and its surrounding area will be **designated as a secure zone**, with access restricted exclusively to individuals holding a valid Ministerial Council accreditation badge.

All **media representatives must hold accreditation to attend the conference**. Accreditation grants physical access to the Media Centre during the Ministerial Council. There **is no option for media** representatives to **participate remotely**.

Media registration opened on Monday, 2 November and **ends on Monday, 30 November 2026, at noon CET**. Registration **is mandatory** and can only be completed via the online accreditation system. In their accreditation request, media representatives can already register to take part in media pools (for details, see 'Programme for media representatives' and 'Accreditation for media pools' below). Accreditation requests will be reviewed and confirmation will be sent by e-mail.

To register, media representatives must complete the required information and upload a recent high quality digital colour photograph. Please do not use a scan from an identity document as this will not provide the required image quality. In the registration form, media representatives must confirm that they either hold a valid press card or can provide a letter from the editor confirming their personal assignment to cover this particular event. Media representatives will be notified by e-mail once the registration has been approved. All personal information provided during registration will be processed in accordance with Switzerland's legislation on data protection.

Late accreditation is only possible in exceptional cases and may result in longer waiting times, as well as difficulties accessing the security area at the venue.

Media badge collection

Accredited media representatives must collect their media badges from the accreditation desk at the Hotel Pestalozzi, Piazza Indipendenza 9, Lugano, at the following times:

Opening hours

- Wednesday, 2 December 2026: 9:00 am – 7:00 pm
- Thursday, 3 December 2026: 7:00 am – 5:00 pm
- Friday, 4 December 2026: 7:00 am – 11:00 am

When collecting their badges, media representatives are requested to present an official photo-ID (identity card or passport).

The entire conference site is located within a security zone. Without a media badge, media representatives will not be granted access to the conference site, including the Media Centre. Media badges are personalized, non-transferable and must be worn in a clearly visible manner at all times.

Media representatives have free access to all areas of the Media Centre with their media badge. However, they must always be accompanied by Media Centre staff whenever they access other areas of the conference venue. This applies to pool coverage, bilateral meetings and interviews taking place in the delegates' area.

Media Centre

A designated Media Centre will be available at the Ministerial Council venue. Media representatives will access the venue via the press entrance:

The Media Centre will provide the following facilities for press coverage:

- Workstations and Wi-Fi connection
- Press conference rooms
- Power supply (adapters not provided)
- CCTV-screens broadcasting the plenary sessions and announcements for media representatives (translations into all six official OSCE languages available)
- Host broadcaster and host photographer
- Media Information Desk
- Catering

At the Media Information Desk, media representatives can obtain information on access to events, in particular regarding media pools and side events.

For ad hoc reporting and live broadcasts, a designated area with a large backdrop and professional lighting will be available to media representatives next to the Media Centre.

Access to the Media Centre is only permitted with a valid accreditation badge. Please remember to collect your media badge in advance at the badge collection desk at Hotel Pestalozzi (see above).

The electric current used throughout Switzerland is 230 volts AC, 50 Hz (continental European standard). Wall outlets are not always compatible with other continental European plugs. Switzerland primarily uses Type J three-pin plugs and sockets, alongside **Type C** two-pin Europlugs. **The Media Centre does not provide adaptors, thus, please bring your own.**

Opening hours of the Media Centre

- Thursday, 3 December 2026: 7:00 am – 9:00 pm
- Friday, 4 December 2026: 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Media representatives are advised **to arrive well before 8:00 am on Thursday morning**. Between 8:00 am and 10:00 am, access may be hindered or delayed due to motorcade arrivals.

Media representatives will have unrestricted access to all areas of the Media Centre. Access to all other parts of the Ministerial Council premises will only be permitted when accompanied by Media Centre personnel.

Media Information Desk

At the Media Information Desk, located at the entrance to the Media Centre, media representatives will receive guidance on how to access events, such as pools for plenary sessions, bilateral meetings and side events, where these are open to the media. Due to limitations related to space, security, and protocol, some events may require pool arrangements or other specific access procedures.

