

# ODIHR in Ukraine



## Making our societies stronger through democracy and human rights

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is the human rights institution of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and one of the key human rights bodies worldwide.

All OSCE countries have recognized that democracy and human rights are the bedrock of lasting safety and security across the OSCE area. ODIHR plays a unique role in the OSCE's overall mandate, assisting its 57 participating States in strengthening their

democratic institutions, upholding the rule of law, increasing respect for human rights, promoting gender equality, and working towards tolerant societies in which all citizens are able and encouraged to participate.

The OSCE Office has been working since its establishment in 1991 to create resilient societies whose democratic institutions work in the interest of the people, as well as supporting the engagement of civil society organizations with national and other state authorities in meaningful dialogue.

ODIHR has played an important role in strengthening democratic institutions and respect for human rights in Ukraine, particularly since launching a dedicated and ongoing project in the country in 2015.

Much of the work undertaken by ODIHR in Ukraine has focused on human rights monitoring, democratic governance and lawmaking, the rule of law and issues of tolerance and non-discrimination, with a special emphasis on the protection and integration of Roma communities. ODIHR has observed 14 elections in Ukraine, most recently in 2020.

Further information on ODIHR's Ukraine project can be found at <https://www.osce.org/odihhr/ukraine>.

Other **human rights instruments** of the OSCE include the Moscow Mechanism, which is supported by ODIHR. <https://www.osce.org/odihhr/ukraine>

All ODIHR's public statements on the ongoing conflict can be found at the following link: <https://www.osce.org/odihhr/ukraine>.

## Activities

Following the Russian Federation's military attack and its devastating consequences for the civilian population, ODIHR made every effort to deliver both needed and timely support to Ukraine. The Office's activities are based on a rapid response phase, as well as a post-conflict phase aimed at supporting subsequent reconstruction and development.

These activities aim to empower all those working on human rights in the country, increase dialogue domestically and internationally, contribute to awareness-raising, and help mobilize civil society.

The projects encompass a wide variety of initiatives. Current and planned activities include:

- **Monitoring human rights:** Monitoring the impact of Russia's military attack and the resulting armed conflict on civilians and prisoners of war for violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. Fourteen monitoring teams have so far conducted more than 200 interviews inside and outside Ukraine, and two **public reports** have been published to date.
- **Combating human trafficking:** Assessments of national referral mechanisms and strategies to prevent and counter human trafficking in the OSCE countries experiencing large refugee flows from Ukraine.

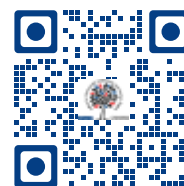
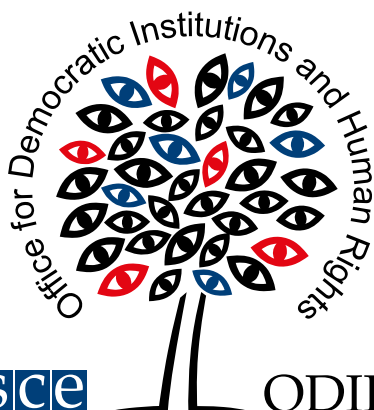
ODIHR has also carried out a **survey** on the safety and security of women refugees from Ukraine, provided training for frontline responders and set up a coordination platform for civil society organizations working on trafficking recommendations.

- **Fostering dialogue:** Workshops on freedom of religion or belief, non-violent communication and mediation to foster dialogue and bring together those who identify with a diverse variety of religious or belief communities.
- **Tracking Roma rights:** Training human rights defenders from Ukraine and neighbouring countries to monitor and document human rights violations experienced by Ukrainian Roma. ODIHR also facilitates dialogue among Roma civil society and others to address the needs of Roma affected by the armed conflict.
- **Training human rights defenders:** Comprehensive training for human rights defenders, both working in Ukraine and with refugees who have fled the armed conflict, providing the knowledge and skills to carry out human rights monitoring safely.
- **Increasing gender sensitivity:** Support for Ukraine's network of gender advisers through awareness-raising and training, as well as potential assistance

to the Ukrainian Parliament in becoming a more gender-sensitive institution.

- **Strengthening the rights of people with disabilities:** Training on disability rights and developing awareness-raising materials on the importance of including people with disabilities at all levels of decision-making and increasing their political participation. The target audience includes decision makers as well as people with different types of disabilities.
- **Engaging youth:** Workshops for Polish and Ukrainian youth to promote mutual respect and understanding in cities across Poland that have absorbed significant numbers of refugees from Ukraine. The training is followed by youth-led community activities to foster equal and inclusive societies.
- **Involving Ukrainians abroad:** With the Ukrainian diaspora proving crucial in mobilizing humanitarian assistance for the areas most affected by the conflict, ODIHR is analysing experiences and lessons learned from other countries and assistance provided by national diasporas in post-conflict reconstruction and development.
- **Strengthening democratic institutions:** Assistance to the Ukrainian Parliament in the field of parliamentary integrity to support the development of an appropriate integrity and ethics mechanism.
- **Safeguarding electoral processes:** Consultations with national authorities and other stakeholders on legal and practical mechanisms to prepare for future elections and facilitate the voting rights of all Ukrainians.
- **Legislative assistance:** Offering advice to the Ukrainian Parliament and other democratic institutions on political party regulations and strengthening domestic legal frameworks and, at the same time, promoting open, transparent and inclusive law-making processes.
- **Strengthening accountability:** Gathering experts and institutions from across the OSCE region for a coordinated response to alleged violations of international human rights and humanitarian law in Ukraine. Subsequently assisting in training judges, prosecutors, and other Ukrainian legal professionals working on war crimes while also administering justice during the armed conflict.

Planning for specific activities remains flexible in order to respond to the needs of all those engaged in protecting human rights in Ukraine.



**OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights**

Ul. Miodowa 10  
00-251 Warsaw  
Poland

Office: +48 22 520 06 00  
Fax: +48 22 520 06 05  
office@odihhr.pl  
www.osce.org/odihhr

**Follow ODIHR here:**