Accreditation for media pools

Media representatives must not only hold an accreditation badge but must also apply for a place in the media pools for the Ministerial Council, as specified below.

To take part in the media pools, a separate 'pool badge' is required. This will be issued on a temporary basis to registered media representatives at the Media Information Desk. Conference accreditation alone does not guarantee access to the individual media pools.

Media representatives can apply online for the pools they wish to attend whilst completing the accreditation form (open from 2 to 30 November 2026). Media representatives will be informed by email no later than Tuesday, 1 December, if their pool preferences have been accommodated. On-site registration at the Media Information Desk is possible, provided places are still available.

Pool badges can be collected at the Media Information Desk 30 minutes before the start of the pool session begins. Media representatives taking part in a specific pool must arrive at the Media Information Desk at least 20 minutes before the start of the session. Those arriving late at the meeting point, will no longer be able to take part. Pool badges must be worn clearly visible throughout the pool event. Pool badges are non-transferable.

Schedule for media pools

Any changes to the media pool schedule will be announced at the Media Centre. The latest updates can be obtained from the Media Information Desk.

Thursday, 3 December 2026

8:30–9:45 am

Pool 1: Doorstep (registration required)

- Arrival of the Heads of Delegation / Opportunity for doorstep interviews
- **Please note that participation in the 'Doorstep Pool' excludes participation in the opening of the plenary session.**

10:00 – 10:30 am

Pool 2: Opening of the plenary session of the Ministerial Council (Registration required)

- Opening speeches by, amongst others, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis, and the OSCE Secretary General, Feridun H. Sinirlioğlu.
- **Please note that attending the opening of the plenary session excludes participation in the 'Doorstep Pool'.**

6:00 pm

Press conference

- OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis, and OSCE Secretary-General Feridun H. Sinirlioğlu
- Open to all accredited media representatives – no pool

Friday, 4 December 2026

Noon (TBC)

Pool 3: Closing of the plenary session (registration required)

- Information regarding the pool will be announced on the day of the event by the Media Information Desk in the Media Centre.

Bilateral Meetings Media Opportunities

Delegations may request pool coverage for bilateral meetings. We kindly ask delegations to inform their counterparts of media presence. These opportunities are **by invitation only and limited to specific media** outlets; they are not open pool opportunities for all media representatives.

The delegation concerned must contact the selected media outlets directly to invite them to join a pool and must inform the Media Centre (mc.infodesk@eda.admin.ch) of the pool participants and timings.

Bilateral pool requests should be submitted by close of business Wednesday, 2 December. Ad hoc or last-minute requests can be accommodated, subject to the availability of Media Centre resources.

Media representatives attending a specific pool must be present at least 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the bilateral meeting in question at the meeting point next to the Media Information Desk, from where the group will be escorted to and from the pool opportunity. Late arrivals at the meeting point will forfeit their access to the pool. Media representatives must wear the pool badge visibly during the pool opportunities. Pool badges are non-transferable.

Interview requests

Journalists can inquire about interview opportunities at the Media Information Desk in the Media Centre. Requests for press briefings and interviews from delegations should be addressed to the OSCE Communication and Media Relations Section at press@osce.org.

Photos & Social Media

The conference will be covered on the official social media channels of the OSCE and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office (CiO). Stay informed and follow the latest updates via @OSCE, @ignaziocassis @SwitzerlandOSCE and the hashtags #OSCE26CH and #OSCEMC2026.

Official photos will be available via the QR code on the back of your accreditation badge, as well as on the official Flickr accounts of the OSCE and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA).

When using or sharing photos, please ensure that the photographer and/or organization is properly credited: ©OSCE/FDFA.

Livestream & National Statements

Official handshakes with and selected arrivals of Heads of Delegation, as well as the press conference will be livestreamed on the OSCE website at www.osce.org/live and will remain accessible on the OSCE's YouTube channel after the event.

Delegations will be provided with download links to videos of individual statements in broadcast quality. To request the recording of an individual statement, journalists should contact the appropriate delegation. Contact information for delegations to the OSCE can be found here: www.osce.org/contacts/delegations.

More information will be provided on the Ministerial Council event page: www.osce.org/event/mc_2026.

Host Broadcaster

Radiotelevisione Svizzera (RSI) is the host broadcaster.

Video pool footage of selected arrivals, the official handshakes with Heads of Delegation as well as of the Opening Session and more will be available to media representatives on the Eurovision Newsdirect platform (Contact for Eurovision News newsevents@eurovision.net or +41 22 717 28 40). Credits: © OSCE / FDFA / RSI

Frequency Management

All users must register their wireless (radio) devices in advance via webtool FreqCoord by 25 November 2026. Wireless devices may not be used if they have not been registered. All wireless devices must be checked on-site before use and receive a validation sticker. End devices that communicate via mobile networks (4G/5G), WIFI, or Bluetooth are exempt from the registration obligation.

Discrimination & Harassment

To ensure that all participants are treated with dignity and respect and are aware of their role and responsibilities in maintaining a positive meeting environment, no form of discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment, will be tolerated during the event.

Switzerland is committed to ensuring a respectful, safe and inclusive environment during the 33rd OSCE Ministerial Council. No form whatsoever of discrimination or sexual harassment will be tolerated. 'Discrimination' means the unjustified unequal or prejudicial treatment of individuals or groups based on certain legally protected characteristics such as gender, age, ethnic background, language, religion, sexual orientation or disability.

'Sexual harassment' means any nuisance behavior of a sexual nature and any other gender-based behavior that is unwelcome on one side and that violates a person's dignity. The perception of the affected person is the deciding factor here, not the intention of the harasser. All delegation members, media and NGO representatives as well as all staff present, are expected to behave respectfully and professionally. Anyone experiencing or observing incidents of discrimination or harassment, or who feels uncomfortable, can get in touch with the FDFA Respect Focal Point on site in confidence at +41 79 428 76 41. Should you wish to personally report an incident, an office is available to meet in person. The FDFA's Respect Focal Point will indicate the location.

Contacts for more information

OSCE press inquiries and interview requests: OSCE Communications and Media Relations Section, press@osce.org

For inquiries related to media participation and accreditation kommunikation@eda.admin.ch

General destination information

Visa requirements

Media representatives who require visas to travel to Switzerland are required to apply in a timely manner. Prior to their trip to Switzerland, travelers are required to ensure that they have a valid passport which expires at least six months after their date of departure. If not sure whether a visa is needed, please refer to the following website: www.swiss-visa.ch.

Visa requirements can be found here.

To ensure that visas are issued on time and in line with Schengen regulations, media representatives should file their visa application with the Swiss Embassy or the embassy representing Switzerland in Schengen issues as soon as possible – at least 21 working days before the conference.

Media representatives are asked to make their own arrangements for securing a visa, if required under Swiss law, for entry into Switzerland. In some countries, Schengen visa applications are processed by partner States. Switzerland has no influence over the allocation of appointments, the organization of visa services, or decisions taken by its representation partners.

Accommodation

Upon registration, media representatives will have the option to reserve a room at Hotel Admiral Lugano (Via Geretta 15, 6900 Paradiso). A number of rooms at preferential rates (CHF 176.20, taxes and breakfast included), has been reserved for media accommodation. Confirmation and payment for the rooms, must be handled directly with the hotel. For general information, media representatives may contact the hotel by phone (+41 91 986 38 38) or e-mail to: commerciale@luganohoteladmiral.ch. However, to ensure accurate handling and tracking of all reservations, submit booking requests exclusively by e-mail to commerciale@luganohoteladmiral.ch

Transport

Public transportation options from Milan Malpensa, Milan Linate or Zurich International Airport to Lugano city centre by train can be found at: www.sbb.ch. Further information about Lugano's public transportation network can be found online at: www.tplsa.ch

While staying in a hotel in Lugano, guests receive the Ticino Ticket, which provides free regional public transport (trains and buses) throughout the Canton of Ticino as well as discounts on local cable cars, boats, and major tourist attractions.

A free shuttle service will operate on Thursday and Friday, 3 and 4 December during the "rush hours" and will stop frequently close to the "Hotel Admiral" and the OSCE MC 2026 venue. To use this shuttle, please wear your media badge visibly when boarding.

Taxis in Lugano

Information about taxi service in Lugano as well as airport service companies can be found at: www.lugano.ch/en/vivere-a-lugano.html

Taxi Phone +41 91 922 88 33

Business hours

Shops are generally open from Monday through Saturday from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm, although times may vary. Most shops are closed on Sunday and public holidays.

Banking services and currency

The national currency is the Swiss franc (CHF). Banknote denominations are CHF 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 1,000 and coins 5, 10, 20, 50 centimes and CHF 1, 2 and 5. All major credits cards are accepted in most restaurants, hotels and shops in Switzerland. For exchange rates, see the currency converter.

International dialing code

The international dialing code for Switzerland is +41.

Weather

Daily temperatures at the beginning of December vary between -3°C and 8°C. You can check the weather forecast at www.meteonews.ch before you leave.

Time zone

Lugano is in the CET time zone (GMT+1).

Electricity supply

The electric current used throughout Switzerland is 230 volts AC, 50 Hz (continental European standard). Wall outlets are not always compatible with other continental European plugs. Switzerland primarily uses Type J three-pin plugs and sockets, alongside Type C two-pin Europlugs. The Media Centre does not provide adaptors, thus, please bring your own.

Medical assistance

A medical team will be on standby at the Ministerial Council venue. The number 112 should be used for all emergencies.

Welcome to Lugano!

Ticino

Geographically and culturally close to Italy, Ticino is the only canton located entirely south of the Alps. Lying on the strategic Milan–Zurich–Frankfurt axis, it is the southern gateway to Switzerland. Ticino is also the only entirely Italian-speaking canton in the country. It has a population of more than 350,000, with most inhabitants living in the four main agglomerations of Lugano, Locarno, Bellinzona and Mendrisio.

The beauty and variety of the landscape range from the Alpine peaks and lakes to the vineyards of the Mendrisiotto and the exotic charm of the Brissago Islands, famous for their remarkable diversity and for being the only island-based botanical garden in Switzerland. Furthermore, the particularly mild climate and wide range of cultural and leisure opportunities make Ticino a diverse, sought-after and increasingly attractive tourist destination. Ticino is home to three of Switzerland's 13 UNESCO World Heritage Sites: the medieval castles of Bellinzona; Monte San Giorgio with its extraordinary fossil deposits from the Middle Triassic period; and the ancient beech forests of the Lodano, Busai and Soladino valleys. To all this can be added the rich range of food and wine and a full programme of international events throughout the year.

Lugano

Lugano developed from a medieval hamlet and fishing village into a popular tourist destination as early as the 19th century. From the 1960s onwards, the city experienced rapid growth in its banking sector and became Switzerland's third largest financial centre, after Zurich and Geneva.

The founding of the University of Lugano in 1996, and later of the University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland, led to the establishment of numerous research institutes specialising in innovative disciplines, from artificial intelligence to medicine and computational science. The region thus offers broad educational opportunities and draws in skills and resources that are essential to the urban development. Today Lugano attracts many high-end professions thanks to its cosmopolitan and multilingual character and strategic location as the hub of a major transport route.

The opening in 2016 of the Gotthard Base Tunnel, the longest railway tunnel in the world, provided a unique opportunity for the city to become part of the new metropolitan area between Milan and Zurich. The city lies in a natural amphitheatre of hills and mountains overlooking Lake Lugano, dominated by Monte Brè and Monte San Salvatore, which provide panoramic viewpoints of rare beauty. The region is a favourite destination not only thanks to its varied landscape – ideal for holidays and excursions, events, meetings, congresses and fairs – but also for the quality of its services and infrastructure, its rich cultural scene and tradition of welcome, hospitality, food and wine. The Mediterranean climate, lake, hills, parks and forests create an evocative natural setting that benefits the quality of life of guests and the local people.